



## **VWA Mental Health Charter**

Date of Issue  
Last Reviewed  
Controlling Body

March 2019  
March 2019  
VWA Board

**Overview**

Volleyball WA (VWA) places the utmost importance on the health and wellbeing of all its employees and volunteers. A safe workplace that promotes mental health and wellbeing (MHW) is vital for employees and volunteers to be motivated to give their best and to ensure that they are able to deal with the day to day challenges with resilience, optimism and flexibility.

Vision

An engaged workforce that is mentally and physically safe and healthy.

Mission

As an employer, Volleyball Western Australia will collaborate to promote a working environment and safety culture that places a high priority on the health, safety and wellbeing of staff and members.

Our commitment

VWA is committed to achieving this vision by taking a holistic and inclusive approach to supporting mental health at work; promoting positive mental wellbeing, preventing mental injury and illness and where mental injury and illness occurs, taking action to support recovery.

**Application**

This Charter applies to all VWA employees and volunteers.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

VWA'S role and contribution in making this policy work is to:

- Embed mental health and safety risk management processes into occupational health and safety management systems to ensure both physical and mental health and safety is supported systematically and effectively.
- Champion mental health and wellbeing initiatives, led by the VWA Management
- Appoint a Mental Health Coordinator
- Develop a culture, skills and environment that empowers workers to raise and better recognise mental health issues, in order to assist themselves and their colleagues
- Undertake data collection and reporting that improves our understanding of mental health and wellbeing in the sporting sector, to inform continuous improvement in the programs and services offered to employees
- Deliver evidence-based training programs that support the capability of managers and workers (including Health and Safety Representatives) in identifying, preventing, protecting and addressing mental injury and illness, as well as promoting positive mental wellbeing
- Consult, communicate and provide services that support mental health and wellbeing that can be accessed and used by all employees.

## **FACTSHEET FOR STAFF**

### **TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF AND YOUR COLLEAGUES AT WORK**

#### **Stress**

Stress is a normal human response and can be beneficial in short bursts (known as eustress). Stress initially can help us to stay alert and perform optimally. However, prolonged or excessive distress can be damaging to your mental health and wellbeing (MHW) creating a risk of injury, fatigue and burnout. It is important to recognise the signs of stress/negative MHW so that appropriate corrective actions can be taken to respond to, and alleviate stress before it has a negative impact on your MHW and related life/work balance:

**Signs and symptoms** of excessive workplace stress / MHW distress can include, but are not limited to:

- feeling anxious, irritable, or depressed
- apathy, loss of interest in work
- problems sleeping
- fatigue
- absenteeism / presentism
- loss of confidence
- depression
- aggression/violent challenging behaviours
- frustration
- 'you against the world' mentality
- persistent negativity/everything is too hard
- trouble concentrating
- muscle tension or headaches
- stomach problems and nausea
- social withdrawal/disengagement
- tardiness/poor time management
- mood swings
- increased intake or reliance on artificial stimulants
- lack of direction/purpose
- closed/blinkered approach to decision making

If you experience an increase in stress / MHW distress at work, there are a number of things you can do to get yourself back on track:

- find someone to talk to – either a close friend, a trusted colleague or a family member.
- have a conversation with your manager, who is not expected to be a subject matter expert on MHW, to assist in identifying any contributing factors towards stress / MHW distress such as lack of direction, unclear parameters, job design, work schedule, etc. and develop a plan to manage and address the concern(s) in a mutually agreed timeframe.
- prioritise and organise – create a balanced schedule, plan regular breaks, prioritise tasks, break projects into small steps and be willing to compromise, and delegate, if possible.
- employ self-care activities for example mindfulness, resilience, emotional intelligence, take lunch breaks, go for a walk, and set aside time for activities you enjoy.
- learn to separate work and personal / home life issues.
- log an injury / illness / incident report to formalise the issue and initiate an incident investigation process to seek rectification and to help prevent a re-occurrence of the issue.

If you notice any change in your thoughts, feelings or behaviour, or your experience of stress/MHW distress is persistent, or depression is involved, see your GP or health professional to ensure you receive early and appropriate intervention to safeguard your MHW.

### **Looking out for your colleagues**

If you're concerned that someone you work with doesn't seem themselves, having a conversation and checking they're okay can make a real difference. You may notice your colleague is:

- turning up late to work, often off sick or taking unexplained days off
- finding it hard to make decisions, manage multiple tasks or meet deadlines
- losing confidence and having negative thought patterns
- struggling to concentrate
- avoiding colleagues – either socially or in a group situation such as meetings
- acting differently including a change in their mood and/or physical presentation

### **Self-care**

Caring for oneself is just as important as caring for others and doing so can put you in the best position to ensure your positive MHW is maintained. Some suggested self-care activities include:

- take your annual leave each year and make sure you have a proper break from work
- set aside time for things you enjoy, such as exercising, meditation, reading, walking and patting your dog, gardening, listening to music etc.
- get out of the workplace for lunch – even if it's just for a 10-minute walk
- resist the temptation to have your lunch at your workstation
- initiate positive, healthy and rewarding relationships
- think of positive activities that make you smile
- learn not to fixate on life's hiccups and hurdles but have a resilient approach and focus on behaviours and outcomes that you can help control to assist with positive personal outcomes
- never forget the added value and positive impact you bring to your workplace, family and friends
- get moving, regular exercise is a powerful stress reliever, related endorphins are beneficial to one's MHW
- eat well/healthy and get enough sleep
- balance your schedule and prioritise tasks.

