

When the Cowpat Hits the Windmill

Mental Health Guide

Updated June 2019

the future of rural health

About us

National Rural Health Student Network

The National Rural Health Student Network (NRHSN) represents the future of rural health in Australia. It has more than 9,000 members who belong to 28 university Rural Health Clubs from all states and territories.

It is Australia's only multidisciplinary student health network, bringing together people studying medicine, nursing and allied health, encouraging them to pursue rural health careers.

The NRHSN aims to:

- ▶ provide a voice for students who are interested in improving health outcomes for rural and remote Australians; and
- ▶ promote rural health careers to students and encourage students who are interested in practising in rural health care.

The NRHSN and its Rural Health Clubs offer rural experience weekends, career information sessions and professional development activities as well as providing a social base for students at university and when on rural placement.

The student network leaders also advocate on behalf of health students of all disciplines - including opportunities for more rural placements and training support.

Rural Workforce Agencies

The NRHSN is an initiative of the Australian Government Department of Health administered as a consortium by the Rural Workforce Agencies. The NSW Rural Doctors Network is the RWA managing the NRHSN on behalf of the Consortium.

Each Australian State and the Northern Territory is served by a government-designated RWA that works to improve access to high-quality healthcare for people in remote, regional and rural Australia. RWAs do this through a range of programs, services and initiatives that attract, recruit, retain and support GPs, nurses and allied health professionals in rural and remote communities.

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Rural Health Clubs

1. ARMS	Australian National University, ACT
2. AURHA	Adelaide University, SA
3. BREATHHE	University of Newcastle, NSW
4. BUSHFIRE	Bond University, QLD
5. CARAH	Charles Darwin University, NT in assoc with Flinders University, SA
6. CRANC	University of Canberra, ACT
7. FURHS	Flinders University, SA
8. HOPE4HEALTH	Griffith University, QLD
9. KRASH	Notre Dame University, Broome, WA
10. LARHC	La Trobe University, Bendigo, VIC
11. MIRAGE	University of Sydney, NSW
12. MURHC	Macquarie University, NSW
13. NERCHA	University of New England, NSW
14. NOMAD	Deakin University, VIC
15. OUTLOOK	University of Melbourne, VIC
16. RAHMS	University of New South Wales, NSW
17. RHINO	James Cook University, QLD
18. Rh+	Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW
19. RHUWS	Western Sydney University, NSW
20. ROUNDS	Notre Dame University, Sydney, NSW
21. ROUSTAH	University of South Australia, SA
22. RUSTICA	University of Tasmania, TAS
23. SHARP	University of Wollongong, NSW
24. SPINRPHX	Combined Universities of Western Australia, WA
25. STARRH	Charles Darwin University, NT including Flinders University, NT
26. TROHPIQ	University of Queensland, QLD
27. WAALHIIBE	Combined Universities of Western Australia, WA
28. WILDFIRE	Monash University, VIC

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Looking after your mental health and wellbeing is always important

...especially when you are in a new environment or facing new challenges. What can you do to stay on top of things? Are there some steps you can take? This guide can help you with some useful tips and information.

Why 'When the Cowpat Hits the Windmill'?

Living in rural or remote areas can present challenges, but it shouldn't limit your ability to enjoy and get the most out of your life.¹

You won't find many people in the country throwing cowpats at windmills. But if you do see dung being flung at a windmill – take cover, because somebody is not happy! Before you get to the stage where you feel like throwing cowpats or anything else at a windmill, remember this guide!

Some other useful resources:

- ▶ See Sections 8, 9 and 10 for a comprehensive list of mental health resources and places to access help.
- ▶ [Services for Australian Remote and Rural Allied Health's Transition Toolkit to Rural and Remote Practice](#)
- ▶ The [NRHSN Rural Placement Guide](#)

¹ Living in a rural or remote area. Online article. Sourced from au.reachout.com/Living-in-a-rural-or-remote-area.

Section 1: Keeping track of your mental health - look, listen, act

The first step to looking after your mental health and wellbeing is recognising if there is a problem. Do you know the signs to look out for that might indicate your mental health is not as good as it could be?

You might notice that you:

- ▶ withdraw from your normal activities or don't enjoy them as much as you did before
- ▶ find it an effort to keep up with your normal activities and relationships
- ▶ find university, placements or work more difficult than usual
- ▶ start thinking bad thoughts about yourself, such as you are a failure or worthless
- ▶ worry about what other people think or feel hopeless about the future
- ▶ find it difficult to make decisions or concentrate
- ▶ have some problems with your close relationships or find yourself being irritable
- ▶ keep worrying about the little things
- ▶ don't want to meet up with friends
- ▶ start having physical health problems, such as headaches, churning gut, tiredness, appetite change, infections or muscle pains
- ▶ have ideas that you can't get out of your head
- ▶ find it difficult to sleep or sleep more than usual
- ▶ feel more irritable, overwhelmed, guilty or miserable.

Noticing changes in others

If you are worried about a friend, consider whether you can see any of these signs in them or ask them if they recognise any for themselves. You can help by having open and honest conversations with them about how they are feeling and encourage them to seek professional help if needed. It is important to listen and to remember that what they don't say can be just as important as what they do say.

The [Beyond Blue anxiety and depression checklist \(K10\)](#) is a useful resource for you, your mates and colleagues.

You may also like to look at the Black Dog Institute who have a number of useful resources for health professionals, including a [Patient Health Questionnaire](#).

You could also suggest some of the resources found in Sections 8 and 9!

Section 2: Adapting to your new town and your position within it

Moving to a new town during placement provides a great opportunity to integrate within that community and take on a new role. Health professionals in rural areas must learn how to juggle living in close proximity to their patients; there is an art to being able to maintain patient confidentiality when you're also playing sport with them and seeing them in the supermarket!

All communities have their own culture and subcultures. As with any cultural learning experience, unwitting errors or embarrassments may be part of your process of adaptation. In adjusting, remember flexibility, sensitivity, respect for difference, a non-judgemental approach and optimism are key factors for developing positive relationships.

Keep in mind you are a new cultural element too, and your new community will want to know about you and adapt to you. People have different ways of getting to know each other, so be prepared for direct and indirect questions and be open to opportunities to meet new people.

However, taking care of yourself should always take precedence. You don't have to befriend everyone or tell strangers your life story. You should not have to pretend or act differently in this new community. Be yourself, take care of yourself, and do your best in your role as a health professional by putting yourself first. Surround yourself with a good support network prior to moving to placement, and don't forget that they exist. You are not alone, and your new community may present an opportunity to meet new friends and contacts.

