

# Taking care of yourself and those around you



## Mentally healthy workplaces



**IDENTIFY** and manage work-related risks to mental health



**PROMOTE** good mental health



**SUPPORT** people experiencing mental ill health or distress

## Taking care of yourself and others

Taking care of yourself can be hard when you work in a busy health care setting, especially when it's your job to take care of others. It's easy to forget how important self-care is to your own health and safety.

The experience of stress can be different for everyone, and how we respond to stress can be different too. Recognising early warning signs of stress can maximise the success of identifying and addressing work-related psychosocial risks.

## Recognising early warning signs of stress

Here are some examples of what to look for in yourself and others:



**EMOTIONAL SIGNS:** feeling overwhelmed, apathy, mood swings



**COGNITIVE SIGNS:** forgetfulness, inability to concentrate, anxious or racing thoughts



**BEHAVIOURAL SIGNS:** withdrawing socially, neglecting responsibilities, poor sleep



**PHYSICAL SIGNS:** headaches, digestive issues, chest pain, exhaustion

## Talking about stress with others

Having a conversation with someone you're worried about can be uncomfortable. The Black Dog Institute's RESPECT model has been designed to support leaders to have meaningful conversations with people they lead.

The underlying principles of the model can be helpful for everyone. The model is included on page 3 of this document. Your workplace will have details of available mental health and wellbeing supports. If you or someone you know needs help, please reach out.

# Taking care of yourself and those around you

## Five ways to wellbeing\*



# The R.E.S.P.E.C.T model

Having a conversation with someone you're worried about can be uncomfortable. The Black Dog Institute's RESPECT model has been designed to support leaders to have meaningful conversations with people they lead. The underlying principles of the model can be helpful for everyone.



**REGULAR CONTACT** with workers is important.



**EARLIER THE BETTER** Don't wait to have a conversation. The way leaders respond and support workers who are experiencing work-related stress is critical. Early intervention maximises the success of identifying and addressing work-related psychosocial risks which may have led to a worker experiencing work-related stress.



**SUPPORTIVE AND EMPATHETIC** Having a conversation can be uncomfortable. Express genuine concern and be empathic and supportive.



**PRACTICAL HELP, NOT PSYCHOTHERAPY** Leaders are not expected to diagnose a mental health injury or illness. Your job is to offer practical help. Ask open questions, demonstrate active listening, and understand any workplace factors that may be impacting on the worker.



**ENCOURAGE HELP SEEKING** Think of the approach you would use if the worker had a physical illness. The same principles apply here. Encourage the worker to seek out supports and resources.



**CONSIDER POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS** Leaders who create psychosocially safe workplaces aid discovery rather than provide solutions. Consider possible solutions and explore what the worker wants to do. Work together to come up with a plan about how the workplace can support the worker. Include details about how you'll keep in touch.



**TELL THEM THE DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN, AND STAY IN TOUCH** Follow up with another conversation and establish a plan for ongoing contact.

## For more information



Peninsula Health

[peninsulahealth.org.au](http://peninsulahealth.org.au)



Thriving in Health

[thrivinginhealth.org.au](http://thrivinginhealth.org.au)



Black Dog Institute

[blackdoginstitute.org.au](http://blackdoginstitute.org.au)



Supported by WorkSafe WorkWell

[worksafe.vic.gov.au/workwell](http://worksafe.vic.gov.au/workwell)