

“Nuggets of Gold” shared by participants at FCA Bushfire training

Community Engagement & Promotion of Service

Keep looking for the key person in the community plus building trust and rapport with other service providers – Lyn P

Work together as a community of Financial Counsellors. Support each other and promote the sector as a whole, not as individual agencies. Be persistent in community engagement.
– Kelly D

I suggest putting time into building and maintaining connections with other agencies - for referrals – Susan

Focus on community centres and hubs – source unknown

Be innovative in the ways you engage with the community – Kelly H

Just echoing - be proactive with other services to be top of mind when the inevitable crisis comes about to be able to meet the needs of people who never used our service before – Rob B

Be patient & persistent..The valuable contacts within outreach communities will eventually be found which will then lead to many other good contacts – Steve S

Tell everyone you know what you do – Kylie H

The importance of building awareness and community engagement in advance of need – Fiona L

Need to change thinking on what FC looks like, conversations with community members are invaluable – Kathryn S

Diarise regular catch ups with key service providers. Make it the norm, for preparedness, rather than reactive once the event has occurred. – Chantal F

Spend the downtime making connections with communities so that they understand what we do and the value we bring – Scott

Being proactive, connecting with community groups, local member, education of what Financial counsellors do to educate the community so they can access our service, being adaptive and flexible in delivery style – Karen A

I think how each town and community has different focus and needs to have counselling services tailored to their own situation - also focus on commercial aspect to reduce stigma – Ischodde

Focus on the education aspect of educating the Community Sector of what a Financial Counsellor does. Not all Community workers know about Financial Counselling - Rachael

I've read a lot of feedback about the time the whole process takes. Both here in training as well as from bushfire affected people. so lots of patience and understanding – Adele G

Keep engaging with community, give people time to access services acknowledge that people are traumatised – Rosie F

Engage with stakeholders before fire season – Kelly H

Working with clients

The lag in fire survivors reaching out to us is perhaps better understood by them focusing on their immediate hierarchy of needs: safety, security, wellbeing – then once their monthly and qly bills start to be pursued, then they may be prompted to seek assistance – Nick G

To get people to engage - say to people if you are not sure whether we can help you just come in and have a chat and if you find you don't need our help at least you know you are ok – Yvonne

Be creative - out of the box solutions that can make a big difference and build trust – Helen D

Nuggets of Gold - I think it has been highlighted to engage and build relationships with existing community groups. Be available to clients on their terms, i.e visit there property, spend the time with them – John G

The process will be slower with bushfire Fc keep in touch support until they are ready – Les F

Home visits have been key to facilitating FC- takes the burden away from the client to come to us – Ella

Validate that the client deserves the help and needs to put forward their needs not sit back because others also need help -Rochelle

If clients are reluctant to access the grants let them know that the funds wont only help them but will help their community. ie they will spend the money locally and that will help everyone – Cheree R

Be able to think outside the square with our Financial Counselling – Greg M

Overall message - Bushfire impacted people 'take time' to seek assistance – Dianne M

Be yourself, take your time to build connections, self-care, back to basics with fc skills - Francine

Spending time with clients and not rushing them – Marisol K

Give clients time, ensure they are aware of services and offer referrals, accept the process will be different to standard FC appt - Build Rapport to ensure ongoing engagement when clients are ready! – Karen

Engagement with community take time to listen to the small concerns of the clients – source unknown

Be aware of trauma and long-term effects on our clients and their families – Francie H

Having a well-developed tool kit – Marison K

Mental Health & Self-Care

Keep checking in on yourself and remember your own experiences and trauma if you were impacted personally – Kelly H

Self-care is important - if we don't look after ourselves we can't help anyone else effectively – Penny S

Self-care and setting clear boundaries and informing the clients of them – Marisol K