Mental Health Support and Resources
for Businesses in the Whitsunday, Isaac and Mackay Region

This information package has been compiled by the Suicide Prevention Community Action Planning Group (SPCAP) in the Whitsunday, Isaac and Mackay region. It is designed to support regional industry and businesses access information, resources and support with mental health concerns, particularly with respect to the outbreak of coronavirus across the world.

SPCAP has workers across the region and can provide a range of local information, resources, supports and links to mental health, suicide, counselling, health and other community services. While all information provided was current and correct at the time of publishing (in March 2020), these services and resources can change quickly to meet changing industry needs.

LOCAL SUPPORT

SPCAP

- SPCAP has workers based in Whitsunday, Isaac and Mackay - you can speak to a local person and get up to date local information
- Email mackaysuicideprevention@selectability.com.au or go to the SPCAP Facebook page

Regional Mental Health and Other Service Providers

- Find a range of local mental health and other community services on the SPCAP website

IN A CRISIS

Call

- 000
- MH CALL (Mackay Hospital and Health Service) 1300 64 22 55
- Lifeline on 13 11 14

GENERAL TIPS FOR MANAGING MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

When a concern arises

- Be aware of what's happening for your staff, and yourself.
- Notice changes in behaviour and consider the impacts of change on the mental health of your staff and yourself.
- Get comfortable with starting a conversation with others about any concerns. Let the person (or group of people) know you have noticed and that you care. You don't have to give advice or fix the problem. You just need to let the person express themselves and listen. Silence is ok.
- If you can't do this yourself, or the person isn't comfortable with you, get help from another trusted person to have this conversation.
- Support the person to take the next step of getting help, which may be talking with a family member, arranging to see a GP, phoning a support service (such as Lifeline) or calling 000.
- Check back in with the person regularly.

Ongoing Support

- Provide your staff with ongoing access to mental health support services, such as a counsellor or psychologist through an Employee Assistance Program. This service should be confidential and without obligations.
- Reduce stigma by encouraging staff to recognise that getting further support is sensible and smart (like seeing a doctor for a physical injury such as a broken leg).
- Provide training for staff members to recognise and respond to signs of mental health concerns or suicide (details above).
- Have a designated and trained Mental Health First Aid worker to provide support to staff as needed.

During Covid-19

- Recognise and monitor the level of uncertainty, tension, instability and stress in the workplace.
- Provide regular information and communication through a range of channels, even if it is to say that nothing has changed.
- Be visible, open and easily contacted by staff members.
- Support staff members to stay socially connected through phone and online channels.
- Support staff members to identify their strengths, build their resilience and focus on positive events and situations.

During Covid-19

- Ensure staff members are receiving information that is accurate and current. Dispel any myths or rumours as soon as they arise by communicating openly and frankly.
- Provide information and resources to staff members about how they can:
  - -Maintain mental wellness (sleep, exercise, healthy food, relaxation and social connection
  - -Manage the information they are receiving
  - -Maintain their mental wellness while working from home (resources provided above)
- Provide information and resources to staff members about:
  - -Local support services (available on the SPCAP website)
  - -A range of state and national phone and online services (detailed above)
- Take care of yourself. As a business owner, manager or supervisor, employees will be looking to you as their role model for how to talk about concerns, ask for help and maintain good mental health in difficult circumstances. You also need to be mentally well to be able to support others.

TIPS FOR SUPPORTING PEOPLE THROUGH LOSS AND GRIEF

- Be patient
- Recognise behaviours that appear problematic and could be grief reactions
- Be empathetic
- Be aware of potential signs that people are not coping (lack focus and motivation, being obsessive, isolating themselves, etc)
- Support everyone, even people who seem to doing ok
- Check in with each person regularly
- Listen
- Encourage people to take care of their mental and physical wellness
- Encourage people to get further help when needed
- Look after yourself

MAINTAIN MENTAL WELLBEING DURING CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK

Head to Health
- Practical psychological skills to help cope with anxiety and worry about infectious diseases
- How to maintain good mental health by keeping a healthy lifestyle, staying informed, staying positive and getting help when needed
- Useful links to other resources

Looking After Your Mental Health During the Coronavirus Outbreak (Beyond Blue)
- Well-being tips for community members, healthcare workers, people experiencing financial hardship, children and young people, and what to do if you're quarantined or in self-isolation
- Links to other quality resources

MATES in Construction
- Tip Sheets and posters with information about how to cope with stress during Covid-19 and how to set up a MyGov account
- There is also a factsheet with QR codes that link directly to information and support services

Beyond Blue Online Forum
- Online forum focused on coping during the Coronavirus outbreak
- Opportunity to connect with others who are dealing with similar concerns
- Relative anonymity can suit some people who may not otherwise get support

Coronavirus Disease - Information for Employers (Aust Dept Health)
- Answers questions such as what to tell staff, precautions to take when cleaning
- Includes links to other resources

Mental Health and Wellbeing During the Coronavirus Covid-19 Outbreak
- This information from Lifeline includes strategies to cope with social distancing, self-isolation or quarantine and how to stay connected with others
- It also includes information for supporting children

SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES TO MANAGE MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

Ahead for Business

- Provide mental health and other supports for small businesses affected by adverse events
- Their website includes a Mental Health 'Check-Up' which uses standardised screening tools for depression, anxiety, stress and alcohol consumption. The total score of these questions provides an indication of the risks to people's health
- There is also a Toolkit to assess your own situation, decide how to help yourself, access support and develop a plan
- There are also resources to support business owners, including how to start a conversation about mental health, look after yourself and support someone who may be suicidal

OzHelp

- Provide workplace wellbeing programs specialising in mental health and suicide prevention
- Their face-to-face training and support programs are transitioning to online delivery during the COVID-19 outbreak
- Counselling and support services remain available through telephone and video conferencing
- An online health check (Workplace Tune Up) can be accessed by groups or individuals, which is especially suitable for those who may be isolated, working from home or in remote locations
- Includes a factsheet about how to look after yourself and others during times of uncertainty
- OzHelp is based in Sydney with a 1300 number

RUOK?

- Practical information about how to stay connected, reach out and ask friends, family and colleagues "Are you OK?"
- Includes a range of other resources to get help to support others
- Also includes 'Connection Cards' to use to reach out to 'hard to reach' people

WORKING FROM HOME

Managing Your Mental Health at Home (Black Dog Institute)
- Factsheet with tips to project your mental health
- Details about how to structure working from home
- Includes useful online resources and tools

Tips for Working From Home
- Roses in the Ocean have developed this useful booklet with a range of practical considerations when working from home
- It includes considerations such as how to structure your workspace, establishing routines, identifying when you're most productive, time management strategies and how to stay connected

Toolkit - Working From Home
- This resource from Lifeline includes a range of useful strategies to consider when trying to integrate work and home life
- It also includes considerations for general mental health and wellbeing

DEALING WITH JOB LOSS

Superfriend: Supporting Colleagues Through Loss and Hard Times
This booklet contains Information about:
- The experience of loss and grief (including job loss) and its affects
- Common fears people have about supporting someone through loss
- Practical tips and suggestions about what to do and what not to do

Taking Care of Yourself After Losing Your Job
This resource from Heads Up, Mental Healthy Workplace Alliance and Beyond Blue provides:
- Practical tips for looking after your mental health
- Information about where to seek financial assistance
- Support for finding another job

Deb Rae Solutions (based in Mackay)

- Provides support to individuals and organisations who are dealing with grief and loss
- Website includes a resource to support workplaces as they encounter grief and loss during the Covid-19 outbreak

HelpGuide.org

- Information and resources to support people to manage stress relating to losing a job, including grief process, how to take care of your mental and physical health and steps to rebuilding a career.

SUPPORT PEOPLE WITH ANXIETY, DEPRESSION AND THOUGHTS OF SUICIDE

MindSpot

- Free digital mental health service
- Online/phone assessment and treatment for adults with symptoms of anxiety and depression
- Their website now also includes Coronavirus (COVID-19) information, helpful links, and
- resources for tips on coping with infectious diseases
- The service is available Mon-Fri: 8am-8pm / Sat: 8am-6pm AEST on 1800 61 44 34

Beyond Blue

- Comprehensive (but easy to read and understand) information about a range of mental health
- Also includes an Anxiety/Depression Checklist that can be completed online

TUFMINDS (app)

- Suicide intervention information that allows people to know what signs to look for, the questions to ask and the steps to take to help save a life
- Suicide Intervention and Positive Mindfulness Cognition Video Modules presented by Drs John and Elizabeth McIntosh
- Guided Mindfulness Audios about stress, anxiety, depression, relaxation and other topics
- Information channels for overall better health and wellbeing

MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING

SPCAP has developed a comprehensive list of mental health and suicide prevention training that is available across the region. This Training Register is available on their website (in Information and Resources) and includes contact details to register for each course. Key training options are detailed below.

Conversations for Life / Stronger Smarter Yarns for life
- Covers impact of life events, skills and knowledge to identify signs, debunking social myths
- Includes communication strategies and tailored mental health conversation planning tools
- Stronger Smarter Yarns for Life explores the unique factors contributing to suicide for Indigenous people

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)
- Covers how to provide initial support to adults who are developing a mental illness or experiencing a mental health crisis
- The course curriculum is evidence-based, as informed by the MHFA Guidelines
- Topics covered include depression, anxiety, substance, suicide, panic attacks, aggressive behaviours and self-harm
- Check the Training Register on SPCAP's website for details about local course delivery dates

safeTALK
- An alertness workshop (3 hours) that prepares anyone, regardless or experience or training, to become a suicide-alert helper
- Content includes how to notice and respond to situations thoughts of suicide may be present and how to provide practical help

MATES in Construction
- The MATES program uses training as tool to raise awareness that there is a problem with suicide and its contributing risk factors in the construction industry and how we can all be part of the solution.
- Support is then provided through clear pathways to help; case management processes that ensure workers in need of support are connected to appropriate help.