**Important Contacts**

Lifeline:	Ph: 13 11 14	<a href="http://www.lifeline.org.au">www.lifeline.org.au</a>
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A national 24-hour telephone and online counselling service for all ages, featuring an online chat service.

Mensline Australia:	Ph: 1300 789 978	<a href="http://www.mensline.org.au">www.mensline.org.au</a>
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A national 24-hour telephone and online counselling service for men.

Suicide Call Back Service:	Ph: 1300 659 467	<a href="http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au">www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au</a>
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A national 24-hour telephone and online counselling service for those feeling suicidal and those caring from someone who is suicidal, or those affected by suicide.

**ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION**

Beyondblue Ph: 1300 224 636	<a href="http://www.beyondblue.org.au">www.beyondblue.org.au</a>
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A national organisation which aims to reduce the prevalence of anxiety and depression in Australia and the stigma surrounding the issues.

Black Dog Institute:	<a href="http://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au">www.blackdoginstitute.org.au</a>
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Expert information on depression and bipolar disorder for the public and professionals, including information on getting help for mood disorders and suggestions on ways of staying well.

BlueBoard:	<a href="http://www.blueboard.anu.edu.au">www.blueboard.anu.edu.au</a>
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An online support group for people affected by depression, bipolar disorder and anxiety disorders. It aims to reduce stigma, and to provide support, hope and opportunities for sharing successful coping strategies. The group is run as a moderated bulletin board with strict protocols to protect safety and privacy.

e-couch:	<a href="http://www.ecouch.anu.edu.au">www.ecouch.anu.edu.au</a>
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A self-help interactive program with modules for depression, generalised anxiety and worry, social anxiety, relationship breakdown, and loss and grief. It provides self-help interventions drawn from cognitive, behavioural and interpersonal therapies as well as relaxation and physical activity.

headspace:	<a href="http://www.headspace.org.au">www.headspace.org.au</a>
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Information, support and advice for young people 12-25, and their families, on general health; mental health and wellbeing; alcohol and other drugs; education, employment and other services. Centres around Australia provide with access to youth-friendly health professionals.

<a href="http://www.mentalhealthonline.org.au">www.mentalhealthonline.org.au</a>
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Information about anxiety disorders, free automated psychological assessment and self-help treatment programs, plus low-cost therapist-assisted programs over 12 weeks.

MoodGYM:	<a href="http://www.moodgym.anu.edu.au">www.moodgym.anu.edu.au</a>
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A popular interactive program which incorporates cognitive-behaviour therapy for depression. MoodGYM has been extensively researched and its effectiveness has been demonstrated in randomised controlled trials.

Partners In Depression:	<a href="http://www.partnersindepression.com.au">www.partnersindepression.com.au</a>
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An innovative information and support group program for people who love, live with or support someone experiencing depression.

### **DRUGS AND SUBSTANCE USE**

Australian Drug Information Network	<a href="http://www.adin.com.au">www.adin.com.au</a>
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A central point of access to quality internet-based alcohol and drug information provided by prominent organisations in Australia and overseas.

headspace	<a href="http://www.headspace.org.au">www.headspace.org.au</a>
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Information, support and advice for young people 12-25, and their families, on general health; mental health and wellbeing; alcohol and other drugs; education, employment and other services. Centres around Australia provide access to youth-friendly health professionals.

### **SUICIDE**

Living Is For Everyone:	<a href="http://www.livingisforeveryone.com.au">www.livingisforeveryone.com.au</a>
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A world-class suicide and self-harm prevention resource, dedicated to providing the best available evidence and resources. The LIFE website is designed for people across the community who are involved in suicide and self-harm prevention activities.

Reach Out:	<a href="http://www.au.reachout.com">www.au.reachout.com</a>
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A national online youth suicide prevention program, featuring information and resources.

Mindframe:	<a href="http://www.mindframe-media.info">www.mindframe-media.info</a>
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National initiative to provide information and resources to help the media and entertainment industries report on suicide, mental health and mental illness.

### **TRAUMA AND GRIEF**

Australian Child & Adolescent Trauma, Loss & Grief Network:	<a href="http://www.earlytraumagrief.anu.edu.au">www.earlytraumagrief.anu.edu.au</a>
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Resources and information for anyone involved in the care of children and youth and interested in the potential impact of trauma, loss and grief experiences.

### **OTHER RESOURCES**

Beacon	<a href="http://www.beacon.anu.edu.au">www.beacon.anu.edu.au</a>
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Provides consumers and professionals with information about e-health online programs for mental health and physical health disorders. Websites throughout the world are reviewed and ranked by a panel of health experts and by consumers.

Mental Health in Multicultural Australia:	<a href="http://www.mhima.org.au">www.mhima.org.au</a>
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An organisation linking a range of state and territory mental health specialists and services, advocacy groups and tertiary institutions to promote the mental health and wellbeing of Australia's diverse communities.

Carers Australia:	<a href="http://www.carersaustralia.com.au">www.carersaustralia.com.au</a>
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The national carer organisation that works to promote the recognition of the important role of carers and to empower carers so that they will be better informed and resourced.

National Rural Health Alliance:	<a href="http://www.ruralhealth.org.au">www.ruralhealth.org.au</a>
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A national body working to improve the health of Australians living in rural and remote areas.