A BETTER YOU AT MQ
LEADER’S GUIDE

STAFF WELLBEING MONTH
12 SEPTEMBER – 9 OCTOBER 2019
MACQUARIE University
The pace of life and its impact on wellbeing

Wellbeing at work is the sum of the physical, psychological, social and relationship parts of our lives. This guide will give you some practical suggestions and tips for how you can support your peers and your team’s wellbeing.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

- Nearly two-thirds of adults are overweight or obese.¹
- One in five people have two or more chronic diseases.¹
- Less than seven per cent of Australians meet the daily vegetable intake requirement. Only one in 15 of us eat a sufficiently healthy amount of vegetables (5–6 serves of 75g) each day.⁷
- Nearly all of us (93 per cent) are walking less than the daily recommended distance for health and wellbeing (10,000 steps per day).³
- One in five women and one in eight men are likely to experience depression in their lifetime and one in three women and one in five men are likely to experience anxiety in their lifetime.⁴
- Almost one in three adults (34 per cent) have high blood pressure. Nearly one quarter of people aged 19 and over (23 per cent) have high blood pressure.⁴
- Two and a half million of us smoke daily. That’s 14 per cent, or one in seven, aged 15 and over, with an additional two per cent smoking irregularly.⁶
- Stress-related absenteeism and presenteeism is costing Australian employers $10.11 billion per year.⁹
- Almost one in six people aged 18 and over (17 per cent) consume an average of more than two standard drinks per day, exceeding the lifetime alcohol risk guideline. Overall, men were three times as likely to be lifetime risk of harm due to alcohol as women (26 and 9.3 per cent respectively).³
By focusing on wellbeing we can make a difference

THE LEADER MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

It has long been recognised that line managers are crucial to employee engagement, wellbeing and resilience.

As a leader, your behaviour and your actions can set a positive tone and culture, bringing multiple benefits.

**Focusing on the health and wellbeing of staff:**
- increases staff morale, satisfaction and motivation
- improves organisational image, which has the flow-on effect of reducing turnover and attracting new employees
- increases productivity and reduces economic costs.

**An unhealthy and hazardous workplace:**
- increases risk of injury and illness
- increases absenteeism and staff turnover costs
- reduces productivity
- reduces organisational morale and health.

Where organisations are focused on wellness, employees are:
- five times more likely to be engaged
- three times more likely to stay in the first year
- two and a half times more likely to say their organisations were creative and innovative
- three times more likely to identify their organisation as a high or above-average performer.10
How can you make a difference?

We can get so caught up in the everyday pressures of work and life, we can often lose sight of our wellbeing.

**WHAT CAN YOU DO TO ENCOURAGE WELLBEING AT WORK?**

Here are a few practical ideas you can do for yourself and with your team to focus on wellbeing in the workplace. This doesn’t need to be difficult – just pick a few things to build into your daily and weekly routine at work, and remember: lead by example.

### GET ACTIVE AT WORK

- Manager’s to consider and accommodate individual difference.
  - Schedule standing or walking meetings
  - If your team has tracking devices, set up a team step challenge with a weekly goal
  - Take it in turns to volunteer for the team coffee run
  - Join the gym and encourage your team to take an exercise class at lunchtime
  - Follow the 20-20-20 rule: every 20 minutes, stand for 20 seconds, and look about 6 metres beyond your computer monitor
  - Encourage walks at lunchtime, and join your staff. As leaders, use these walks to connect outside the four walls of the office
  - Use the stairs rather than taking the lifts
  - Do stretches and exercises at your workstation
  - Walk to meetings instead of scheduling them at your office

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<th>OTHER TIPS AND IDEAS</th>
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<td>- Have a bulletin board of wellness tips, posters and reminders</td>
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<td>- Install a thank you board and look at ways to recognise your team</td>
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<td>- Find opportunities to give positive feedback, whether face-to-face or sending a complimentary email. Recognition goes a long way to boosting morale</td>
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<td>- Practice gratitude – a personal thank you or sending an email and leaving a note on a colleague’s/staff member’s desk will go a long way to make staff feel appreciated and cared for</td>
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<td>- Support team members in setting and meeting work development goals</td>
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<td>- Continuous learning and development is good for wellbeing. Encourage your team to look at LinkedIn Learning for relevant online training and ask members to share what they have learnt at team meetings</td>
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<td>- Include wellbeing topics in team meetings and, when possible, invite a guest speaker, eg a trainer from the gym or an expert from MQ Health</td>
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<td>- Understand each team member’s challenges to create a balanced work/home life</td>
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<td>- Share ideas for healthy snacks at work</td>
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<td>- Use your two days leave a year for community volunteering and get involved in a team volunteering activity in the community. This is a great opportunity to do team building with your team and do good for others, which is good for your wellbeing</td>
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CREATE A MENTALLY HEALTHY WORKPLACE AND CHECK IN REGULARLY WITH YOUR TEAM

How staff are treated and managed on a day-to-day basis is central to their mental wellbeing and engagement.

