WELLNOW

Welcome Pack

Individual Wellbeing

Organisational Wellbeing
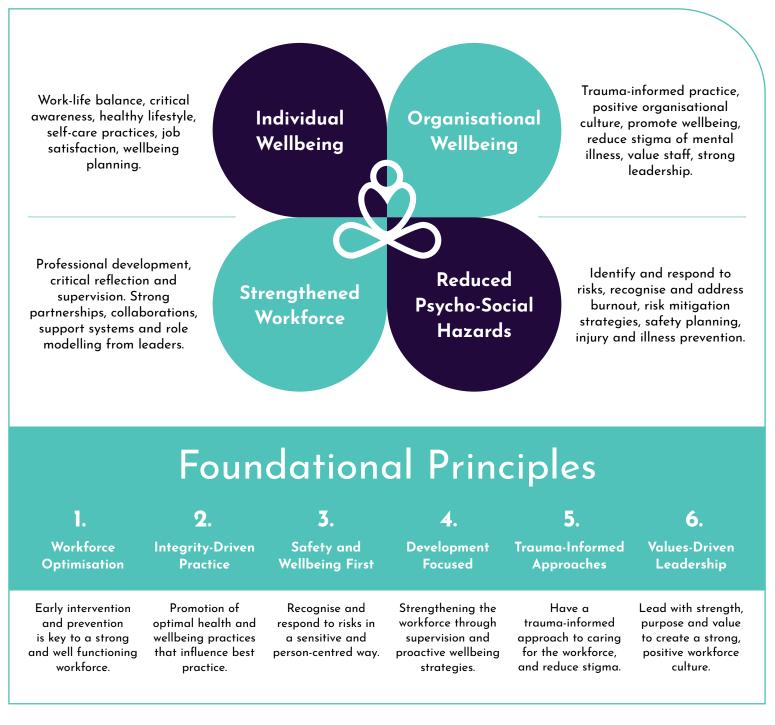
Strengthened Workforce

Reduced Psycho-Social Hazards

Supporting Workforce Wellbeing in the Housing and Homelessness Sector

Free templates, tools and resources to support and enhance staff resilience, performance and retention.

Wellbeing Framework

Vision: Our vision is to always place the person at the heart of our organisation's wellbeing functions, ensuring operations and functions actively promote both individual and organisational wellbeing. We are dedicated to minimising psycho-social hazards and enhancing the workforce through genuine care and values-driven responses.

Work-life balance, critical awareness, healthy lifestyle, self-care practices, job satisfaction, wellbeing planning.

Individual Wellbeing

Organisational Wellbeing

Trauma-informed practice, positive organisational culture, promote wellbeing, reduce stigma of mental illness, value staff, strong leadership.

Professional development, critical reflection and supervision. Strong partnerships, collaborations, support systems and role modelling from leaders.

Strengthened Workforce

Reduced Psycho-Social Hazards

Identify and respond to risks, recognise and address burnout, risk mitigation strategies, safety planning, injury and illness prevention.

Foundational Principles

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Workforce Optimisation	**Integrity-Driven Practice**	**Safety and Wellbeing First**	**Development Focused**	**Trauma-Informed Approaches**	**Values-Driven Leadership**
Early intervention and prevention is key to a strong and well functioning workforce.	Promotion of optimal health and wellbeing practices that influence best practice.	Recognise and respond to risks in a sensitive and person-centred way.	Strengthening the workforce through supervision and proactive wellbeing strategies.	Have a trauma-informed approach to caring for the workforce, and reduce stigma.	Lead with strength, purpose and value to create a strong, positive workforce culture.

HOMELESSNESS QLD

SHELTER
Because home matters

WELLBEING FRAMEWORK V2

Foundational Principles

1. Workforce Optimisation

- **Establish a wellbeing check-in system with staff** to monitor their wellbeing and identify any early signs of stress or burnout.
- **Offer training and sessions and resources** on stress management techniques, resilience-building strategies, and self-care practices.
- **Foster and cultivate a culture of support** where colleagues feel empowered to seek help when needed. Encourage team bonding activities, peer support networks and mentorship programs.
- **Offer flexible work arrangements.** Recognise the diverse needs of staff, allow opportunities such as remote work, flexible hours or compressed work weeks.
- **Provide holistic wellbeing programs** that address physical, mental and emotional health. e.g. Workshops, wellness challenges and resources such as counselling services.

