

# Self-care for health professionals

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# Self-care: why is it important

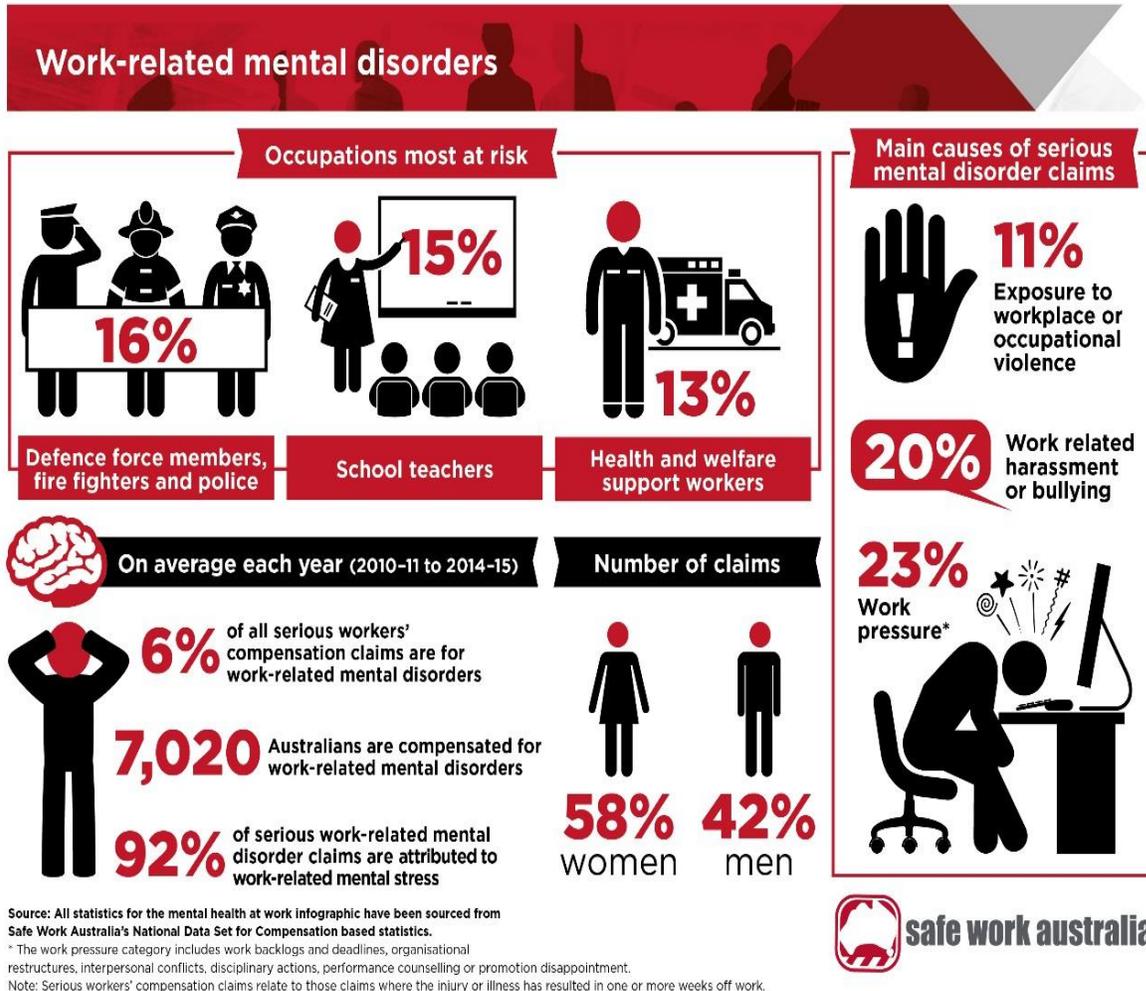


# Put on Your Mask First – The Safety of Self Care

*“In case of emergency, air masks will drop the ceiling. If you are traveling with a minor, please put on your own mask before helping the minor.”*



# Our increased risk: a reason to take action



13% of health and welfare support workers are at risk of work-related mental health disorders.

58% of claims are made by women.

6% of claims are for work-related mental disorders and 92% of those are due to work-related mental stress.

11% reported exposure to workplace or occupational violence, 20% reported work related harassment or bullying and 23% reported work pressure.

Safe Work Australia, 2018



# Psychological Resilience

- Resilience = exposure to high stress, whilst also feeling very well
- This is not just about temperament or personality but is modified by how you process the stress and the actions you take
- Resilience is not about removing stress... But finding ways to care for yourself under stress

**Wellbeing**

|                        |             | <b>Good</b>   | <b>Poor</b>   |
|------------------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Stress Exposure</b> | <b>High</b> | Resilient     | Poor Expected |
|                        | <b>Low</b>  | Good Expected | Vulnerable    |



# Self-awareness: a key to self-care

Connect with why you entered the helping profession - purpose/meaning of the work

Understand which work situations may be particularly difficult for you

Be aware of your own adaptive resources and coping responses – what are they?

Develop awareness of early signals of distress

Identify small ways in which you can take control and in areas in which you would like to change – where can you start?



# Components of self-care



# Creating your self-care plan

## Daily Self Care Plan

| Physical | Spiritual | Professional | Psychological | Social |
|----------|-----------|--------------|---------------|--------|
|          |           |              |               |        |

## My Top Three Positive Coping Strategies

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

## My Emergency Self Care Plan

| Helpful (To Do)                                    | Harmful (To Avoid)   |
|--|--|
| What are your top 5 emergency self-care practices? | List 5 practice, people, places or things to avoid during times of crisis or stress. |



# Self-care in a unique time – some thoughts and tips



## DON'T ISOLATE

- Stay connected
- Ask for support
- If possible participate in social activities
- Avoid withdrawal from people in your household



## STAY GROUNDED

- Stick to a daily routine
- Break large jobs into smaller manageable tasks
- Find activities that make you feel better (e.g., reading, cooking, playing with kids/pets)
- Allow yourself to feel what you feel when you feel it



## TAKE CARE OF YOUR HEALTH

- Get sufficient sleep and rest
- Avoid alcohol/drugs as worsens depression, anxiety
- Exercise regularly, eat a well balanced diet
- Reduce stress and make time for rest, relaxation (e.g., meditation, yoga, deep breathing exercises)

If time poor, consider self-care in small snippets  
e.g. brief exercise, 5 minutes of music

Problem solve how to best manage risk in the home if you or family members are worried about others being at risk

Use of online resources if there are limited options in being able to leave house/work for self care

Connect with work values and stay informed if having ongoing concerns about own safety



# The Barriers to Self-Care

Lack of time:  
competing  
demands for  
your time

Not prioritising  
self-care

Taking pride  
in “being  
tough”

Unsupportive  
work  
environment

Feeling isolated

Mood issues  
– depressed  
or anxious

Disconnected  
from own values  
/ sense of  
purpose

Stigma/self-  
stigma about  
what you are  
experiencing “I  
should be  
coping”



# Next Steps

## 'Call a Psychologist'

- Provided by Monash Health psychologists
- A wellbeing rather than a clinical service

## EAP

- External providers
- 1-4 sessions

## Private psychology/ psychiatry

- If treatment is indicated, a referral and assistance in connecting to the right private provider(s) will be given through Call a Psychologist

- Confidentiality & Privacy
- Caring consideration of your circumstance (home and work)

