



Australian Government

Department of Health
and Aged Care



FACT SHEET

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

What are the different careers in mental health?

There are many different career paths that can be pursued in mental health.

Here are some of the key professions in the field:

- Psychiatrist
- Psychologist
- Counsellor
- Nurse
- Occupational therapist
- Community mental health worker
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mental health worker
- Lived experience (peer) worker
- Social worker

What are the education requirements for working in mental health?

There are several study pathways that can lead to a career in mental health.

Depending on each profession, education and training requirements can vary, but they may include:

- University
- TAFE
- Paid Training
- Volunteering

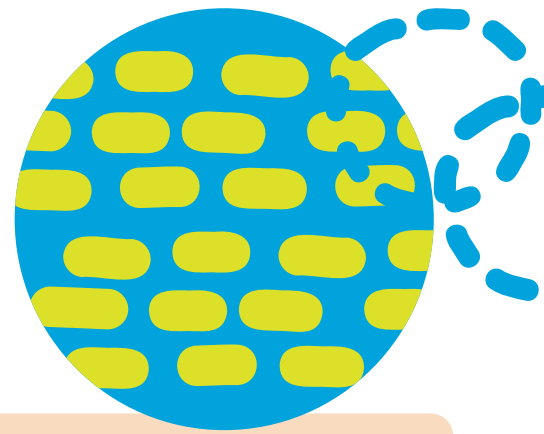
What does a typical day look like for someone working in mental health?

No two days are the same working in the mental health sector.

Mental health workers play a vital role in providing support and guidance to individuals experiencing mental health issues and help them to improve their mental health and wellbeing.

Workers may provide counselling sessions to individuals, make referrals to third party mental health care, prescribe treatments, develop mental health plans, engage with the families of patients as well as members of the community.

There are many common misunderstandings about working in mental health...



What are some common misunderstandings about working in mental health?

1 You need superhuman skills to work in mental health

There is no one 'type' of person suited to a career in mental health.

People with a diverse range of personality types, skill sets and training preferences can have a successful career in mental health.

2 Working in mental health can lead to harm for the worker, their patients or both

Many mental health professionals find their work fulfilling and rewarding, making a positive impact to the lives of people, families and communities each day.

There can be challenges and risks associated with working in mental health. However, mental health professionals receive ongoing training and support to help them navigate challenging situations and provide safe and effective care to.

3 You need to have a degree to work in mental health

There are many mental health related professions in the sector that don't require a university degree.

You can start your career in the field through other study pathways including TAFE, paid training and volunteering, for example: Lived Experience (peer) workers can study a Cert IV in Mental Health Peer Work.

4 Mental health is a limiting career path

Mental health offers a broad range of roles and ongoing opportunities for growth.

Even within the same profession, different professionals can have different skillsets, specialties and different styles. For example, one psychiatrist may choose to specialise in Forensic psychiatry, another may specialise in eating disorders. Counsellors may also specialise in a particular areas, for example, family therapy, or school counselling.

5 Mental health roles are based in hospitals and offices

In a career in mental health, you may find yourself working in a range of environments including hospitals, clinics, community health centres, schools, prisons, businesses, nursing homes, Aboriginal health clinics, courts, welfare agencies and research institutions.

Where can I volunteer in mental health roles?

There are many places you can volunteer in mental health roles to help those in need.

A great place to start is by visiting the websites of mental health organisations in Australia to find out how you can get involved.

- Lifeline
- Beyond Blue
- Black Dog Institute
- OneWave
- RU OK?
- Gotcha4Life
- FriendLine
- 13YARN

Where can I find more information on study pathways?

Visit health.gov.au/mental-health-careers to learn more about pursuing a career in mental health today.

Are you ready to make a difference? Take the next step and visit health.gov.au/mental-health-careers or scan the QR code to learn more about pursuing a career in mental health today!



Careers in **MENTAL HEALTH**
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