2. Integrity-Driven Practice

- **Model integrity-driven practice.** Demonstrate integrity in all aspects of practice, uphold ethical standards, honesty and transparency in decision-making processes.
- **Establish clear policies and procedures** for ethical conduct and integrity in services. Ensure staff are informed and have resources for guidance and support on ethical dilemmas.
- **Foster and maintain** a work environment that adheres to codes of conduct, ensuring professional boundaries are maintained.
- **Provide regular training sessions and workshops on ethics and integrity.** Upskill staff to navigate complex ethical issues, make informed decisions, and uphold professional standards with clients and colleagues.
- **Encourage staff members to seek guidance** from supervisors or ethics committees when faced with difficult decisions, promoting a collaborative approach to problem-solving.
- **Foster a culture** where staff engage in self-reflection and critical thinking about their own values, biases and ethical responsibilities.

3. Safety and Wellbeing First

- **Prioritise workforce safety training.** Ensure all staff receive comprehensive training on safety protocols and risk management procedures specific to their roles and workplaces.
- **Conduct regular risk assessments** of programs and facilities for potential safety hazards or security vulnerabilities, and implement proactive measures to mitigate risks.
- **Allocate sufficient staffing levels, equipment and funding** to support effective safety and risk management practices across all services. Ensure staff have resources to promptly and effectively address safety concerns.
- **Develop and communicate** clear and safe processes for reporting safety concerns or incidents to the appropriate management and authorities.
- **Foster a culture of safety awareness.** Regularly discuss safety topics, share best practices, discuss wellbeing and burnout, and recognise proactive safety behaviours.

4. Development Focused

- **Provide supervision and reflective practice opportunities** for ongoing learning and development and promote a culture of continuous improvement and learning.
- **Provide opportunities for staff** to enhance their skills and expertise through targeted training and professional development programs.
- **Offer flexible learning options** such as online courses and seminars to accommodate varying schedules, preferences and learning styles.
- **Encourage and offer** peer learning and mentorship programs where experienced professionals can share their knowledge and expertise with colleagues.
- **Emphasise the importance of self-care and work-life balance** as integral components of professional development. Include resources and support for staff in planning and workforce development actions.
- **Recognise and reward staff members** for their commitment to their profession. Celebrate milestones and achievements, provide opportunities for advancement, offer incentives and development opportunities, recognise and celebrate best practice outcomes.

5. Trauma-Informed Approaches

- **Provide comprehensive training on trauma-informed practice.** Ensure staff members understand the prevalence and effects of trauma and how to recognise signs of trauma in themselves and others.
- **Foster a work environment** that prioritises safety, trust and support. Implement policies and practices that promote psychological safety, e.g. regular check-ins, peer support and supervision.
- **Provide access to trauma-informed support services** such as counselling, therapy or support groups to assist staff in processing their own trauma or secondary trauma exposure.
- **Empower and provide staff** with self-care strategies and coping mechanisms to mitigate the impact of trauma on their wellbeing. Offer resources and training on stress management, mindfulness and boundary-setting.
- **Promote reflective practice and continuous learning** Provide opportunities for staff to participate in workshops, case consultations or supervision sessions on trauma awareness and self-care strategies.

6. Values-Driven Leadership

- **Demonstrate values-driven leadership.** Embody the organisation's core values in your own actions and decision-making processes. Be transparent, ethical and accountable.
- **Create a work environment built on trust, respect and collaboration.** Encourage open communication, active listening and mutual support among staff members, promoting a sense of belonging and shared purpose.
- **Empower staff to make ethical decisions** aligned with the organisation values by providing the necessary guidance, resources and autonomy.
- **Identify diversity champions** to actively promote policies fostering belonging and respect for all. Ensure leadership prioritises fairness, equity and accessibility.
- **Invest in workforce professional development and wellbeing.** Provide opportunities for growth, training and support through paid opportunities, peer learning, collaborative practice models, case consultation and industry-led opportunities.

