

Self Help

Staff Wellbeing Access Program

Self Help

COVID-19 is an extraordinary event, that the RACF workforce and health provider workforce have never experienced before. As such, we are being asked to do extraordinary things, over long periods of time and for how long, we do not know. We are a tired workforce who continue to show up for our residents, our colleagues, our families and our RACF community.

The coronavirus pandemic is being broadcast to us through every medium and on a global scale. It is usually the main topic of conversation when we connect with others and drives the intention around how we work. It is everywhere.

Your contact with friends or family members overseas may bring stories of tragedy and distress, which in turn, may increase your distress and worry.

You may have been directly impacted by the virus, possibly including your family.

At work you are working hard to reduce the exposure of the virus and been supporting your residents, your coworkers and your RACF community. You have been a witness to residents becoming unwell, isolated, distressed, frightened, vulnerable. So:

- How do we help ourselves during this time?
- How do we maximise our resilience and coping when times get really tough?
- How do we get support if things are too difficult to manage?
- How do we reboot our energy and ensure self-care so we can face the challenges we encounter each day?
- Who do we speak to if we are worried about others?

How we look after ourselves is really important. By ensuring we allow space for ourselves to engage in self-care activities, we can build the resilience and strength that is required to keep us moving positively forward through this pandemic.

This is a good time to reflect and take time to think of you. Within this folder you will find different information on understanding what you may be experiencing and looking at various self-help options.

What we do know from research, is that everyone is struggling one way or another through these times and it is quite common and normal. What is important – is that we acknowledge this and access positive ways to help us through what we are experiencing.

Self Care



Signs that may indicate that self-care is needed:

- Finding that it is difficult to be present or concentrate in the workplace.
- Difficulty with sleep or unable to “turn off” your thoughts.
- Finding that it is increasingly difficult to manage your emotional responses to events.
- Finding it hard to engage at normal activities at home and at work.
- Feeling low, stressed, and exhausted
- Difficulty getting to sleep, or regular waking through the night and intrusive thoughts.
- Increased intake of alcohol to help you cope.
- Increased isolation from family, friends, and social activity

Things that may help to self-care.

- Understanding and talking with others about exploring what works for them for self-care.
- Learn new strategies which help when experiencing any of the signs listed above - such as: relaxation therapy, mindfulness, or meditation.
- Attend to self-care through eating well, exercising, maintaining social connections, and getting sufficient rest.
- Give yourself permission to react to your emotions and recognize that the work you are doing is through an extraordinary event.
- Support each other, as colleagues who understand shared experiences.
- Seek professional support if you are feeling distressed or troubled by your experiences and things are not improving for you.
- Access self-help support through websites, phone or smart phone apps listed below.
- Making it work through social distancing measures – develop a creative list of ways to remain connected, such as morning tea, staff message boards and staff chat forums.

Tips for self-love

- Eat balanced, healthy meals.
- Minimise alcohol intake
- Create a regular sleep routine.
- Increase exercise or walking.
- Reach out to those important to you
- Take time to breathe.
- Learn mindfulness.
- Hug yourself and know you are amazing.

Where to get help:

- Access your Employee Assistance Program: speak to HR or look at your Organisation’s employee website or noticeboard.
- Contact HeadtoHealth on 1800 595 212 or <https://headtohealthvic.org.au/>
- Make an appointment to see your G.P. for an emotional wellbeing health check or referral to a counsellor.
- Have a look at the many web-based supports that are available such as Head to Health: <https://headtohealth.gov.au/>

Website links & resources:

1. HeadtoHealth: <https://headtohealthvic.org.au/> and phone support: **1800 595 212**
2. Beyondblue: www.coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au/
3. Mind Spot: www.mindspot.org.au or call **1800 614 434**
4. MoodGym: www.moodgym.com.au
5. Smiling Mind: www.smilingmind.com.au/thrive-inside and smart phone app.
6. Head To Health: website full of amazing resources: www.headtohealth.gov.au