Rural placements

The experiences you will have while on placement in a rural community can be very different to a metro placement. Some people assume that because they are going to a small community there won't be much to do on placement and that it will disadvantage them when looking at training pathways down the track. However, rural placements provide a great array of health concerns and tend to be more hands on than city-based placements. Australia's rural and remote communities often struggle to fill healthcare positions, so your help is greatly appreciated. Rural health professionals must have a wider scope of practice than their city counter parts, which means that you will see and be involved in managing a much greater variety of diseases. For more info see the [NRHSN's Rural Placement Guide](#).

Confidentiality

You may get to know many patients socially, which may make some community members reluctant to access health services. People may also be unwilling to acknowledge a problem for fear other community members will find out. Patients may have to travel long distances to see a health professional or may wish to travel to another area to avoid seeing someone they know in their own community.

It is imperative community members can trust their personal information is never shared with anyone. Socialising purely as a friend with community members, who may also be your patient, may feel awkward at first but soon you will settle into your dual roles within the community. If you feel unsure about how to act, seek out an experienced health professional in the community who can give you some advice. When in small communities it may be useful to discuss this with the patients you see and ask how they would like you to act when they see you in the community setting, that way you will both be on the same page.

General health in regional and remote areas

Research by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) demonstrates that health levels for people living in regional and remote areas are often lower than those of people in metropolitan areas.

Poorer health is multifactorial and may be reflective of socioeconomic disadvantage, distance from health care services, lower educational levels and increased occupational risks. However, AIHW research also found that in regional and remote communities there were higher rates of social cohesion, and people were more likely to participate in volunteer work and feel safe in their community.

Anxiety or depression in regional and remote areas

Mental health disorders are a large contributor to the total burden of disease and injury in Australia. It is important to be aware of this when on your placement and to be very clear about local services, policies and strategies.

Results of research from the AIHW show non-Indigenous males, Indigenous females and Indigenous males living in regional and remote areas are more likely to experience depression than those living in major cities. Anxiety is also a major contributor to ill-health for all Australians.

Rates of suicide are higher among rural men (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous). Despite increased social cohesion rural individuals are more isolated from friends and family. Farmers, the homeless, and the elderly can be vulnerable within these communities.

Indigenous communities

For Indigenous communities, social and emotional wellbeing is a holistic concept encompassing health and mental wellbeing but acknowledges the significance of connection to culture, family, community and land. There are also significant differences in mental health knowledge between Indigenous communities. This is reflective of the very different histories, cultures and individualism of each group. While some communities consider mental health a facet of holistic care, others consider mental health a reflection of personality. This is an important consideration in approaching the topic with Indigenous individuals as their perception of mental health will greatly affect their own lifestyle and treatment.

The AIHW have some great strategies and suggestions on how to support Indigenous people with their mental health.

Some universities and workplaces provide opportunities for cultural awareness training, so ask if this is available. Your best contacts for information and advice are the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers in the community of your placement.

Further mental health strategies for Indigenous people can be found at the Menzies School of Health Research.

Managing disclosures

A person who has experienced physical, emotional and/or mental abuse is likely to be very distressed and this may put significant stress on you. The information below should not take the place of the local protocols of the health service of your placement, rather it is meant to be a starting point to consider issues that may arise.

If a person discloses an abusive experience, you should explain to the person that you need to advise your supervisor and that the issue will be treated in strict confidence. Your supervisor has the advanced skills and professional contacts necessary to deal with these situations. Under national guidelines some situations need to be reported (mandatory reporting) and your supervisor will manage this.

It is important to involve your supervisor as soon as possible, but if you're in a situation where you are the only person available, do not ask leading questions, but let the person you are consulting with tell the story in their own words as this can influence further investigation.

Document the conversation in the notes using an 'I said', 'He/she said' format, if possible, trying to use their exact words. This should be countersigned by your supervisor. Make sure to have a chat to your supervisor before you start your placement and ask them direct questions about what to do if cases are presented to you regarding issues such as underage sexual abuse, physical or mental abuse.

Make sure that you debrief with skilled people and use the support services that are listed in this guide. They are there to help you. Your supervisor and university should also provide strong support for you.

Stigma of mental health

Mental illness, including depression and anxiety, still attracts a lot of stigma across Australia. Stigma and shame can influence how people raise their mental health concerns and it may take several consults to get to the heart of the problem. Cultural beliefs may mean emotions are expressed differently from the ways you would recognise.

Some minority groups are at a greater risk of mental health problems. At particular risk are migrants, LGBTQI+ individuals, small ethnic groups, the disabled and the elderly. Regional and remote areas often provide less support for minority groups and their identification may not be normalised within the community. One of the best ways to help is to equip yourself with resources to share with these individuals. For example, knowing what community events are on and how elderly people may access them can help them reintegrate within their community. LGBTQI+ individuals might feel more comfortable disclosing their problems if they see an acknowledgement of LGBTQI+ support at the practice (for example, a discrete poster, or by you yourself within the clinic). You can also provide support by being knowledgeable of specific counselling services available to them, some of which are listed for both yourself and patients below (see Section 8).

Section 3: Ways to maintain good mental health

All is going well. You like your new town, you've made new friends and you impress your new workmates with your polished clinical skills. Try some of the following exercises to help you stay on top of the world, make the most of your placement and maintain optimal mental wellbeing.

Tip: Find a comfortable and quiet place where you won't be interrupted before practising these.

Abdominal breathing exercise

When you are stressed, directing your attention to your breathing enables you to slow and deepen your breaths. This can help reduce the feeling of tension or restlessness.

Learning to change your breathing to a more relaxed pattern is a simple, yet effective skill.

1. Sit down with your legs crossed.
2. Place one hand over your navel.
3. Take a deep breath and blow it out completely through your mouth like a sigh.
4. Allow your next breath to flow in by itself through your nose.
5. Note: Your hand on your stomach should rise or move upward.
6. Keep breathing through your nose and breathe in slowly for three seconds, then out for three seconds, and then repeat these slow breaths for at least a minute, or until effective.
7. Note: If you catch yourself getting distracted or worrying about something during the exercise, just return to the breath, or jot the thought down somewhere so you don't forget to deal with it later.

Most useful for: maintaining composure before a difficult task or conversation.

