

Australian Medical Association Limited

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Seek help on World Mental Health Day and beyond

With more than two in five Australians over age 16 struggling with mental health at some time in their life, the Australian Medical Association is encouraging people to seek help this World Mental Health Day rather than “pushing through”.

AMA president Professor Steve Robson said prevention is key in reducing mental illness and this starts with people focusing on and prioritising their own mental health.

“World Mental Health Day is a reminder to us all to check in on our mental wellbeing, especially after such a difficult few years,” Professor Robson said.

“But it shouldn’t just be on one day of the year, because the stresses of daily life, the impact of the pandemic and so on can have a cumulative effect and lead to a deterioration in our mental health.

“Some simple things you can do during times of stress to maintain good mental health include maintaining regular exercise, connecting with family and friends, minimising use of alcohol and getting regular sleep.

“People should not hesitate to reach out to their GP who can provide much-needed care and treatment and, if necessary, coordinate with mental health professionals to help you find the right support pathway.”

Professor Robson said doctors also remained under pressure with heavy workloads, pent up demand from the pandemic lockdowns, more complex and chronic patients presenting and hospital logjams, all posing stress factors for doctors.

“I’m committed to making doctors’ mental health and wellbeing a feature of my presidency and I want to remind doctors to seek support when they need it and to recognise the signs of burn out and anxiety.

“We’re enhancing the AMA Drs4Drs service which has been developed by the medical profession for the medical profession so that every doctor in Australia can speak to a peer who understands the pressures they’re under.”

The Drs4Drs 24/7 helpline is 1300 374 377 (1300 Dr4Drs). Lifeline offers 24/7 crisis support for all Australians on 13 11 44.

In addition, Doctors Health Services Pty Ltd (DrHS) also has a [confidential telehealth service](#) specifically for doctors and medical students who are struggling with their mental health.

It is also Mental Health Awareness Month, which is recognised every year to help reduce the stigma that persists around people with mental health problems and to normalise talking about mental health and share resources to support your mental well-being.

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