

## *Self care for managers during the Covid-19 Pandemic*

At AccessEAP, we recognise that you are likely feeling emotions such as anxiety, distress and concern about the outbreak of COVID-19: your safety, people around you and what the future holds. As a manager or leader, you will be experiencing your own emotions as well as feeling responsible for your people or teams. As leaders, we are used to being in control and providing guidance and support to others, but we are also human.

Remember that feeling anxious, fearful, stressed, angry and irritable are common and normal feelings during uncertain times. Identify your responses and feelings and ensure that you look after yourself and get support if needed. It is difficult to support others when we are experiencing heightened stress.

Here are a few tips to look after yourself as a leader:

- Be mindful of media coverage: COVID-19 has received unprecedented media coverage. While this can be helpful, it can also create anxiety. It's tough to maintain a healthy perspective when your phone or tablet is constantly telling us what is going on in the world.
- Get your information from credible and official sources such as The World Health Organisation and Australian Government websites.
- Feel more in control through good personal hygiene practices such as washing your hands properly, checking in with your loved ones or helping your elderly neighbour with their grocery shopping.

Here are some tips to offer great support to your employees:

1. Know and identify the signs and symptoms of stress, including the emotional responses which people may be experiencing.
2. Acknowledge feelings of anxiety and fear, recognise and provide reassurance that these responses and emotions are normal.
3. Suggest some of the coping and self-care strategies, access [Self care for employees during the Covid-19 Pandemic](#) through the Employer Login.
4. Do not engage in "catastrophizing" conversations; focus on the facts.
5. Encourage people to keep things in perspective and to focus on the things they can control.
6. Work on plans with individuals, e.g. work from home, self-isolation if a family member is confirmed to be infected. Discuss options carers need to care for children or elderly as this contributes to anxiety and stress.
7. Have conversations about other things that matter and encourage your people to do the same.
8. Encourage your people to have breaks, to be active and to get rest.
9. Discuss the impact of excessive exposure to media and social media.



10. Do not judge, everyone will have their own response and most of these responses are due to fear. Be kind and offer support.

Useful websites:

[The World Health Organization](#)

[Commonwealth Department of Health](#)

[NSW Health Resources for Businesses](#)

If you are concerned about an employee, help them to access support through the EAP. Telephone and video counselling are available 24/7. Sometimes, as a manager, it is helpful if you arrange the support or initiate the call. Remember to ask your employee if this is something they would like.

Finally, remember employees look to you to role model personal hygiene practices, social distancing and self-care strategies.

If you have any further questions or would like to discuss specific requirements on how AccessEAP can assist your organisation and your people, please contact your Relationship Manager or the Manager Support Hotline. As always, as your EAP we are here to support your people whatever the nature of their concerns, please contact **AccessEAP** on **1800 818 728**.

