beyondblue Professional Education to Aged Care (PEAC) Program

www.beyondblue.org.au  1300 22 4636
Older people who require a high level of support to continue living in their own homes are twice as likely to experience depression compared to older people who need less support.

In addition, the rate of depression among older people living in residential care is believed to be much higher than the general population – around 35 per cent, or one in three residents.

The rate of anxiety conditions in these groups is unconfirmed, but believed to be even higher than depression.

It was these statistics, coupled with the limited training options, which led beyondblue to develop the Professional Education to Aged Care (PEAC) Program for aged care staff.
Managing depression and anxiety in aged care

Identifying and managing depression and anxiety in the aged care environment is challenging.

Some common challenges include:

- Many of the symptoms associated with depression, anxiety and dementia are common to all three conditions. This makes identifying any one of these conditions difficult. (Dementia is also a risk factor for developing depression.)

- Specific screening tools are required to identify the presence of depressive symptoms in older people. Limited screening tools exist for anxiety conditions.

- To date, there has been little research into anxiety in older people.

- There may be reduced effectiveness of medications in older people with depression and/or anxiety and dementia owing to their existing cognitive impairment.

However, effective strategies do exist. The PEAC Program explores evidence-informed strategies to effectively care for older people with depression and anxiety – both in residential and community care settings.

About the PEAC Program

*beyondblue* has developed two workshops that make up the Professional Education to Aged Care (PEAC) Program:

1. Understanding depression and anxiety in older people in residential care.
2. Understanding depression and anxiety in older people in the community.

The first workshop is for staff working within residential care settings, including direct care staff, registered staff, supervisors and managers. The community care workshop is for the broad range of staff employed by community care agencies who provide care into a person’s home, including direct care staff, supervisors and care managers.
Both workshops are three hours in duration and provide participants with:

- a greater understanding of depression and anxiety in older people
- an understanding of how their work can impact upon a resident or client’s mental health
- strategies for working with residents or clients who have depression and/or anxiety
- an understanding of the process for reporting their concerns
- an understanding of screening tools and referral/pathways to care
- an understanding of effective management of older people with depression and/or anxiety and/or dementia.

“Much more aware of depression, anxiety and dementia – the overlap and the differences.”

- Registered nurse, PEAC residential workshop, Hobart TAS

“Well presented and comprehensive – nice balance of activities – great for my role in the community.”

- Care giver, PEAC community pilot, Balwyn VIC

“I enjoyed this session very much. I have never had a session on this subject before in 30+ years of nursing.”

- Registered nurse, PEAC residential workshop, Altona VIC
Enquiries and bookings

*beyondblue* has partnered with several aged care training licensees to deliver the PEAC Program to the sector.

To enquire about the workshops or to make a booking, please contact one of the organisations providing training in your state or territory.

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**Leading Aged Services Australia (LASA)**
[formerly ACCV & ACQI]
(03) 9805 9400 or (07) 3725 5555

**McCarthy Psychology Services**
1300 659 681

**Wise Care**
1300 785 110

For general enquiries relating to *beyondblue*’s aged care educational projects please visit [www.beyondblue.org.au/agedcare](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/agedcare)
Where to find more information

**beyondblue**
www.beyondblue.org.au
Learn more about anxiety and depression, or talk it through with our support service.

📞 1300 22 4636
✉️ Email or 🤖 chat to us online at www.beyondblue.org.au/getsupport

**mindhealthconnect**
www.mindhealthconnect.org.au
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