Muscle relaxation exercise

1. Sit or recline comfortably with your eyes closed.
2. Tense up one set of muscles e.g. arms or legs.
3. Now let them go limp. If you do this effectively, the contrast between tensed and relaxed should show you what relaxed feels like – you want to remember that feeling.
4. Move on to another set of muscles e.g. back, stomach or face.
5. Now let them go limp. Notice the relaxed feeling. Try to hang on to it.
6. Repeat for all muscle groups.

Most useful for: relieving physical tension or anxious, or if you have trouble getting to sleep.

Word repetition relaxation exercise

1. Sit down with your legs crossed and close your eyes.
2. Allow your muscles to relax completely, beginning with your feet and progressing up to your face.
3. Breathe through your nose and direct your attention to the breath.
4. As you breathe out say the word 'ONE' silently to yourself. For example, breathe in ...then out ... saying the word 'ONE', breathe in ... then out ... saying the word 'ONE', and so on. The repetition of 'ONE' will help to break the train of distracting thoughts.

5. Note: There is no need to try and control the breath, just breathe naturally and rest your attention on the breath.
6. Continue for 10 to 20 minutes.
7. When you finish, sit quietly for several minutes, at first with your eyes closed, and then with your eyes open.

Most useful for: restoring focus or gaining clarity over a situation, before important decision making.

Visualisation exercise

1. Sit down with your legs crossed and close your eyes.
2. Use one of the above exercises to relax yourself.
3. When you are very relaxed, visualise yourself in a favourite place where you feel relaxed, peaceful, safe and tranquil.
4. Imagine the sounds you can hear, the fragrances you can smell, how it feels to be there and the relaxed body sensations.
5. For a couple of minutes just stay in that peaceful place enjoying these sensations.
6. Imagine how you look while you're there, feeling peaceful.
7. Allow your mind to come back to the room you're in.
8. Move and stretch a little.
9. Open your eyes and feel alert and refreshed.

Most useful for: during busy days or breaking through heavy moods and emotions, visualise your end goals using this same exercise for a motivation boost.

Meditation

While you may not have practiced meditation most people have experienced a meditative state, or a 'flow' state. You may have felt this after driving or going on a run - suddenly you're at your destination unable to account for the time that has just passed. This is because you were totally immersed in that activity, so much so that you became unaware of yourself, of time and place. On an elementary level, this is meditation!

Spending more time in such a state can help to centre and relax you. It may enable you to be more aware of yourself, your needs and the needs of others. It can bring increased clarity and calmness to your everyday life. It can also help your body to repair itself from the impact of stress and allow you to recharge your batteries both physically and mentally.

Find activities that can put you in a state of flow and ensure that they are included in your regular routine. The benefits of meditation may not be immediately apparent and regular meditation may be necessary before you notice a change in your everyday life.

A simple meditation technique is as follows: sit comfortably in a quiet place and close your eyes or have them slightly open. Bring your attention to your breath – simply observe the process of inhaling, exhaling, and the spaces in between.

You will probably catch yourself getting distracted by thoughts popping into your mind. This doesn't mean that you're doing it wrong or that you're not trying hard enough, you're just noticing how easy it is to become distracted and for the mind to wander. Just let these thoughts pass and return to your breath.

If you meditate regularly any noise or mindless chatter decreases and it is common for regular practitioners of meditation to report feelings of improved mood, cognition, and decision making. Regular practice of meditation has also been shown to increase 'gray matter density' in areas of the brain associated with learning and memory, as well as self-awareness and compassion.

If you're interested in learning more about meditation or the benefits, there are some excellent apps available that make it easier for you to incorporate the practice into your life. Some of these include guided meditations or sessions that are specific to whatever mood you're in, whether it be stressed, anxious or even happy. Check out section 8 for some handy meditation apps. [This video](#) also explains meditation in an understandable and relatable way.

"It is common for regular practitioners of meditation to report feelings of improved mood, cognition, and decision making"

Mindfulness

The ability to release and let go is not only a great technique for relaxing if things are becoming overwhelming but is also excellent at helping to maintain good mental health. Where meditation is about letting go, mindfulness is about being in the present moment and just allowing whatever might be happening to happen. Just be aware of the present, accept and embrace what is happening. You can also practice mindful meditation, which is about focussing on one thing – this may be your breath or repeating a phrase under your breath. Whenever your mind begins to wander bring it back to your focus. Just be, moment to moment.

Check out [this video](#).

Wellbeing

Alcohol and drug use

A respectful relationship with alcohol and drugs means understanding the law and the effect that these substances can have on the body. You will find people abusing alcohol and other drugs in all settings, but rates of alcohol and drug abuse are higher in rural and remote areas. Beyond Blue provides up-to-date resources containing information on the effects of alcohol, cigarettes and illicit drugs, along with advice on how to manage problems with any of these substances.

Beyond Blue's resources on alcohol and drug use are available. Black Dog Institute also have a [podcast](#) on this topic.

Eating well

It's easy to get into bad eating habits by skipping meals and not maintaining a balanced diet. You are a health professional in the making and you will be advising others on good eating. So, take a leafy-green vegetable out of your own book and eat it!

Exercise

Regular exercise and a nutritious diet contribute to a strong and healthy body that will be better able to withstand the wear and tear of short and long-term stress. Exercise 'burns off' the excess physical energy created by stress, helping to prevent a slow drift towards a chronically stressed state.

Exercise can also be useful as a circuit breaker at the end of the day. It can help put a boundary between work and home and provide time for reflection or an escape from the daily grind (a “meditation” if you will). Not only that but getting involved in local sporting competitions is a great way to get to know people and build up a social support network in your new town. If ‘time out’ is what you’re after, consider joining the local gym or just going for a walk around the town with a friend.

Sleeping well

More and more evidence is emerging about the importance of regular sleeping patterns in combating the steady onset of chronic disease, maintaining immune function and staving off the common cold. Lack of sleep is also strongly correlated with increased emotional reactivity, a more negative viewpoint, and an overall diminished ability to delay gratification.

Journal writing

Keeping a journal can be useful in helping you reflect on your experiences, keep track of your progress and set goals for your placement (and beyond).

Use your journal to undertake critical reflection of your experiences:

1. Recall the event. Don’t include any judgements, but instead focus on what actually happened, not what could have happened.
2. Reframe your experience, looking for and exploring positive feelings. Negative emotions, such as anger and fear, can block the reality of the situation and make it difficult to see other ways of looking at the whole view.
3. Analyse the issues. Would you do anything differently if a similar event occurred again? Are there any old practices or attitudes that need to be replaced to deal with things better in the future?
4. Use your journal to record your goals. Make sure they are in line with your priorities and are realistic and achievable.

