

MENTAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT PLAN



PURPOSE

Community sporting clubs may face situations that impact the mental health and wellbeing of their members and wider community.

This plan outlines how your club can respond to critical mental health incidents in a timely, respectful and coordinated manner.

WHEN TO USE THIS PLAN

This plan should be used following any critical incident that has the potential to cause significant distress within the club community, including:

- death of a club member, volunteer or supporter
- serious injury or illness
- road trauma involving a club member
- natural disasters
- violence, abuse or other traumatic events
- any event that causes significant distress within the club community.



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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A clear understanding of roles and responsibilities helps ensure an effective and coordinated club response.

The club committee's role is to provide steady leadership during a critical incident and is responsible for:

- ensuring this plan is accessible to members and volunteers
- maintaining confidentiality and privacy
- coordinating and approving communications to members and stakeholders.

If the club has a wellbeing officer or similar role, they can be called upon to:

- act as the primary contact for any mental health and wellbeing concerns
- liaise with emergency services and support agencies
- coordinate support and referral pathways for coaches, volunteers and committee
- maintain records of actions taken following an incident.

All club members, coaches and officials share a responsibility for contributing to a safe and supportive environment, they should:

- report concerns promptly to the committee or wellbeing officer
- follow club procedures and communications during a critical incident
- respect the privacy and confidentiality of affected individuals
- encourage affected members to access appropriate support services.



Coaches and club leaders should provide appropriate support, while recognising the limitations of their role.

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RESPONDING TO A CRITICAL INCIDENT

Step 1: Ensure immediate safety

- Contact emergency services (000) if there is immediate risk to any person's safety.
- Ensure affected individuals are safe and receive appropriate support.
- Follow directions provided by emergency services and relevant authorities.

Step 2: Notify club leadership

- Inform the club committee and/or wellbeing officer as soon as possible.
- Establish the facts of a situation before sharing information.
- Avoid speculation, rumours or sharing of unverified information.

Step 3: Coordinate communication

- Prepare clear, consistent and respectful communication.
- Protect the privacy of people affected and their families.
- Share information on a need-to-know basis.
- Include details of support services where appropriate.
- Nominate a single spokesperson to manage media enquiries.

Step 4: Support affected members

The club may provide support through:

- wellbeing check-ins with affected members
- referral to mental health support services
- information sessions or wellbeing workshops facilitated by qualified providers
- flexible participation arrangements for people impacted by the incident
- ongoing monitoring of the wellbeing of those affected.

Step 5: Refer to professional support

Club officials, coaches and volunteers are not expected to provide counselling.

Members requiring additional support should be encouraged to access professional services, including:

- Lifeline: 13 11 14
- Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636
- headspace: www.headspace.org.au
- Emergency services: 000
- Local GP or mental health professional.

Step 6: Recovery and follow-up

Following an incident, the club committee and/or wellbeing officer should:

- monitor the wellbeing of affected members
- assess whether additional support measures are needed
- consider any adjustments to club activities or events
- conduct a review of the club's response and update this plan if necessary.

ACCESSIBILITY AND REVIEW

The Mental Health Management Plan should be:

- stored in the club office and/or secure shared drive
- made available to committee members, coaches and volunteers
- reviewed annually, or following any critical incident, to ensure ongoing effectiveness and relevance.