

ACSEP Mental Health Plan

In response to the increasing prevalence of mental health issues in the medical profession, the tragic deaths of two of our colleagues at the end of 2015 and the *National Forum on Reducing the Risk of Suicide in the Medical Profession* held in Sydney in September, 2017, the ACSEP is proud to announce an integrated, multi-dimensional approach to supporting the mental health of our members. This was first launched on October 20, 2017 by then ACSEP President, Adam Castricum, and will be regularly updated as more valuable resources become available.

The **eight point** plan consists of

1. **Staying active with regular exercise**, balanced with **time with family** and exploring and using **mindfulness** techniques
 - a. [Practicing what we preach – ways to keep healthy](#) – an excellent blog from ACSEP Fellow, Dr. John Best
 - b. <https://www.headspace.com>
<https://smilingmind.com.au>
2. **Each to have a GP – maximum 1 CPD point for seeing GP each year**
3. **Mental health e-modules - 1 CPD point per module completed** – The College has a **Mental Health for Doctors** module now available on the LMS for all College members to access as part of their membership. It can be found in the Internal Medicine section.
4. **College Better Members support / Rural Members Support**
<https://www.acsep.org.au/page/better-members/member-wellbeing>
 Members only support page with member wellbeing page with links to government and medical body links regarding mental health and doctor support networks, including
<https://www.dr4drs.com.au>
 A website developed by medical professionals for medical professionals and medical students to keep them healthy in mind and body
<https://ruralspecialist.org.au>
 Financial support for rural and remote specialists to assist with CPD requirements
5. **Promotion of positive role models / messages**
 - a. College Culture and Values
Integrity,
Professionalism,
Excellence,
Leadership,
Teamwork
 - b. [Equality and Inclusion statement](#), [Reconciliation Action Plan](#), updated [Bullying, Discrimination, Harassment and Unacceptable Behaviour Policy](#) and [Grievance Policy and Procedure](#)
 - c. College awards
 - i. annual **ACSEP Registrar Training Supervisor awards** at Annual Fellowship dinner as nominated by Registrars,
 - ii. annual **ACSEP Fellows and Registrar Research** awards
 - iii. **Fred Better award** for registrars who display exceptional personal, humanitarian or clinical qualities beyond the formal requirements of the College training program
 - iv. **Ken Crichton Distinguished service award** for outstanding service to the College
 - v. more information regarding these awards are posted on the [ACSEP website](#) with a call for nominations in the November newsletter
 - d. encourage diverse career paths especially mid-career - administrative, research, university, CMO roles.
 - e. post exams support for those who fail part 2 (written and clinical) - through Board of Censors to Clinical Training Supervisors, support in newsletter and from National Office
 - f. creation of **Retiring Fellows support group**
6. **Raise awareness through College organised activities**

- a. conference - **mental health workshops**, activity mornings, **mental health first aid course** (we also hope to be able to offer these in various states and in NZ) – these sessions will earn **1 CPD point per hour**
- b. activities - **ACSEP Annual #DoctorDash** midyear as a virtual online event so can be included anywhere in the world through social media, potential charity cycling rides and other events
- c. social media – **#DoctorDash**, **#CrazySocks4Docs** day, mental health days and other initiatives
- d. provide healthy food / drink choices at all College activities

7. College External Member Assistance Program

The College has engaged Converge International Response to provide responsive short-term off site confidential counselling support for any ACSEP members or staff in need. This can be accessed in person and remotely. More information is available through the [Better Members website](#).

8. College Peer Support / mentoring group – available only to ACSEP Fellows and Registrars

This group will consist of Fellows from both sides of the Tasman representing a diverse set of experience and knowledge and will help facilitate discussion of issues whether health related or not around career - burn out, anxiety, negative feedback, need for change; family, personal

- a. the College would offer additional **Mental health first aid for Health Professional** training for all who agree to be in this group - **CPD points for this training at 1 point per hour**
- b. this group will be promoted on the members only website through the Better Members site under **Peer Support Group** with list of Fellows with their contact details.
- c. We ask that this service and the members of this Peer Support group be respected by all and engaged appropriately

I trust you will all welcome these initiatives to help us all be better, healthier doctors - which will ultimately be to the benefit of our patients, our colleagues, our families and most of all, ourselves.

Warm regards

Keep active

Adam

Appendix: High Level Summary – National Forum on Reducing the Risk of Suicide in the Medical Profession, Sept 14, 2017

V4 - Updated 13 February, 2020 by Adam Castricum, Chair of Mental Health Working Group