Social support network

We are all individuals with different personal attributes and backgrounds. Along with different personal identities, everyone has different levels of need in how they can acknowledge or communicate with people similar to them. Such support can be provided by personal social support networks.

Establishing and maintaining a good social support network is essential for long-term wellbeing. Social support could come from inside the local community or from interest groups containing people with the same values or beliefs as yourself (e.g. places of worship, social events, cultural centres). Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students may benefit from connecting with Elders or community members in the town they are placed. These relationships can provide opportunities to confide painful feelings and help buffer all types of stress.

It is important to accept the support of others to avoid jeopardising your wellbeing. Setting aside regular times to debrief with other students, workmates and friends will help you manage stress, maintain a balanced lifestyle and avoid burn-out. Will you be courageous and speak up if you think a friend is doing it tough? Will your friends feel comfortable voicing any concerns they may have about you? This might be something you could all negotiate.

For more information on finding a community interest group/club and extending your social support network, speak to your university’s student experience officer, or visit the [Reach Out.com website](https://www.reachout.com.au).

Maintaining a balanced lifestyle

Maintaining a balanced lifestyle is important for long-term wellbeing. The following strategy may help you to monitor where you are putting your time and energy and how well the different parts of your life are going. This exercise can be used regularly to appraise what is happening in your life, what is good about it and what could be better.

1. Draw the spokes of a wheel.
2. Label each spoke with an important part of your life e.g. one spoke for family, one for work, one for hobbies, one for study, one for a connection to culture.
3. Give each spoke a mark out of ten depending on how well that part of your life is going – ten being the best, one being the worst. Mark a dot on the spoke to indicate this score, for example right at the centre of the wheel for one, right on the periphery for ten.
4. Join the dots together and assess how round the wheel looks.
5. The aim is to have the wheel as round as possible. A round wheel will indicate a holistic and broad base to your wellbeing. You look like you're ready to roll!
6. If you are allocating all your energy to only one or two areas of your life then the wheel (and your life!) will be off balance. This exercise may show areas of your life are being neglected and need attention.

Time management

Are you completely satisfied with how you use your time or do you think you could use your time more efficiently? Consider the following strategies:

- ▶ List all the things you want to get done.
- ▶ Separate the tasks into what **MUST** be done and what you **WANT** to get done. Then list what **MUST** be done in order of priority. Work through the **MUST** list first, one point at a time.
- ▶ Another way of drawing up this list of priorities is to categorise tasks under deadlines. Organise your list of tasks under the headings **DO TODAY**, **DO BEFORE NEXT WEEK**, **DO BEFORE NEXT MONTH**, and **CAN WAIT**. This is a simple way of working out tasks that are urgent and important, important but not urgent and not urgent or important.
- ▶ Identify the activities you would like to spend more time doing and the activities you would like to spend less time doing. Ask yourself "*do I really need to be doing this right now?*" and "*how essential is this in achieving my goals?*" It's easy to find satisfaction alone in making your schedule for the day as efficient and lean as possible.
- ▶ Set some goals for yourself for the upcoming year or the upcoming placement. Think about how you can spend your time now in order to achieve these goals. What obstacles might be in the way and what steps can you take to avoid/overcome these? Can you manage them by yourself?
- ▶ When planning your time, space out rewarding and non-rewarding tasks. This will help you keep motivated during tasks that are less satisfying.
- ▶ Probably one of the most important time management strategies is learning to say 'no'. Learning what not to do is as important as knowing what to do. Over-commitment is a sure road to exhaustion.
- ▶ Scheduling your days and writing to-do lists are extremely effective at increasing productivity. Have a go at scheduling out an entire day from the moment you wake up until a reasonably set curfew, and see how much you can fit in. Setting time limits and reminders for certain tasks using smart device calendars and organisational apps is a great method of maintaining focus and ensuring task completion.

- ▶ We are all prone to distractions, it is part of being human. Try making a list of the things that tend to distract you most and put in place strategies to help - this could mean leaving your phone in a different room!
- ▶ Part of effective time management is making sure you have time to relax, reflect and re-orientate yourself. Take the time to lie down, read or meditate. Make it part of your routine. This can deactivate the stress response for a while.

Section 4: Troubleshooting

Things aren't going to plan. Feeling down? Stressed? Frustrated? Maybe moving to your placement has left you feeling lonely, isolated or confused?

Some of the following ideas might help you through these problems. Also make sure you fill in the Mental Health Strategies magnet before you leave for placement and put it in an easily accessible place!

Problem-solving strategy one

Something many of us tend to do, perhaps without even thinking about it as 'problem solving', is to talk to others about our problems. It is important to put in place support networks before starting your placement – these could be friends, family or colleagues. It is a good idea to keep a physical or mental list of two or three people you know you can call if things aren't going well. Make sure you have their contact numbers close by. Sometimes "a problem shared is a problem halved" can be true and simply having someone to discuss your problem with may help you to work through it and feel better.

While on placement you may like to talk to someone face-to-face, depending what is bothering you this could be a fellow student or your placement supervisor. It is also important to have your own doctor, a GP. If you really start to find you're struggling don't wait, book in to see a professional, be this your own GP or the local doctor. They have lots of experience and can work through things with you or give you referrals to all the right places.

Problem-solving strategy two

Identify sources of stress

Make a list of all the things in your life causing you stress or problems. Rank them in order of impact on your life. Categorise each one as requiring 'immediate action', 'future action' or 'ignore/adapt to' (see the time management strategies).

If your list is too long or intimidating, address the easier ones first. Some issues may need to be put on the back burner in order to give you time to examine the problem and decide on the best course of action.

Analyse the problem

Write the problem on a piece of paper. Draw two circles around it – a large outer circle and a smaller inner circle.

The large outer circle is your circle of concern. Note down the elements of the problems that are beyond your control.

These are elements that you will have to come to terms with without letting them erode your peace of mind.

The smaller circle is your circle of influence.

Within the smaller circle, note down the elements of the problem that you have some power to influence or change in some way. These are the elements that you can start to do something about.

During the process of addressing the issues in the smaller circle, you may find that some of the elements in the larger outer circle come under your control. By the same token, you may find issues you thought you could address are not really within your control.

Problem-solving strategy three

Identify the problem and condense it to one word or sentence. Think up as many possible options to solve the problem as you can. Weigh up the good and bad points about each option. Consider the consequences of each option. Decide which one is best and commit yourself to carrying out this option.