Workplace Wellbeing

INDIVIDUAL WELLBEING PLAN GUIDELINES

WHAT IS AN INDIVIDUAL WELLBEING PLAN?

An Individual Wellbeing Plan (IWP) is a personalised plan that is designed to enhance and optimise an individual's overall health and wellbeing. Tailoring specific wellness goals to the unique needs and circumstances of each person, an IWP encompasses various domains of wellbeing, including physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, cultural and social aspects. This plan is a roadmap for individuals to identify their goals, aspirations, and potential challenges, while also outlining strategies and actions to promote positive wellbeing outcomes. It may encompass lifestyle changes, therapeutic interventions, and support measures, providing a comprehensive framework for self-improvement and sustained wellbeing. Typically developed collaboratively with the individual and relevant workplace supervisor, an IWP considers the individual's strengths, resources, and any existing limitations regarding health and wellbeing. Regular reviews and updates ensure that the plan remains dynamic and responsive to evolving needs, fostering a holistic and person-centred approach to health and wellbeing so the individual can thrive at home and at work.

WHY IS AN INDIVIDUAL WELLBEING PLAN IMPORTANT?

Implementing a comprehensive IWP is of paramount importance in any organisation as it not only reflects the person's and organisation's commitment to the health and wellness, but it is mutually beneficial to both parties in achieving a collaborative approach to workforce wellness. An IWP is crucial to workforce wellness as it serves as a proactive and personalised roadmap for individuals to navigate their journey towards optimal health and happiness. The sector is fast-paced, challenging and stressful at times, so having a structured plan allows individuals to be proactive by identifying and prioritising their physical, mental, and emotional needs. It provides a tangible framework for setting and achieving realistic goals, fostering a sense of purpose and direction in life. The process of creating an IWP encourages self-reflection, strengths identification, exploration of challenges, and connection to values and belief systems. Moreover, a wellbeing plan can act as a preventive tool, addressing potential health issues before they escalate, and empowers individuals to take an active role in enhancing their overall quality of life.

ALIGNED PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

- **Workforce optimisation:** Having an established a wellbeing check-in system with staff to monitor their wellbeing and identify any early signs of stress or burnout.
- **Integrity-Driven Practice:** Fostering a culture where staff members are encouraged to engage in self-reflection and critical thinking about their own values, biases, and ethical responsibilities.
- **Development Focused:** Significant emphasis on the importance of self-care and work-life balance as integral components of professional development, whereby resources and support for staff are included in support planning and workforce development actions.

- **Trauma-Informed Approaches:** Empower and provide staff with self-care strategies and coping mechanisms to mitigate the impact of trauma on their wellbeing by offering resources and training on stress management, mindfulness, and boundary-setting.

CRITICAL REFLECTION PROMPTS

Reflecting on these questions can provide people valuable insights into individual wellbeing within the workplace and help guide actions to enhance overall satisfaction and fulfilment. These can be done individually, but ideally with a supportive supervisor.

How would you describe your current workload and its impact on your work-life balance? Can anything change?	Are there specific tasks or projects that consistently contribute to stress, and how can they be managed more effectively?
Are there skills or knowledge areas you would like to further develop for both personal satisfaction and career progression?	Are there workplace challenges that, if addressed, could improve your overall workplace satisfaction? What ideas do you have?
How do you manage physical wellbeing during the workday, such as breaks, nutrition, and exercise?	Are there workplace initiatives that could better support your physical health?
How do you cope with stress and maintain mental wellbeing in the workplace?	Are there improvements or adjustments that could enhance your workspace?
Are there aspects of your job that create a sense of purpose and meaning for you?	Are there boundaries or adjustments that could improve your overall work-life integration and satisfaction?

