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NEW FREE, CONFIDENTIAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELLING SERVICE FOR DOCTORS AND MEDICAL STUDENTS

Doctors and medical students around Australia now have access to free, confidential telehealth mental health services through the new Drs4Drs Support Service, which has been established by Doctors’ Health Services Limited (DrHS).

“While we encourage all doctors and medical students to have their own GP as their first point of contact for any health problem, we know that some don’t have a regular GP, may be geographically isolated, or are reluctant for many reasons to discuss mental health concerns with others,” AMA President and DrHS Board member, Dr Tony Bartone, said today.

“The availability of a confidential, non-judgmental service that makes it much easier to access mental health support, particularly for those located in rural areas, is a very important step forward, particularly with the impact that the COVID-19 crisis is having on frontline healthcare workers.”

The Drs4Drs Support Service provides crisis support as well as non-urgent mental health support, and complements services provided by the network of State-based doctors’ health advisory services that are also funded by DrHS.

DrHS Chair, David Brennan, said that corporate mental health provider, Converge International, will deliver the Drs4Drs Support Service, deploying mental health professionals who are experienced in helping people work through workplace issues, conflict management, relationship concerns, financial problems, legal matters, and lifestyle issues.

“Converge International was able to demonstrate significant experience in this area and will use a team of psychologists, counsellors, and social workers who are experienced in providing support to medical professionals,” Mr Brennan said.

“All services funded by DrHS are completely confidential. DrHS does not receive any information that could identify anyone using this service, as we appreciate patient privacy is paramount, and we provide the option of anonymity.”

DrHS is a subsidiary of the AMA, established with funding from the Medical Board of Australia to provide health and wellbeing support to medical students and doctors.

The Drs4Drs Support Service is funded by a grant from the Federal Department of Health, allowing participants to have up to three free telehealth counselling sessions.

Accessing the Drs4Drs Support Service is simple. Doctors and medical students can call 1300 374 377 (1300 DR4 DRS) or visit Drs4Drs.com.au - a national one-stop-shop for wellness and support resources for the medical profession.

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