Once you have decided on a course of action, it may help to break it down into several smaller steps. Work through the plan one step at a time. If it doesn't work, consider the outcomes of the first solution and consider alternative options, then try again.

If nothing works, you may need to accept that you cannot change the situation. Sometimes this can't be helped, so consider strategies that will help you live with the situation as it is. This may mean implementing practical strategies to protect your wellbeing in the face of the stressor, changing your attitude to the stressor or implementing good self-care strategies.

Problem-solving strategy four

Begin with the end in mind. Identify your desired outcome. Imagine your situation could magically change. What would the situation look like once the problem had been solved? What changes can you make to bring that about? With a clear goal in mind, you can plan and hopefully bring your desired outcome into a reality.

Feeling down?

Changing the way you think and feel about a situation will influence how you feel and behave in response to it. By changing how you think, you can change how you feel about a particular situation. Try some of the strategies below.

- ▶ Try to think positive thoughts. Look for and notice any positive attributes, no matter how small, in any given situation.
- ▶ Be as fair to yourself as you would be to others. Imagine a good friend is describing the situation that you are experiencing and imagine what advice you would give them. Follow your own advice.
- ▶ Imagine you are several years into the future. How much will it really matter then?
- ▶ Confront your fear. Exaggerate the situation. Paint a worst-case scenario – what's the worst thing that can happen? How likely is it?
- ▶ Don't let negative thoughts get out of control. If you notice yourself constantly painting worst-case scenarios and interpreting situations in a negative manner, say to yourself – 'STOP!' Pause and then take a fresh and more balanced look at the situation.
- ▶ Analyse the 'self-talk' that may lead to you feeling more stressed about a situation. Change the 'self-talk' to a more positive interpretation. For example, instead of thinking 'This person drives me nuts', try replacing it with 'I can cope with this person' and notice the difference in the way you feel in response.
- ▶ If you have a particular worry that keeps popping into your mind, make a plan to allocate some 'worry time' to it each day. Schedule this, say for half an hour in the evening. Put off worrying about whatever it is until you sit down to have your 'worry time'. This will allow you to concentrate on the tasks at hand and minimise the amount of worry in your day.
- ▶ Assess your strengths and weaknesses. Accept yourself as you are, warts and all. No one is perfect or without human frailties.
- ▶ Keep a 'journal of gratitude'. Note down pleasant moments or experiences in your day. This might be as simple as the way the morning light falls in your kitchen or the smell of being in the country.

Although a simple strategy, it can have a powerful, positive effect on your perceptions, how you feel, what you notice and the amount of pleasure your experience during each day.

- ▶ Don't struggle to control situations that are beyond your control. Sometimes the best thing to do is to 'let go' and accept 'what is' rather than 'what you would like it to be'. Let go of your expectations. Go with the flow.
- ▶ At the end of the day, take 10 minutes to acknowledge what you have achieved and give yourself credit for it. Don't waste time feeling guilty about what you could not do.
- ▶ Try to discipline yourself to work during work time and allow yourself to relax at the end of each day.
- ▶ Above all, get in a good laugh at least once a day.

Angry?

It's possible to learn to cope with anger and frustration.

Before you get angry

- ▶ Remember you are responsible for your own feelings. No one can make you feel anything that you don't want to feel.
- ▶ Identify those events and behaviours that can trigger your anger.
- ▶ Avoid 'setting yourself up' to get angry.
- ▶ Develop coping strategies to diffuse your anger reactions before you lash out at others. Counting to 10 is a cliché AND it works. Take a few deep breaths. Leave the situation if you don't need to be there. In the longer term, you can go off alone to cool down, get stuck into some exercise and use relaxation techniques.

When you feel anger coming up

- ▶ Acknowledge the anger, it is a normal emotion. Acknowledge that it is there.
- ▶ Use the coping strategies you have developed to defuse the anger and cool off a bit.
- ▶ Think about the situation. Is there anything you need to do? Is there a threat to your wellbeing that needs to be addressed? Was the anger just a result of your overall stress?
- ▶ Try to achieve a calm state of mind before working out a plan to deal with the problem. Use your mindfulness strategies to keep yourself in the moment and try to let the anger pass you by. Just because it is there doesn't mean you need to let it take over. Just allow space in your mind for it to sit there. Think about how it makes you feel and breath. Just be in the moment.
- ▶ Try and remove yourself from the situation that is upsetting you and use your troubleshooting strategies.

When a cowpat flies

Coping with difficult or traumatic events

To help cope with the aftermath of a traumatic event, arrange some time out and talk with your support network about the event and your reactions. Friends, family, peers, mentors and supervisors are all good choices. Sometimes it may be difficult to find someone to talk to because of the lack of anonymity in rural locations or you may wish to speak to someone outside your social network. In these cases, resources such as the CRANAPlus Bush Support Services 1800 805 391 (24-hour Freecall) may be useful.

Further resources are available at the end of this guide in Section 8.

Feeling isolated?

Working and studying alone can leave you without some of your familiar support networks. Opportunities to get reassurance from others experiencing similar situations may be limited in some placement locations.

A sense of isolation may be reduced by working with a mentor, networking with local and regional health organisations and networking with other students on rural placements. If you're not sure where to look to find these contacts, your Rural Health Club is a great place to start. You can find out who your local club is on the NRHSN website.

Also, when you're on placement, make sure your university is aware of any issues due to isolation. They may be able to help you find others in similar situations and provide important assistance with issues associated with your placement, such as housing or telephone access.

Keeping safe

When on a rural placement, it is important to consider your personal safety, just as you would anywhere. Use the tips below as a starting point to consider other issues that may arise.

- ▶ Make an informal risk assessment for yourself, considering issues such as transport, accommodation (including the availability of a phone) and supervision.
- ▶ Don't walk around the town or community by yourself at night in unlit or isolated areas.
- ▶ Ask a local mentor about the places that should be avoided in the community for cultural or safety reasons.
- ▶ Observe the local customs in terms of culturally appropriate dress.
- ▶ Lock your accommodation at night or when you aren't there during the day.
- ▶ Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to be back, even by SMS to a friend.
- ▶ Ensure that you have the appropriate driving skills if driving over unsealed roads and tell someone if you do not feel confident.
- ▶ When beginning your placement, ask about safety procedures, personal alarms and the location of a safe room in the event of an aggressive patient.
- ▶ Do not approach or confront an aggressive patient or community member, ensure your safety first, and follow the advice of your supervisors.
- ▶ Do not get involved or take sides in personal disputes between community members.

Going online

You can surf the internet for some strategies and assistance.