As a leader, you are crucial in supporting wellbeing, identifying early signs of distress and initiating early intervention.

If you have noticed that one of your colleagues is not travelling well, here are some simple steps to start a conversation:

1. Ask: ‘Are you OK?’ – help staff open up by asking: ‘How are you going?’
2. Listen without judgement – take what they say seriously.
3. Encourage action – urge them to commit to doing one thing that might help them.
4. Check in later – if they’re really struggling, follow up soon and also encourage them to seek additional help (e.g., Employee Assistance Program).

As the leader, you can seek help from our EAP provider Benestar and involve your HR client team.

Take any suggestion that a colleague may be suicidal very seriously. Encourage them to get support immediately.

Contact emergency services. Dial 9999 or 0000 from your office phone or Lifeline Australia - 13 11 14 (Crisis Support and Suicide Prevention).

Remember to look after yourself

Take time to assess your own wellbeing requirements and make a plan for your own self-care. Sharing your plan with your team is a valuable way to lead by example.

“Self-care is not selfish. You cannot serve from an empty vessel.”

Eleanor Brown, health and lifestyle speaker and author

For more resources for leaders and staff visit our website staff.mq.edu.au/work/wellbeing
HOW CAN WE SUPPORT YOU AT MQ?

There are a range of services available on campus to help proactively manage your wellbeing.

**SPORT AND AQUATIC CENTRE**

E: macsport@mq.edu.au  
T: 9850 7636  
W: macq.it/sport

Get active, keep fit, make use of our wonderful facilities on campus:  
- Indoor and outdoor heated pools  
- Fitness classes  
- Staff membership rates – save 30 per cent

**CENTRE FOR EMOTIONAL HEALTH**

E: ehc.admin@mq.edu.au  
T: 9850 8711  
W: macq.it/ceh

You can achieve emotional health by learning to manage anxiety, depression and other emotional issues through our therapy services:  
- Little Kids, Cool Kids and Cool Kids Chilled (Teens)  
- Study Without Stress  
- Ageing Wisely

**EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

Benestar  
E: benestar@mq.edu.au  
T: 1300 360 364  
W: benestar.com

Six free confidential counselling sessions are available to staff and their immediate family. Support is available face-to-face, by phone or online:  
- Self-assessments – stress test, financial fitness test  
- BeneHub resource portal: benestar.com/user/login?current-/node/25  
- MyCoach for individuals and leaders  
- staff.mq.edu.au/work/wellbeing/employee-assistance-program

**MQ HEALTH**

E: info@mqhealth.org.au  
T: 9812 2990  
W: mqhealth.org.au/heal

Access to experts on campus:  
- Macquarie University Hospital  
- Cardiology clinic  
- Exercise physiology clinic  
- General practice  
- Haematology clinic  
- Healthy weight clinic  
- Kidney and hypertension clinic  
- Lymphoedema clinic  
- Neuropsychology clinic  
- Nutrition and dietetics clinic  
- Ophthalmology clinic  
- Physiotherapy clinic  
- Plastic and reconstructive surgery  
- Preventive health clinic  
- Psychology clinic  
- Shoulder and elbow clinic  
- Speech and hearing clinic  
- Urology clinic

**HEALTH INSURANCE: MEDIBANK**

E: info@mqhealth.org.au  

Find out more about our preferred health provider:  
- Nine per cent discount for all MQ staff  
  - book an appointment with our Medibank consultant to find out more.  
- Do your own health risk assessment online today  
- Look at the Live Better portal for some great resources: mq.medibank.com.au

**STUDENT WELLBEING**

E: wellbeing@mq.edu.au  
T: 9850 7497  
W: macq.it/studentwellbeing

For resources and information to support students visit the website and for the WellbeingWISE online course on mental health visit: macq.it/studentcounselling

**SUSTAINABILITY**

E: carewise@mq.edu.au  
T: 9580 4771  
W: macq.it/sustainability

Be good to yourself, to others and the planet and help us build a better future:  
- Community volunteering (Staff members receive two days volunteer leave per year – why not use it?)  
- Sign up for the bush care session and help preserve our campus.

**MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY HEARING**

E: hearing@mq.edu.au  
T: 9850 8709  
W: mq.edu.au/hearinghealth

Macquarie University Hearing is a global hub of hearing and hearing-related research, education and engagement.

**MQ HEALTH SPEECH AND HEARING CLINIC**

E: shc@mqhealth.org.au  
T: 9850 2900  
W: mqhealth.org.au/heal

To make an appointment contact the MQ Health Speech and Hearing Clinic located in the Australian Hearing Hub.

**STAFF WELLBEING PROGRAM ‘A BETTER YOU AT MQ’**

E: abetteryouatMQ@MQ.edu.au  
T: 9850 9716  
W: mq.edu.au/wellbeing

Look out for our health and wellbeing series of seminars and activities throughout the year aimed at sharing wellbeing advice.

For more information about our wellbeing program and for all upcoming events please visit our website.
References