



## Protocol for Responding to Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Concerns

The following protocol should be used to guide a response to support a staff member presenting with significant mental health and wellbeing issues. Issues could include but are not limited to:

- Suicidal ideation
- Psychotic episode
- Behaviour towards others that is out-of-character or unusual
- Delusional thoughts
- Poses a significant risk to self or others.

### At School

- If the risk is immediate (ie presents a danger to self or others), call 000 for an ambulance and/or police
- The staff member should not be left alone and should be monitored at all times (by a member of the Leadership Team, the College Nurse, or a member of the Counselling Department)
- Support the staff member to make contact with existing supports (for example, contact their mental health care professional, contact lifeline)
- Do not use Student Reception or First Aid; check the availability of rooms in the Bruton building, including the Principal's Office
- Alert the Principal or the Deputy Principal (or another member of the Leadership Team, if they are not available)
- Determine a plan for self-care with the staff member:
  - Recommend connecting with a healthcare professional (ie GP, AccessEAP, Psychologist or existing mental health practitioner – Psychologist, Social Worker – if the staff member has one)
  - Ask staff member for permission to speak with a family member
- Another option is to contact the CAT Team (Crisis Assessment Treatment Team - contact details below)
- Document your concerns and actions via the Incident Reporting Form (select Incident/Accident - Serious Injury).

### Out of School Hours

If you have received communication from a staff member out of school hours, that indicates their safety and wellbeing is compromised:

- If you believe the risk is immediate, call 000, ambulance and/or police
- Phone the CAT Team of the area in which the staff member lives, let the staff member know you are going to do this
- Provide the CAT Team with the information you have:
  - *Location – where is the staff member?*

- *Phone number – the number where you are calling from*
- *What happened – be able to effectively explain exactly what has happened or what staff member is telling you they are going to do?*
- *Number of people involved – how many people require assistance*
- *Condition – what is the current condition of the person in crisis? Describe presenting symptoms?*
- *What assistance is currently being given – are there emergency services already in attendance?*
- Document your concerns and actions, as above
- Follow-up with a phone call to the Principal or Deputy Principal.

## Post-Incident

- Check-in with any staff impacted, provide debriefing and counselling support for staff involved; this may need to occur over several weeks
- Secure the mental health care plan and/or a letter of clearance from the medical professional.

## CAT Team Contact Details

Another option for responding to a mental health crisis is contacting a CAT Team (Crisis Assessment Treatment Team – known as Acute Community Intervention Service in Victoria). You will need to contact the CAT Team assigned to the area in which the staff member lives. CAT Teams provide immediate help for people during a mental health crisis and work with other services such as police, ambulance, drug and alcohol, child protection, where required.

### Inner West (Moonee Valley)

Psychiatric triage (administration, information, assessment and referral)  
 24 hours a day, 7 days a week  
 Telephone: 1300 874 243 Royal Melbourne Hospital

For Staff Members who may live in other local government areas, please use this link to find the contact details for the relevant area:

- <http://www3.health.vic.gov.au/mentalhealthservices/adult/index.htm>

Contact Nurse On Call – 1300 60 60 24 – if you need assistance with the CAT Team number to call, they may also be able to provide further guidance on how to respond.

### Further Resources

- AccessEAP 1800 818 728 , <https://www.accesseap.com.au/>
- [https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/3-managing-mental-illness-workplace#s3\\_5](https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/3-managing-mental-illness-workplace#s3_5) - 3.5 What should I do if I am worried about the health and safety of a worker with mental illness?
- <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/mental-health>
- <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/servicesandsupport/colleagues-employees-and-mental-health-in-the-workplace>
- [Lifeline](#) (anyone having a personal crisis) — call 13 11 14 or chat online.
- [Suicide Call Back Service](#) (anyone thinking about suicide) — call 1300 659 467
- [SANE Australia — Get help](#)
- [Beyond Blue](#) (anyone feeling depressed or anxious) — call 1300 22 4636 or chat online
- [Black Dog Institute](#) (people affected by mood disorders) — online help.