Refer to Sections 8 and 9 of this guide for a list of useful websites and telephone numbers.

Always remember that the strategies and suggestions above are just that. It is important to see your GP or other medical support people if you are struggling to cope. They can help you to put in place plans and discuss things such as medication and referrals with you. If you're worried about placement you could even touch base before you go – to make sure you have strategies in place to deal with any challenges that may arise.





Section 5: Student's stories

TBC



Section 6: Health professional's stories

TBC

Section 7: Preparing for your new role or placement

One of the best ways to reduce stress or anxiety about a new experience is to be prepared and have all the information as well as physical items you may need. This can save you time and money as well, and just makes everything easier.

Before you leave, run through this handy checklist and make sure you are as prepared as possible for the challenges and rewards a rural placement or job can give you!

Placement details

Contact person's name:

Contact person's phone number:

Location:

Dates:

Address for accommodation:

Phone number for accommodation:

Student pre-placement checklist:

General

- What do you need to take with you (e.g. linen, alarm clock, etc.)?
- What facilities are available to you (e.g. computer, internet, shops)?
- Should you take food with you?
- Do you need to take any resources/textbooks with you?

Transport

- What transport services are available to you?
- How will you get around the community?
- What is the travelling time from your accommodation to your workplace (walking or driving)?
- Are you better off taking your own transport (e.g. car, bike)?
- What is the community like (e.g. demographics, geography)?
- Where do you go to find information about the community (e.g. shire, tourist information)?
- What social, cultural or recreational activities are available in the community?
- Is there a local Indigenous community?
- What are the health services available in the community?
- Are there any support services in the community?
- What are the priority health issues for the community?
- What else has the community got to offer?

- Do you need to notify your workplace of flight/bus times?
- Are you able to be picked up when arriving?
- Do you know details to pick up keys to accommodation?
- Do you need the taxi contact details?
- Do you need to phone the staff/supervisor for your roster and start time?

Mail/phone contact details

- Do you know the phone number of your placement?
- Do you know the address of your placement?
- Do you have contact details of your supervisor?

Accommodation

- Do you know where you are staying and the contact details?
- Have you asked your supervisor for potential accommodation within your rural placement location?
- Does your accommodation provide cooking facilities, laundry, fridge, beds, linen, pillows.
- TV, microwave, crockery and cookware?
- Is your accommodation close to your workplace?
- How much will your accommodation cost?

Uniform/clothes

- What is your uniform or dress code?
- What is the weather like where you are going and what type of clothes do you need to take with you?

Meals

- Are meals provided and when?
- Do you need to place orders for meals the day before?
- How much do they cost (if getting lunch at hospital)?
- Are special dietary needs catered for (e.g. Halal, Kosher)?

Orientation

- What is your caseload?
- What are your working hours?
- What are the policies and procedures of your workplace?
- Who will you be working with?
- Are there other students from the same discipline as you or other disciplines at the workplace or at your accommodation?
- What other health professionals work in the health service?
- Will you be travelling e.g. visiting remote communities? If so, what do you need to take with you? What facilities are available to you at the workplace (e.g. computer, library)?
- Do you know who your supervisor will be?

- Will you have regular contact with your supervisor?

Mental health

- If you are feeling lonely while you are away, who can you call?
- If you notice any of the signs in section 1, what tools can you use (for example the ones found in Sections 2 & 3) to try and feel better?
- Where can you go in your new town on your days off to get out of the house?
- What can you take to relax and unwind? (e.g. Books, games, exercise equipment, instruments etc.)

Section 8: National helplines and mental health services

The information listed here will be useful and may help you get through some rough times. It is important to recognise when you need to seek help from others. Don't go it alone!

Services where you can access help directly

Beyond Blue

Beyond Blue is a non-profit organisation providing information and support to help everyone in Australia achieve their best possible mental health, whatever their age and wherever they live.

Phone: 1300 22 4636 (available 24/7)

Webchat: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/get-immediate-support> (between 3.00pm - 12.00am)

Email: (receive a response within 24 hours)

Website: www.Beyond Blue.com.au

Beyond Blue also offers specific resources for youth at www.youthBeyond Blue.com.

CRANaplus Bush Support Services

The CRANaplus support program is collectively known as *Bush Support Services (BSS)*, and is for ALL remote health workers, service providers and their families. BSS has an understanding that the particular mental health of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous remote health workers is a result of the unique nature of remote work. The BSS is answered by psychologists with rural and remote experience and with the capacity for repeat callers to speak to the same psychologist. Psychologists are able to offer practical coping strategies and survival tips to prevent burn-out and to prevent crises from developing. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander psychologists are available.

Phone: 1800 805 391 available 24/7

Online counselling services: available via scp@crana.org.au

Headspace

ehespace offers an end-to-end, high quality clinical experience – either online or by phone. It provides young people (aged 12 to 25) with a safe place to access confidential and free support.

Phone and webchat: 1800 650 890 (available 9am to 1am 7 days).

<https://headspace.org.au/>

Headtohealth

Formerly *Mindhealthconnect*, *Headtohealth* provides mental health resources and content from leading health organisations in Australia. You can access a range of mental health resources, including online programs, fact sheets, audio, video and online support groups.

https://headtohealth.gov.au/?utm_source=mindhealthconnect&utm_medium=301

Lifeline

Lifeline provides counselling services with the nationally accessible number for the cost of a local call. This is available through 42 Lifeline Centres across Australia. Lifeline offers face-to-face counselling services in many Lifeline Centres. Types of services and counselling service themes may vary from one centre to another based on the specific needs of each regional or local area.

Phone: 13 11 14 (available 24/7)

Webchat: available 7.00pm to midnight 7 days

MensLine Australia

MensLine Australia is a professional telephone and online support, information and referral service helping men to deal with relationship problems in a practical and effective way.

Phone: 1300 78 99 78 (available 24/7)

Webchat and videochat are also available.

Nurse and Midwife Support

A National support service for nurses, midwives and students. Available 24/7 from anywhere in Australia and is completely confidential.

Phone: 1800 667 877

www.nmsupport.org.au

QLife

QLife provides Australia-wide anonymous, LGBTI peer support and referral for people wanting to talk about a range of issues including sexuality, identity, gender, bodies, feelings or relationships.

Phone: 1800 184 327 (available 3pm to midnight 7 days)

Webchat: available 3pm to midnight 7 days

<https://qlife.org.au/>

SANE Australia: Social, Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services in Aboriginal Australia

SANE Australia is a national charity helping people affected by mental illness (particularly schizophrenia). It campaigns for improving services and attitudes, promoting understanding, and conducts research.

