SUPPORT FOR PROVIDERS

Mental Health and Wellbeing for Practice Staff

phn WESTERN VICTORIA
An Australian Government Initiative

Managing your stress

Feeling under pressure is a likely experience for you and many of your colleagues. It is quite normal to be feeling this way in the current situation.

Stress and the feelings associated with it are by no means a reflection that you cannot do your job or that you are weak. Managing your mental health and psychosocial well-being during this time is as important as managing your physical health.

Take care of yourself

Try and use helpful coping strategies such as ensuring sufficient rest and respite during work or between shifts, eat sufficient and healthy food, engage in physical activity, and stay in contact with family and friends.

Using strategies that have worked for you in the past to manage times of stress can benefit you now. You are the person most likely to know how you can de-stress and you should not be hesitant in keeping yourself psychologically well. This is not a sprint; it's a marathon.

Some healthcare workers may unfortunately experience avoidance by their family or community owing to stigma or fear. This can make an already challenging situation far more difficult.

If possible, staying connected with your loved ones, including through digital methods, is one way to maintain contact. Turn to your colleagues, your manager or other trusted persons for social support – your colleagues may be having similar experiences to you.

Managing your staff's stress

Keeping all staff protected from chronic stress and poor mental health during this response means that they will have a better capacity to fulfil their roles.

Be sure to keep in mind that the current situation will not go away overnight, and you should focus on longer-term occupational capacity rather than repeated short-term crisis responses.

Ensure that good quality communication and accurate information updates are provided to all staff.

Some useful strategies may include:

- Rotating workers from higher-stress to lower-stress functions.
- Partnering inexperienced workers with their more experienced colleagues. The buddy system helps to provide support, monitor stress and reinforce safety procedures.
- Ensuring that outreach personnel enter the community in pairs.
- Initiating, encouraging and monitoring work breaks.
- Implement flexible schedules for workers who are directly impacted or have a family member affected by a stressful event.
- Ensure that you build in time for colleagues to provide social support to each other.

Ensure that staff are aware of where and how they can access mental health and psychosocial support services and facilitate access to such services.

Managers and team leaders are facing similar stresses to their staff and may experience additional pressure relating to the responsibilities of their role.

It is important that the above provisions and strategies are in place for both workers and managers, and that managers can be role-models for self-care strategies to mitigate stress.

Safer Care Victoria – Healthcare worker Wellbeing Centre

https://www.bettersafercare.vic.gov.au/support-and-training/hcw-wellbeing
Has resources and ideas on:

- Supporting myself
- Supporting others
- 24/7 support

Doctors4Doctors

https://www.drs4drs.com.au/

Through the network of doctors' health advisory and referral services, they offer an independent, safe, supportive and confidential service including a confidential telehealth service specifically for doctors and medical students.

Phone: 1300- 374 377

Nurse and Midwife Support

https://www.nmsupport.org.au/

A 24/7 national support service for nurses & midwives providing access to confidential advice and referral.

RACGP EAP

https://www.racgp.org.au/racgp-membership/member-offers/the-gp-support-program

Members can access professional advice no matter where you live or work.

ACRRM EAP

https://www.acrrm.org.au/support/wellbeing

24/7 Support Members experiencing workplace, training, exam, or other stresses or issues impacting your personal wellbeing can call ACRRM's Employee Assistance Program
Phone: 1800 818 728

General Practice Staff EAP

https://www.convergeinternational.com.au/
Provided by WVPHN, confidential. WVPHN will only be provided with number of people who accessed the service – practice and staff names will not be disclosed. Converge International is a holistic, customer-focused and quality-assured service delivered within a contemporary health and wellbeing framework.

See link to instructions here

Beyond Blue

https://www.beyondblue.org.au/

Beyond Blue is available to talk to a trained mental health professional any time. Calls are confidential.
Phone: 1800 512 348

Black Dog Institute

https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/the-essential-network/

Helping healthcare workers find resources and support to manage burnout and maintain good mental health.

Medicare mental health

https://www.medicarementalhealth.gov.au/

Mental Health professionals will work to find the best way to assist, this is not a crisis service. Depending on a person's needs, they may:

- be connected with suitable existing services
- receive care at a Medicare Mental Health hub, either onsite or through telehealth
- be connected to specialist or acute mental health services, including into emergency care.

Phone: 1800 595 212 - business hours

Lifeline

https://www.lifeline.org.au/about/our-services/

Lifeline Text 0477 13 11 14 available nightly - Australia's first SMS-based Crisis Support service, any person in Australia can receive support from a Crisis Supporter by text message every night.

Online chat available nightly - online chat service available for people who prefer to type than talk.
Phone: 13 11 14 - 24/7

Bush Support Line | CRANAplus

https://crana.org.au/mental-health-wellbeing/call-1800-805-391
CRANAplus offers free 24/7 confidential psychological support to remote nurses, midwives or health professionals. Phone: 1800 805 391

Business.gov.au

https://business.gov.au/risk-management/mental-health/mental-health-and-wellbeing-support-for-business#promote-good-mental-health
Free, confidential one-on-one mental health coaching program delivered by Beyond Blue to help small business owners manage the pressures that come with running a business.