**MAINTAINING CLINICIAN HEALTH + WELLBEING**

DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

It is important that clinicians stay healthy and protect themselves, clients, colleagues and loved ones, as we continue to deliver services during this challenging period.

**STEP 1 - INFECTION CONTROL**

Follow the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) and your organisation’s advice around **hand hygiene** and the use of **personal protective equipment** if you continue to work face-to-face.

Stay at home if you feel unwell, and complete the COVID-19 self-assessment (**https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus-self-assessment**), to help you better understand the risks and precautions you need to take based on your personal circumstances.

**STEP 2 – MENTAL WELLBEING**

Providing care during a pandemic can be unsettling. It is normal to experience concerns about the impact of COVID-19 on your own health, as well as that of your clients, colleagues and loved ones.

To support your own mental wellbeing:

* **Avoid speculation and review only trusted information sources** (e.g. Department of Health and Human Services1) for the latest COVID-19 advice. **Take a break** from the news and social media if you are feeling overloaded by all the information circulating.
* If you or your colleagues have any questions about the impact of COVID-19 in your workplace **speak with your manager or employee assistance program** to alleviate concerns.

Follow the *Five Ways to Wellbeing*2**:**

1. **Connect**: With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. It is still possible to socialise and meet others using technology and social distancing measures
2. **Be Active**: Exercise and maintaining physical activity will help you feel good. Consider other physical activities such as gardening and dancing indoors if your usual sporting or gym activities are unavailable.
3. **Take Notice**: Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling. Reflecting on things will help you appreciate what matters
4. **Keep Learning**: Try something new or rediscover and old interest (e.g. cooking, reading).
5. **Give**: Do something nice for a friend or a stranger. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be rewarding and help create connections with the people around you.

**STEP 3 – MANAGE FATIGUE**

Use the following tips to reduce fatigue and stay safe:

* Continue to eat regular meals and keep a balanced diet
* Maintain a regular sleep schedule
* Take a short break during your work shift if you are feeling overwhelmed or tired
* Get up and walk around during breaks
* Keep in contact with colleagues to stay connected and supported, particularly if working from home

**REFERENCES + HELPFUL RESOURCES**

1. DHHS Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) website: https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus
2. Five Ways to Wellbeing: https://5waystowellbeing.org.au/