Phone: 1800 187 263 (available 10am to 10pm weekdays)

Webchat: available 10am to 10pm weekdays

www.sane.org

Services with information and support programs

The Black Dog Institute

The Black Dog Institute is dedicated to understanding, preventing and treating mental illness. Their vision is to have a mentally healthier world by the rapid translation of high-quality research into improved clinical treatments, increased accessibility to mental health services and delivery of long-term public health solutions. They have great resources targeted at different populations, including for health professionals.

www.blackdoginstitute.org.au

Black Rainbow

Black Rainbow is Australia's first and only National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer, Trans and Intersex (LGBTI) Suicide Prevention National Advocacy Platform and National Touchpoint. We support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTI people who are homeless, leaving domestic violence relationships or the justice system. We are 100% Indigenous owned and operated. Black Rainbow provide microgrants to Indigenous LGBTI individuals to host events and for daily living support.

www.blackrainbow.org.au

BluePages

Developed by the National Institute for Mental Health Research, this website has tools for self-assessment of anxiety and depression, information on medical, psychological and alternative treatments, a link to a cognitive behaviour therapy site, a downloadable relaxation tape and a list of resources for depression.

www.bluepages.anu.edu.au

The Desk

The desk is a free online program aimed at providing Australian tertiary students with strategies and skills for success and wellbeing during their time at university or TAFE.

www.thedesk.org.au

ECouch

E-couch is a self-help interactive program with modules for depression, generalised anxiety & worry, social anxiety, relationship breakdown, and loss & grief.

<https://ecouch.anu.edu.au/welcome>

MoodGym

MoodGym is an interactive program that provides emotional and cognitive management skills for handling stress and depression. This website was developed by the National Institute for Mental Health Research at the Australian National University. Registration is required but is free. MoodGym is a way to undertake cognitive behaviour therapy from home, gaining feedback as you go.

www.moodgym.anu.edu.au

Reach Out!

Reach Out! helps young people with information and support on a range of issues, including

depression, dealing with exam stress and ways to get through tough times. The website includes forums, stories, 'stress-less' tips and is a great resource if you need help or if you just want to relax and stay at your best.

www.au.reachout.com

Useful apps to support mental health

AIMhi Stay Strong

This app has been developed for Indigenous people to be used in conjunction with a health professional.

www.menzies.edu.au/page/Research/Projects/Mental_Health_and_wellbeing/Development_of_the_Stay_Strong_iPad_App

Brethe

"De-stress, sleep better, get happier & be healthier with guided meditations".

<https://brethe.com/>

Headspace

A meditation and mindfulness app focused on reducing anxiety and stress. Subscriptions are available and there are many useful free features.

www.headspace.com

ReachOut Breathe

Helps to reduce physical symptoms of stress and anxiety by slowing down your breathing and heart rate.

<https://au.reachout.com/tools-and-apps/reachout-breathe>

Smiling Mind

Free mindfulness app that has been developed by psychologists and educators to help bring balance to your life.

www.smilingmind.com.au/smiling-mind-app

Wake up: guided meditation

Meditation classes for any ability.

<https://wakingup.com/>

Wellbeyond

A mapless walking app and meditation timer, they also have a kid's version.

<https://wellbeyond.com/>

Youper

Youper is an online chatbot that has been developed as a free counselling tool.

www.youper.ai/about-us

Are you a Podcast Person?

Then you might like to check out:

The Black Dog Institute

A number of podcasts from people of all walks of life, including health professionals. It can be good to know you're not alone and that everyone struggles with their mental health at times.

www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/clinical-resources/health-professional-resources/podcasts-for-health-professionals/being-well-podcast-series

MDA National

MDA National are a medical indemnity organisation and host a SoundCloud which has a number of different podcasts, including topics such as Doctor's Mental Health and Wellbeing, How to Respond to a Complaint and Communication.

<https://soundcloud.com/mdanational>

Section 9: State and territory help lines and mental health services

Australian Capital Territory

ACT Department of Health

Phone: 1800 629 354

Website: www.health.act.gov.au/services/mental-health

New South Wales

NSW Department of Health

Phone: 1800 011 511

Website: www.health.nsw.gov.au/mhdao/Pages/contact-service.aspx

Northern Territory

NT Department of Health

Phone: 1800 682 288

Website: <https://nt.gov.au/wellbeing/mental-health>

Queensland

Queensland Department of Health

Phone: 13 43 25

Website: www.health.qld.gov.au/mentalhealth

Queensland Doctors' Health Programme

24/7 support line for doctors and medical students which is staffed by volunteer GPs and counsellors with experience in doctors' mental health.

Phone: (07) 3833 4352

Website: www.qdhp.org.au

South Australia

SA Department of Health

Phone: 13 14 65



Website: www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/health+topics/health+conditions+prevention+and+treatment/mental+health+and+mental+illness

Tasmania

Tasmania Department of Health

Phone: mental health services HELPLINE 1800 332 288

Website: www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/mentalhealth

Victoria

Victorian Department of Health

Website: <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/mental-health/mental-health-services/support-and-intervention/telephone-and-online-services>

Victorian Doctors' Health Program

Provide confidential and discrete assistance to doctors and medical students who are struggling with stress, anxiety, substance use problems, mental or physical health concerns or any other health issue. They provide individual management plans and coordinate treatment – including arranging referral to appropriate external providers.

Phone: (03) 9280 8712 (Monday to Friday 9am-5pm)

Website: www.vdhp.org.au/website/home.html

Western Australia

WA Department of Health

Phone: Metro 1300 555 788 or RuralLink 1800 552 002 (RuralLink Monday to Friday 4.30pm to 8.30am, 24 hours Saturday, Sunday and public holidays)

Website: www.health.wa.gov.au/services

Section 10: University support services

Australian National University

Website: www.anu.edu.au/counsel

Hours: 9.00 am – 4.45 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (02) 6125 2442

Email: Counselling.Centre@anu.edu.au

Adelaide University

Website: www.adelaide.edu.au/counselling/home

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (08) 8313 5663 (9am to 5pm) and the University Crisis Line 1300 167 654 on weekdays 5pm to 9am, weekends and public holidays

Self-help brochures available at www.adelaide.edu.au/counselling_centre/brochures/

Bond University

Website: <https://bond.edu.au/current-students/services-support/services/counselling-service>

Hours: 8.30am – 5pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (07) 5595 4002

Email: studentcounselling@bond.edu.au

Charles Darwin University

Website: www.cdu.edu.au/equity-services/counselling

Hours: 8.30 am – 4.00 pm Monday to Thursday to 3.00 pm Friday

Phone: (08) 8946 6288 & crisis support line 1300 933 393 for out of hours support

Email: equity@cdu.edu.au

Charles Sturt University

Website: www.csu.edu.au/oncampus/student-support/health-counselling

Student Central Hours: 9.00am – 5.30pm Monday to Thursday and 9.00am – 5.00pm Friday

Phone: 1800 275 278

Student Counselling appointments can be booked via an online form under CSU Student Online Portal.

