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# PEOPLE at work



beyondblue  
Depression. Anxiety.

ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015

# People at work

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*beyondblue* works hard to improve the mental health of Australian workers and promote the benefits of mentally healthy workplaces.

**Untreated mental health conditions cost Australian businesses at least \$10.9 billion annually in absenteeism, reduced productivity and compensation claims.**

Research shows one in five workers is likely to experience a mental health issue every year. If employers aren't investing in mental health in the workplace, they are missing out on the benefits of improved productivity, increased staff engagement and standing out as an employer of choice.

# Heads Up

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Supported by the Commonwealth Government, Heads Up is a joint initiative of *beyondblue* and the Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance (MHWA), aimed at improving the mental health of people in Australian workplaces, large and small.

Launched in May 2014, Heads Up is underpinned by PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC) research, which found that for every dollar employers invest in effective workplace mental health strategies, there is an average return on investment of \$2.30.

The Heads Up website provides a one-stop-shop for organisations and workers to access practical information and resources to help them manage a broad range of workplace mental health issues.

**In 2014/15, there were nearly 215,000 unique visits to the Heads Up website: a total in excess of 300,000 since the program launched in May 2014.**

By 30 June 2015,  
Heads Up had received

7,500

registrations with  
requests to receive  
information about mental  
health in the workplace  
and new resources.

In 2014/15, several new features were added, including:

- › Interactive tools to calculate the potential return on investment for implementing mental health strategies in the workplace, and to weigh up the pros and cons of telling your employer that you have a mental health condition.
- › Videos showing:
  - › How to disclose a mental health condition in the workplace
  - › Good return-to-work practices
  - › Interviews with employees with a mental health condition
  - › Interviews with employers and industry leaders about the importance of mentally healthy workplaces.
- › Information on suicide and the workplace, including information and advice for managers supporting an employee at risk of suicide.

Heads Up is also supported by a national engagement strategy.



During 2014/15,  
the engagement  
team spoke about  
Heads Up at  
**133 events**  
across Australia,  
reaching  
**14,000 people.**

These events included conferences, seminars and business breakfasts, in association with both the *beyondblue* National Roadshow and NAB.

As part of the *beyondblue*  
National Roadshow,

**18**  
**business**  
**breakfasts**

were held across Australia for  
business owners and leaders,  
promoting mentally healthy  
workplaces and free  
Heads Up resources.

The biggest event was held at  
the Melbourne Town Hall with

**700**  
**attendees.**

*beyondblue* also partnered with NAB to deliver **10 Heads Up business breakfasts** to NAB's small business customers in Southern New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, with **700 people** attending.

NAB recognises that it is not only important for NAB to strive to be a mentally healthy workplace, but it is also important for its customers to do the same. Of those small business customers attending, **93 per cent** indicated they were **'likely'** or **'very likely'** to implement at least one strategy to make their workplace more mentally healthy.

In addition to the *beyondblue* National Roadshow and NAB business breakfasts, *beyondblue* engaged directly with hundreds of employers across Australia in a range of other ways, including visits to offices, worksites and mine sites, and via webinars, to promote the benefits of mentally healthy workplaces. This included a partnership with the Business Council of Australia and the Diversity Council of Australia to introduce Heads Up to their members in Sydney, Perth and Melbourne.

*beyondblue* continues to work directly with big business to support their mental health strategies, including NAB, Lend Lease, Jetstar, BHP, Sodexo, Linfox and Coles.

*beyondblue* also ensures that engagement activities reach all businesses, particularly small businesses, through collaboration with peak industry associations including the Australian Chamber of Commerce, the Council of Small Business Australia [COSBOA], state and territory-based business chambers, unions including the Australian Workers' Union (AWU), the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU) Pulp and Paper Division, the Transport Workers' Union (TWU) and a range of other industry associations.

Visit [heads-up.org.au](http://heads-up.org.au)

[linkedin.com/company/  
heads-up-australia](https://www.linkedin.com/company/heads-up-australia)

Twitter [#HeadsUpAu](https://twitter.com/HeadsUpAu)

## Media and marketing

In addition to *beyondblue* generating stories across traditional media outlets nationally, Heads Up was promoted on *beyondblue's* social media platforms and supported with advertising on TV, outdoor and airport terminal billboards, and online.

