



Help when you need it – mental health support for frontline health workers

How will this document help?

Frontline health workers are facing unprecedented circumstances and pressure during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many are facing:

- worries about their health and the health of their loved ones
- increased pressure and stress from higher workloads
- uncertainty about the future.

Frontline health workers have often experienced many of the same challenges as their patients.

Caring for yourself during this time will help you, your family, colleagues and your patients. This document outlines services and supports available to you to support your mental health and wellbeing while working on the frontline of the pandemic.

What mental health support can you access?

Australian health workers can use a range of digital, telephone and telehealth mental health services. You also have access to on-call and in-person mental health support.

Urgent mental health help: If you or anyone you know needs support, contact Lifeline (13 11 14) or Kids Helpline (1800 55 1800).

- **Free 24/7 Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service** Anyone can contact Beyond Blue's **Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service**. You can speak to a trained counsellor on 1800 512 348 or visit coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au. This service includes web-based support and online forums where you can connect with others and share your experiences.
- **HeadtoHealth** The [HeadtoHealth](https://www.headtohealth.gov.au) website is a good place to start if you, or someone you care about, needs help managing anxiety and worry. It provides access to free and low cost telephone and online mental health and support services, <https://www.headtohealth.gov.au/>.
- **Access to a psychologist** Australians can access psychology services subsidised **through Medicare** (up to 20 sessions). You can access these services through telehealth up to 31 December 2022. You will need to be eligible for Medicare and referred by your GP to access this support. Your GP can help you decide whether accessing support via telehealth is safe and appropriate in your circumstances.
- **The Essential Network (TEN)** The [TEN website](https://www.ten.org.au) and app provide resources and a help centre for health professionals experiencing mental health concerns. This is led by the Black Dog Institute and funded by the Australian Government.

If you need help finding a GP or mental health services visit healthdirect at www.healthdirect.gov.au and choose 'Find a health service'.

If you need help finding a psychologist, visit www.psychology.org.au/Find-a-Psychologist.

Useful Resources

Disaster Mental Health Hub

The Hub provides resources and training for professionals who support individuals and communities experiencing the mental health impacts of disasters. Developed by Phoenix Australia and funded by the Australian Government.

SANE Australia

An inclusive organisation that provides resources and shares stories from individuals with lived experience of mental health issues.

DRS4DRS telehealth service

An independent service that provides confidential support to doctors and medical students. This is provided by phone and video.

Beyond Blue

On the frontline: how healthcare workers can support themselves and each other

Nurse & Midwife Support

A 24/7 national support service for nurses and midwives. This provides

access to confidential advice and referral.

RACGP GP Support Program

Free, confidential specialist advice to help GPs cope. Face to face or phone counselling available by calling 1300 361 008

Phoenix Australia

Recovery after Trauma: a guide for paramedics with posttraumatic stress disorder – A useful guide for education and advice.

Keeping up to date

It is important you stay up to date with local information about COVID-19 in each state and territory. You can find information and links to relevant state and territory websites on the healthdirect.