Curtin University

Website: www.counselling.curtin.edu.au

Hours: 8.00 am – 6.00 pm Monday to Thursday and 8.00 am – 4.30 pm Friday

Phone: (08) 9266 7850 or 1800 651 878 (Free call)

Deakin University

Website: www.deakin.edu.au/students/health-and-wellbeing/counselling

Phone: Burwood (03) 9244 6300; Waurn Ponds (03) 5227 1221; Waterfront (03) 5247 9312; Warrnambool (03) 5563 3256

Edith Cowan University

Website: <http://intranet.ecu.edu.au/student/support/counselling>

Hours: 8.30 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (08) 9370 6706

Federation University

Website: <http://federation.edu.au/students/assistance-support-and-services/student-supportservices/advice-and-counselling>

Hours: 9.00 am – 4.00 pm Monday to Friday

Ballarat and Wimmera

Phone: (03) 5327 9470

Email: counselling@federation.edu.au

Gippsland

Phone: (03) 5122 6425

Email: gippslandcounselling@federation.edu.au

Flinders University

Website: <https://students.flinders.edu.au/student-services/hcd/counselling>

Hours: 8.45 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (08) 8201 2118

Griffith University

Website: www.griffith.edu.au/student-services/counselling-wellbeing

Options for in-person, email, phone and messaging counselling through the website.

James Cook University

Brisbane Campus

Website: www.jcub.edu.au/current-students/the-learning-hub/counselling/

Hours: 9.00 am – 4.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (07) 3001 7800

Email: studentcounsellor@jcub.edu.au

Townsville and Cairns Campus

Website: www.jcu.edu.au/counselling/

Hours: 8.30 am – 4.30 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (Townsville) (07) 4781 4711 Phone: (Cairns) (07) 4042 1150

La Trobe University

Website: www.latrobe.edu.au/students/counselling/contacts

If the counsellor at your local campus is away, please contact Melbourne Campus.

Melbourne Campus

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (03) 9479 2956

Email: counselling@latrobe.edu.au

Albury-Wodonga Campus

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (03) 6024 9627

Email: counsellor.aw@latrobe.edu.au

Bendigo Campus

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (03) 5444 7223



Email: studentservicesbendigo@latrobe.edu.au

Mildura Campus

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (03) 5022 3614

Shepparton Campus

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (03) 5820 8600

Macquarie University

Website: <https://students.mq.edu.au/support/wellbeing/counselling-services>

Hours: Business hours Monday to Friday

Phone: (02) 9850 7497

Email: wellbeing@mq.edu.au

Monash University

Website: www.monash.edu.au/counselling

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (03) 9905 3020

Murdoch University

Website: www.murdoch.edu.au/Counselling

Email: counsellingservice@murdoch.edu.au

Perth Campus

Hours: 8.30am – 12pm and 1pm – 4.30pm Monday to Friday

Phone: 9360 1227

Peel Campus

Hours: Tuesday and Friday

Phone: 9582 5501

Newcastle University

Website: www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/support/health-counselling-and-wellbeing/your-mental-health/counselling

Hours: 9.30 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (02) 4921 5801

Email: counselling@newcastle.edu.au

University of Canberra

Website: www.canberra.edu.au/on-campus/health-and-support/medical-counselling/counselling

Hours: 9am – 5pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (02) 6201 2351

University of Melbourne

Website: www.services.unimelb.edu.au/counsel

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday/Tuesday/Thursday/Friday

Phone: (03) 8344 6927

University of New England

Website: www.une.edu.au/current-students/support/student-support/counselling

Hours: 9am – 4pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (02) 6773 2897

Email: studentcounselling@une.edu.au

University of New South Wales

Website: www.counselling.unsw.edu.au

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (Kensington) (02) 9385 5418

Email: counselling@unsw.edu.au

University of Notre Dame

Sydney Campus

Website: www.nd.edu.au/sydney/current-students/counselling.shtml



Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (02) 8204 4220

Email: sydney.counselling@nd.edu.au

Fremantle and Broome Campus

Website: www.nd.edu.au/fremantle/current-students/student-services/counsellingservice.shtml

Hours: 8.30 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (08) 9433 0580

University of Queensland

Website: www.usq.edu.au/current-students/support/counselling

Springfield Campus

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (07) 3470 4400

Email: studentservicespringfield@usq.edu.au

Toowoomba Campus

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (07) 4631 2372

Email: stsv@usq.edu.au

Fraser Coast Campus

Hours: 8.30 am – 4.30 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (07) 4194 3125

Email: fcstdhub@usq.edu.au

University of South Australia

Website: <https://i.unisa.edu.au/students/student-support-services/counselling/>

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: City East (08) 8302 2330; City West (08) 8302 0022; Magill (08) 8302 4423; Mawson Lakes (08) 8302 5006

Email: counsellors@unisa.edu.au

The University of Sydney

Website: www.sydney.edu.au/current_students/counselling/

Cumberland Campus

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday and Tuesday

Phone: (02) 9351 9638

Email: cumberland.cs@sydney.edu.au

Camperdown Campus

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (02) 8627 8433 or 8627 8437

Email: caps.admin@sydney.edu.au

University of Tasmania

Website: www.utas.edu.au/students/counselling or www.utas.edu.au/students/counselling/online-counselling

Hobart Campus

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (03) 6226 2697

Launceston Campus

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (03) 6324 3787

Cradle Coast Campus

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (03) 6430 4949

University of Western Australia

Website: www.student.uwa.edu.au/life/health/counselling

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (08) 6488 2423

University of Western Sydney



Website:

www.westernsydney.edu.au/currentstudents/current_students/services_and_facilities/counselling_services

Hours: 9.00 am – 4.30 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (02) 9852 5199

Email: counselling@uws.edu.au

University of Wollongong

Website: www.uow.edu.au/student/counselling/gethelp/ecounselling/index.html

Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Phone: (02) 4221 3445