

Supporting those impacted by the surge of COVID cases

The recent surge of COVID cases globally continues to affect many of us deeply. Many people have family and loved ones living interstate and abroad and during times like these we may feel isolated, helpless and frustrated at the challenges they are facing and our inability to assist.

Many of us work with, or know, people with connections that are struggling with COVID issues. This may be distressing for us and for those around us. During this time it is common to experience a range of physical, emotional and intellectual responses.

Everyone is different and people may experience different reactions at different times.

Common responses

Initially:

- Shock and feeling the situation is not real
- Feeling alert, energised, and wanting to help out
- Feeling distressed and sad
- Feeling nervous, stressed, or worried
- Unexpected tears or emotion
- Difficulty thinking clearly
- Feeling frustrated about events or just generally more frustrated
- Feeling physically ill or tense
- Wanting more information to attempt to understand the situation

After a little time:

- Feeling tired and exhausted
- Feeling down
- Lacking motivation for usual events and activity
- Replaying memories of the event or situation
- Feeling guilty about not being able to assist
- Playing the situation over and over in your mind
- Changes in sleep, diet, or health patterns



How to look after yourself and others

- Acknowledge the crisis and recognise we may all be impacted in different ways
- Let people talk about the situation
- Recognise that some of your colleagues may feel distracted and concerned
- If you're concerned about a colleague, ask if they are ok
- Listen to individual stories and concerns, but be cautious of giving advice
- Recognise you may have different views or reactions to others
- Try to minimise your demands on others if you sense they are feeling overloaded
- Create space and support for those directly impacted and recognize that right now they may not be able to perform or deliver as they might have previously
- Understand that work can be a distraction and talking only about the current events may not be helpful for everyone. Talking about other topics can provide a welcome break from the worry
- Respect cultural and religious differences and ask people what will help them the most

Additional Resources

[Helping your employees after a major event](#)

[Understanding the stress effects of major events](#)

These are challenging times and sometimes it can help to talk with a professional.

We're here to help so don't hesitate to call if you need individual support or want guidance on how to help your family, friends, colleagues or community.