WELLNESS LEVELS CHECK

Recognising what we think, feel and do related to our mental wellness is so important and empowering. Below are some guidelines to consider for each level of wellness:

POSITIVE MENTAL WELLNESS: What people may notice, think and feel
Positive approach: Having a positive outlook, communicating well with others, proactive and open communication, expressing needs/ideas/concerns in a productive way.
Connection and collaboration: Actively engaging in collaboration with others, fostering a sense of teamwork and mutual respect/support within the workplace.
Self-care activities: Positive stress management behaviours, such as seeking help when needed, debriefing, accessing supervision, taking breaks, utilising stress reduction techniques, listening to music, mindfulness, wind-down rituals.
Healthy work-life boundaries: Ability to maintain healthy boundaries between work and personal life, ability to switch off at the end of the day, taking regular and appropriate breaks, not taking work home etc.

Regular physical activity: Regular physical activity, exercise programs, or other wellness programs that promote physical wellbeing.

Positive problem-solving: Approaching challenges with a solution-focused mindset, focusing on problem-solving rather than dwelling on difficulties.

Engagement with wellbeing programs: Participating in workplace wellbeing programs and initiatives, such as workshops, seminars, or wellness challenges.

DECLINING MENTAL WELLNESS: What people may notice, think and feel

Increased irritability: Individuals may exhibit heightened irritability, becoming easily frustrated or agitated over minor issues.

Change in sleep patterns: Stress often disrupts sleep, leading to insomnia or changes in sleeping patterns, such as difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep.

Physical tension: Stress can manifest physically, resulting in muscle tension, headaches, or other physical discomfort.

Decreased concentration: Stress can impair cognitive function, leading to difficulties in concentration, memory, and decision-making.

Changes in eating habits: Some people respond to stress by overeating, while others may lose their appetite, leading to changes in eating habits.

Withdrawal and isolation: Stressed individuals may withdraw from social interactions, isolating themselves from friends, family, or colleagues.

Procrastination: Stress can contribute to a sense of overwhelm, leading individuals to procrastinate or avoid tasks they find challenging.

Increased restlessness: Restlessness and an inability to relax are common signs of stress, as the mind remains preoccupied with worries.

Mood changes: Individuals can experience sudden shifts between sadness, anxiety, anger, feeling overwhelmed, low mood.

Negative thinking: Self-criticism, catastrophising, pessimistic, focus on challenges rather than achievements, racing mind, difficulty concentrating.

Decreased enjoyment in activities: Stressed individuals may lose interest in activities they once enjoyed, finding it difficult to experience pleasure or relaxation.

CONCERNING MENTAL WELLNESS: What people may notice, think and feel

Frequent absenteeism at work: Consistent and unexplained absences, increased sick days, leaving early frequently, repetitive running late to work.

Decline in work performance: A noticeable and sustained decline in work performance, such as not achieving set tasks, missed deadlines, decreased productivity, increased errors, or avoiding work tasks.

Increased agitation or irritability: Heightened levels of agitation, irritability, or conflicts with colleagues that are unusual for the individual.

Social withdrawal: Avoidance of social interactions, team activities, or workplace events that is unusual for the individual.

Neglect of personal appearance: Observable decline in personal grooming or appearance standards and ability to engage in self-care.

Expressions of hopelessness or suicide ideations: Verbalising feelings of hopelessness, despair, or a lack of motivation, as well as verbalising suicide ideations or threats to harm self.

Maladaptive coping strategies: Excessive drinking, drug taking, excessive use of prescription medications, self-injurious behaviours.

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR WELLBEING PLAN

Inclusions of life areas and ideas for actions/tasks:

Emotional Wellbeing	Managing stress, good sleep hygiene, staying on top of work, seeking therapy
Intellectual Wellbeing	Staying curious, learning new things, reading, group activities, engaging in professional development
Physical Wellbeing	Regular exercise, balanced nutrition, preventative medical care
Connection Wellbeing	Positive social network, attending social events, staying connected
Environmental Wellbeing	Caring for surroundings, avoiding clutter, recycling and volunteering for environmental initiatives
Spiritual Wellbeing	Connecting with land, connecting with culture, seeking guidance from loved ones, values mapping
Professional Wellbeing	Having career goals, engaging in professional development, seeking supervision, strategies for managing workload

HELPFUL RESOURCES

Links to 24/7 support services:

