

COVID-19 STAFF WELLBEING

Central Adelaide Local Health Network

Leader's wellbeing guide

The aim of this guide is to help provide tips and ideas on how you can support your staff during COVID-19.

Workplace huddles

A daily workplace huddle of about 10 to 15 minutes is great to receive feedback between shift change and general briefings in this fast-paced COVID-19 period. This gathering keeps everyone up-to-date with staff changes, allows us to exchange information and support one another during this social distancing phenomenon.

This gathering generates positive energy and is a wellbeing gesture creating a sense of unity. It also keeps people together as a team and reminds us of common goals and what needs to be achieved.

The huddle is a chance to be informed of any CALHN updates, allow employees to quickly state what they will work on that day and answer any quick questions.

Team huddles create an opportunity where people are comfortable to address issues and ask questions.

Wellbeing reminders

Health care workers may feel extra stress during the COVID-19 outbreak, so it is ideal to offer Wellbeing reminders. This might be as simple as asking if everyone is okay, encouraging staff to take a breather, or having a regular mindful or meditation/breathing space pause during the day. Stress and anxiety is a normal response in these circumstances, with virtual communications, social distancing and uncertainty becoming part of our everyday lives.

There are practical ways to manage your mental health during this time, including:

- Getting enough rest during work hours and between shifts;
- Eating healthy foods and engaging in physical activity;
- Keeping in contact with colleagues, family and friends by phone or online;
- Avoid using smoking, alcohol and other drugs to deal with your emotions;
- Establish routines where possible and try to view this period as a new experience that can bring some benefits;
- Limit worry and agitation by lessening the time you and your family spend watching or listening to media coverage that is unsettling;
- being aware of where you can access mental health support at work.

It's important to bolster staff by explaining to the general public the current pressures on the health system and workers themselves and encouraging them to support staff where possible. Health care workers can be supported by the public and continue to keep people safe if individuals follow government advice about ways they can help slow the spread of the virus.

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Working remotely

As the workforce start working remotely to limit face-to-face interactions, it is important to have daily communications and keep staff engaged.

If you are working from home, please ensure you complete the Work From Home Application and Assessment [application form](#) and submit to Health.CALHNHumanResources@sa.gov.au for registration.

The Microsoft Teams software can assist with virtual communications in the modern world of social distancing. Microsoft Teams allows the CALHN workforce to stick together for support, give everybody a chance to speak and discuss any obstacles that they are facing. Connect via the [Microsoft Teams](#) intranet link.

Managers should regularly contact staff that are in isolation to check up on their wellbeing. This can be done by video or by a phone call.

Keeping up-to-date and informed

It is important to keep up-to date with COVID-19 developments and worth joining the internal CALHN group for COVID-19 on Facebook. The link is: www.facebook.com/groups/CALHN. This Facebook site offers a range of information on social distancing, updates about changes in the workplace and on the facilities available for COVID-19 testing.

The [COVID-19 internet portal](#) is also a valuable information tool for staff. It offers general information, tools and resources for staff in managing COVID-19. Other useful sites are:

- [SA Health's Dashboard](#)
- [Community information](#)

If staff have any specific questions on healthcare workers and COVID-19, they can be emailed to: Health.CALHNCovid19@sa.gov.au. Questions will either be addressed directly or the more frequently asked questions will be distributed as FAQs.

Mental health support at work

Professional support is available through the Employee Assistance Program which enables workers to access free, confidential and professional counselling services for themselves or for family members. Visits are increased from 4 to 6 free visits during the COVID-19 outbreak. All of SA Health staff are included. See [EAP intranet site](#).

The [EAP – Information for Managers](#) is available to provide Managers with advice and support to help them manage difficult or complex situations which arise as part of supervising people with COVID-19 related issues.

Encourage your staff to also use the OurEAP App. The OurEAP smart phone App can be downloaded for free by searching for 'OurEAP' in the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store.

The App has features including:

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- Access to EAP support services 24/7
- Wellbeing resources and self-assessments and other health information
- Appointment booking capability
- Manager hotline call back facility
- “Helpline” for HR and management for support with critical situations
- Emergency help contacts
- Regular EAP updates
- Designed to make access to EAP easier and more user friendly

Creating mentally healthy workplaces

If you're a manager creating mentally healthy work structures, a useful practical information guide for SA public sector agencies is available in the [Mentally Healthy Workplaces Framework and Toolkit](#).

This MHW Framework and Toolkit draws on world-leading research and assists by raising awareness, building positive cultures, preventing harm and supporting people with a mental illness.

It aims to make a difference in workplaces, and to create environments in which mental health is fostered and mental illness is supported, and harassment and bullying are absent.

Other resources

There are a number of resources available to leaders to help assist with their staff wellbeing.

To find out more visit <https://www.rah.sa.gov.au/covid19/information-for-calhn-staff/staff-wellbeing>