**TNS Research in April 2015 showed the Heads Up initiative is gaining traction in the business community.**

Ignoring mental  
health costs  
Australian business

**\$10.9 billion**

a year, but for every  
\$1 invested in mental  
health initiatives,  
there's an average

**ROI of \$2.30**

88% of  
employees

believe it's important to  
work in a **physically** safe  
workplace and

76% agree

their workplace fits  
that description

91% of  
employees

believe it's important to  
work in a **mentally** healthy  
workplace but only

52% agree

their workplace fits  
that description

# David's Story

Jetstar CEO



After attending the launch for Heads Up in 2014, I knew the initiative could help Jetstar become the most mentally healthy workplace it can be.

While Jetstar has had various programs in place over the years to protect and improve the wellbeing of our teams, before Heads Up we didn't have an overarching workplace mental health strategy.

To create this kind of strategy, we established a working group which meets monthly and a steering committee which regularly checks in with the working group's leader.

This group used the free and simple 'Action Plan' tool on the Heads Up website to create a practical mental health plan tailored to the needs of our staff.

To make sure we knew these needs, we surveyed all of our staff beforehand to gauge the issues they faced across all aspects of the business.

In addition, we launched a mental health Yammer site, a private social network where team members can discuss their mental health experiences and share ideas.

The first step in our 'Action Plan' was to raise awareness of depression, anxiety and suicide prevention among our staff and make mental health resources readily available to them. We put *beyondblue* and Heads Up booklets and information sheets in our staff rooms and hung posters throughout workplaces.

We launched a permanent mental health intranet page, which links to a wide range of information, including some specifically tailored to different roles within the business.

To help the team support their colleagues when they are struggling, we are looking to extend the successful 'Trust Pilots' peer support program for pilots to other parts of the business, including our customer service teams and cabin crew.

We are also currently conducting a full review of our HR and health and wellbeing policies, to ensure they all incorporate mental health.

Though we have a long way to go, it's clear to see that our commitment to promoting good mental health among Jetstar team members through Heads Up is already having a profound impact.

Anecdotally, more of our team mates now feel comfortable disclosing mental health conditions, accessing support if they are doing it tough or offering support to colleagues.

**Our involvement in the Heads Up initiative has helped us put mental health at the forefront of our wellbeing program, which will benefit staff and help them give their best at work.**

# National Workplace Program

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*beyondblue's* National Workplace Program [NWP] is an awareness, early intervention and prevention program designed specifically for workplace settings, which aims to increase the knowledge and skills of staff and managers to address mental health conditions in the workplace.

The National Workplace Program continued to be delivered successfully under license by Davidson Trahaire Corpsych.



**of senior leaders —  
CEOs, managing directors,  
small business owners  
and human resources  
managers — now agree that  
'effective leaders must focus  
on mental health'**

## Key statistics

### National Workplace Program

- › Senior Leaders advising that they definitely run mental health awareness training in their workplace has **doubled to 30%** since the campaign began
- › Information on company intranet pages about mental health, as advised by Senior Leaders, has also more than **doubled to 32%**
- › To the proposition 'organisational leaders who are conscious of the mental health of their team are respected', positive responses by senior leaders have **increased by 23% to 79%** since the launch

### Heads Up website

- › **7,500 people registered** to receive information and new resources
- › There are **3,610 members** of the LinkedIn Heads Up page

There have been

**300,000**

**visits to the  
Heads Up website**  
since its launch in  
May 2014

Visit [headsup.org.au](http://headsup.org.au)

# New and ongoing initiatives

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## First Responders

The *beyondblue* First Responders Program was established in 2014 to improve the mental health of emergency service workers and reduce their risk of suicide.

The program focuses on police, ambulance, fire and rescue, and state emergency services workers, and includes former or retired workers, volunteers and their families.

Because of the nature of their jobs and the situations to which they are exposed, first responders are at higher risk than the general population of experiencing depression, anxiety and PTSD; they are also more likely to die by suicide.

Work-related risk factors for first responders include: shift work, long working hours, repeated exposure to death, trauma and violence, access to means to suicide, difficult interactions with members of the public, high professional expectations, strong cultural pressures and traditionally stigmatising attitudes towards mental health conditions and suicide.

Many first responder organisations have acknowledged these issues and have put programs in place to support the mental health of their workforces. However, more needs to be done to create workplace cultures where workers feel safe and comfortable to seek support when they are struggling.

**To identify gaps and priority areas, a national audit of existing mental health programs provided by employers of first responders was completed in December 2014 involving police, fire, ambulance and SES agencies across Australia.**

In the coming year, *beyondblue* will develop a good practice model for creating mentally healthy workplaces based on the findings of the audit and stakeholder consultations.

We will also conduct an Australian-first, national research study to identify the prevalence of mental health conditions among first responders and what men and women on the frontline need to do to protect their mental health.