Lifeline 13 11 14

Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467

Beyond Blue 1300 22 46 36

MensLine Australia 1300 78 99 78

Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800

1800 Respect 1800 737 732

13 YARN - 13 92 76 - for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Additional support services:

Queensland Health 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)

Alcohol and Drug Information Service 1800 177 833

Counselling online (drug and alcohol) 1800 888 236

Quitline 13 78 48

SANE Australia 1800 18 7263

headspace 1800 650 890

youthbeyondblue 1300 22 46 36

Veterans Support Service 1800 011 046

PANDA (perinatal anxiety and depression) 1300 726 306

Butterfly Foundation (eating disorders) 1800 334673

Eating Disorders Queensland (07) 3844 6055

QLife (LGBTI) 1800 184 527

Griefline 1300 845 745

Grow Australia (support through peer groups) 1800 558 268

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT SOMEONE:

When choosing what action to take, consider the following:

- **Immediate Support**: If you are supporting someone and you are concerned for their immediate safety, please contact emergency services on **000 or 112**.
  Alternatively, you can contact **Mental Health Call (Qld)** on **1300 MH CALL (1300 642 255)** – this is a confidential mental health telephone triage service that provides the first point of contact to public mental health services to Queenslanders. In the workplace, it is important to tell your direct line supervisor of any situations of this nature.
- **Ongoing Support:** If you are concerned about someone and they are not at immediate risk, please refer to your organisation's internal policies for supporting staff in the workplace and seek consultation/guidance from your senior management and/or Human Resources department.

SUPPORT GUIDELINES IN THE WORKPLACE

When thinking about our roles in the workplace and how best to support people who are having difficulties with their mental health, people need to really consider their role and approach to others at their time of need. Responding to a staff member who has declining or concerning mental wellness requires empathy, support, and understanding. Below are some key guidelines to consider and implement:

- **Express concern and empathy**: Approach the person privately and express genuine concern for their wellbeing. Use empathetic language, such as "I've noticed you seem to be struggling, and I'm here to support you."
- **Listen actively**: Allow the person to share their feelings without interruption. Listen attentively and avoid making assumptions or judgments.
- **Validate their feelings**: Acknowledge their emotions and validate their experience without downplaying or dismissing their feelings.

- **Respect privacy**: Respect the person's privacy and only discuss their situation with those who have a need to know, following any confidentiality policies in place.

- **Refer to resources**: Provide information on available mental health resources, such as Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), counselling services, or support groups.

- **Follow up**: Find a key support person in the workplace to regularly check in on the person's wellbeing. Discuss any progress, changes in their situation, or adjustments needed to better support them.

- **Involve HR**: If necessary, involve the Human Resources department or service to ensure compliance with workplace policies and explore available support services/programs.

- Remember, every individual is unique, and responses should be tailored to the specific situation. A compassionate and supportive approach can significantly contribute to a person's wellbeing and their ability to manage and recover from mental health challenges.

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES AND FORMS *[Organisation to add]*

This guideline document supports the Individual Wellbeing Plan template, which you can download for free from the WellNow website and customise for your workplace and staff needs.

Download the Individual Wellbeing Plan Template

These documents are just two in a suite of FREE downloadable and customisable resources for available on the WellNow website. Supported by a comprehensive framework and guided by foundational principles, the WellNow Workforce Wellbeing Framework and resources have been developed in collaboration with Queensland's homelessness and housing sector.

The WellNow project is delivered by **Homelessness Queensland** and **Q Shelter** under the Workforce Connect Fund, powered by the Queensland Government's Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032.

Explore the WellNow Wellbeing Framework and resources at: **www.wellnow.org.au**

WELLNOW

A Wellbeing Framework for the Housing and Homelessness Sector

The WellNow team are here to help you understand the Wellbeing Framework and resources, so you can customise and implement them in your workplace. We'd also love your feedback and suggestions!

- Individual Wellbeing
- Organisational Wellbeing
- Strengthened Workforce
- Reduced Psycho-Social Hazards

Scan the QR code to send our team a message, and we'll be in contact with you soon to support you and your workplace with WellNow.