

From: Commissioner QAS
Sent: Friday, 25 May 2018 2:27 PM
To: All QAS Staff [DDG] <AllQASStaffDDG@ambulance.qld.gov.au>
Subject: Staff support communique



Dear All QAS Staff

Some of you may have seen last night's media coverage on the ABC regarding the potential tragic consequences of the use of substances by paramedics as a way of dealing with personal or work related stressors.

When we see stories like this we immediately empathise with those involved, particularly the family members who are also impacted – and our thoughts go out to them. While yesterday's media coverage focused on other Ambulance Services within Australia, it was a sobering reminder of some of the challenges we too face.

We know that in any given year, 1 in 5 people will suffer from a mental health issue. QAS personnel are not immune to this. Sadly, we also know that, like the general population, there may be times when some individuals utilise alcohol or other drugs of dependence as a coping strategy, which may lead to additional stress, addiction or further difficulty coping.

I would like to reiterate that the QAS is committed to providing support and the necessary resources to maximise recovery or enhance wellbeing for anyone in QAS who is struggling with any issue.

We know that early access to support is the key to maintaining wellbeing at work and within your personal lives outside of work. The services that are available to you and your immediate dependant family members, through Priority One, are free and confidential and can be accessed for *any reason* including non-work related issues. You can access the contact numbers for these services, available in your area, through the QAS Portal under the *Priority One* tab or at the following link <https://qas.psba.qld.gov.au/priorityone/Pages/default.aspx>. Additionally, you may choose to access free confidential counselling through the Priority One telephone counselling service on 1800 805 980.

I can understand that some people may not wish to access the internal support services for various reasons, however, there are a range of other support services available to you. Accessing your GP can also provide an important first step to recovery. You can also access a more comprehensive list of other external support services, including some of those listed below, on the QAS Portal:

QAS Priority One Telephone Counselling - 1800 805 980

Lifeline – 13 11 14
Beyondblue – 1300 22 4636

The QAS is currently planning to dedicate a staff forum to further discuss staff health and wellbeing, and will include presentations from external experts.

Please reach out if we can help support anyone who is currently struggling with any of these issues. Your ongoing health and wellbeing is a key focus for QAS.

Regards

Russell Bowles ASM



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