## Toolbox talks

These resources aim to equip union delegates with the skills and confidence to deliver onsite ‘toolbox talks’ to their members focusing on mental health in the workplace, and support members who may be experiencing a mental health condition.

The resources, which were developed in consultation with the Australian Workers’ Union, the Transport Workers’ Union and the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union: Pulp and Paper Division, were completed this year, to be launched in late 2015.

# Doctors' Mental Health Program

The *beyondblue* Doctors' Mental Health Program [bbDMHP] aims to improve the mental health of Australian medical students and doctors. Doctors experience a range of risk factors for anxiety and depression including heavy workloads, long working hours, shift work, work/effort imbalance, abuse or mistreatment from patients, and home/work stress.

Poor mental health among doctors and medical students has far-reaching effects. As well as the personal ramifications for the individual and those close to them, colleagues, peers and patients can also be affected.

Following the deaths of several trainee doctors in Victoria, *beyondblue* established a group comprising representatives from *beyondblue*, the Australian Medical Association (Victoria), the Australian Medical Students' Association, Monash Health and mental health advocate Dr Helen Schultz, to bring a focus to the issue and push for action by colleges, peak bodies, hospitals and health services.

In June 2015, *beyondblue* convened a working dinner focused on doctors' mental health, involving Victorian hospital CEOs and Chief Medical Officers, representatives from medical training colleges and the Victorian Minister for Health, The Hon. Jill Hennessy.

To cater specifically to the needs of doctors, *beyondblue* has a dedicated page on the Heads Up website.

Visit [headsup.org.au/doctors](https://headsup.org.au/doctors)

There have been times when I suspected I was struggling with depression, but I didn't seek support because I was afraid of the repercussions on my work as a cardiologist.

# Geoff's story



This definitely occurred a few years ago, at a time when I was separating from my wife and had recently taken on a specialist job role.

Gradually, I lost interest in the things I loved, like swimming, and withdrew from people in my life. It was a struggle to get out of bed, and even very simple tasks seemed near impossible.

I felt trapped in despair and began considering suicide, especially in the early hours of the morning. I didn't want to die, but I didn't want to live with the painful feelings I was experiencing.

For around two years, I didn't open up to anyone about this or get help. I was afraid that I would lose my job and my practice if word got out, due to the stigma attached to a depression diagnosis among medical professionals.

It took completing *beyondblue's* online checklist, which measured distress, to realise that my distress levels were out of control and that I needed support urgently. I saw my GP who reconnected me with my psychiatrist and recommended I take time off work.

I took time off work although I didn't feel supported in this by all of my employers. It staggered me to think how little some people in the medical profession understand about mental illness.

After six months of treatment, I had recovered significantly and was able to appreciate my life again. This included simple joys like long swims and the sound of my two daughters laughing.

Returning to work had been important to me because it's a great part of my life's purpose, to help contribute to people achieving their best possible health. It seems strange to me now that I denied myself that very opportunity because I was afraid what others would think of me.

It's so important that *beyondblue* is working to break down the stigma around depression and anxiety among doctors, and make it easier for medical professionals to get help when needed.

**Seeking support early will help medical professionals recover more quickly, so they can get on with their lifesaving work.**

# New funded research

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## Men@Work

The Men@Work project, which started in March 2015, aims to use research evidence to develop and test a new type of e-mental health program for men in the workplace.

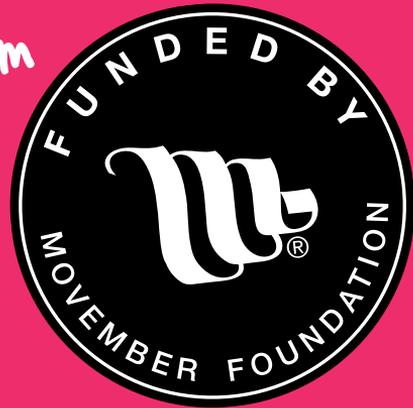
Organisations will pilot an integrated range of e-resources for male workers and their managers, including a smartphone application, a personalised mental health action plan and an e-health training program to assist managers in the workplace.

It is run in consultation with the Black Dog Institute, with oversight from the principal investigators, Dr Sam Harvey, Professor Nicholas Glozier and Professor Rafael A. Calvo.

Men@Work is funded with

**\$3,400,000**

in donations from  
The Movember  
Foundation.



*beyondblue* Support Service

**1300 22 4636 — 24/7**

**Web chat at [beyondblue.org.au](https://beyondblue.org.au)**

**— 3pm to 12am AEST**

Find help online

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Get involved

**[beyondblue.org.au/get-involved](https://beyondblue.org.au/get-involved)**

