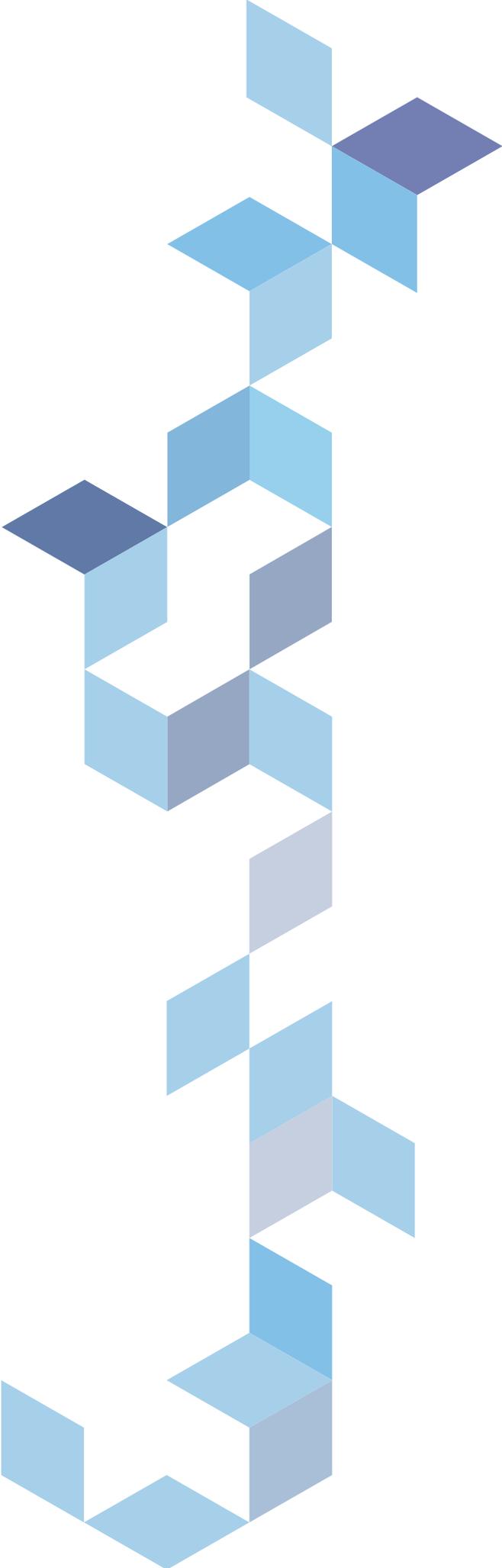


# Health and wellbeing

**Health and wellbeing**

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## Psychological health

As a PCBU you have a primary duty of care to ensure the psychological health of your workers, in the same way that their physical health must be taken care of.

At any given time, approximately one in five Australian workers is likely to be experiencing a mental health condition such as depression or anxiety. This is estimated to cost Australian workplaces \$10.9 billion per year in absenteeism, presenteeism and compensation claims.

It is therefore worth considering your investment in mental health initiatives – for every \$1 you spend, there is an average return on investment of \$2.30.

A 'mentally healthy' workplace:

- has a positive workplace culture
- minimises workplace risks related to mental health
- supports people with mental health conditions appropriately
- reduces stigma and discrimination.

## Safety solutions

Identify psychological health hazards through one-on-one discussions with workers, observations and reviewing past incidents.

Consider the following questions:

- What are individual job demands and has the level changed recently?
- Do any workers have too low a level of control/ autonomy in their daily duties?
- Have you provided sufficient support to your workers (management, training, resources, employee assistance program)?
- Do workers have good relationships at work?
- Have you clarified job descriptions appropriately?
- Have you communicated and managed any business changes effectively?
- Are workers remunerated and recognised adequately?
- Are you treating all workers fairly?

Control the psychological health risks through:

- matching jobs to skills
- setting reasonable and achievable timeframes for work, through consultation with workers
- clearly defining job roles and scope of the work
- providing flexible working arrangements and considering work/life balance
- engaging workers in decision-making and providing regular feedback on performance
- ensuring support systems are in place for workers, as well as allow feedback to employers (e.g. bullying and harassment)
- linking workers to employee assistance programs.

Maintain and review control measures to ensure their effectiveness, in particular when a psychological injury occurs or before making change.

## Further information

For more detailed information refer to the Safe Work Australia fact sheet *Preventing Psychological Injury under Work Health and Safety Laws*.  
[safeworkaustralia.gov.au](http://safeworkaustralia.gov.au)

### Top tip

Ensure that you first address inherent risks by looking at the systems of work design and management, before complementing with health and wellbeing programs.

## Resources and contacts

### Beyondblue

[beyondblue.org.au](http://beyondblue.org.au)

[headsup.org.au](http://headsup.org.au)

*Beyondblue* is a national organisation with the aim of raising awareness of anxiety and depression in the community, and provides resources for recovery, management and resilience.

*Beyondblue*, in conjunction with the Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance, has developed the national *Heads Up* campaign, to help workplaces create a mentally healthy workplace.

Support resources available online include a *Mental health in the workplace toolbox talk training package*, which is a free resource to assist workplaces in ongoing engagement with workers about mental health. The package includes a 90 minute training session which is delivered to managers by a nominated professional or educator. After the session, managers are equipped to deliver toolbox talks and better support workers who may be experiencing or are at risk of mental health conditions. Materials such as brochures and posters are included for display in the workplace.

If you have further queries in relation to this resource or the *Heads Up* initiative, please email [headsup@beyondblue.org.au](mailto:headsup@beyondblue.org.au)

In addition to this toolkit, the *New Access* program provides free, structured, confidential phone coaching about wellbeing issues for individuals. This resource is for small businesses that do not have access to employee assistance programs and is accessible across South Australia. This resource is not a crisis service.

### Menswatch

[aimhs.com.au](http://aimhs.com.au)

Menswatch is another service that has been accessed by many farmers across the state. Group peer education is provided to enhance the capacity of men to support other men experiencing extreme distress and emotional challenges which threaten wellbeing (e.g. drought, disasters, relationship break-down). This program is suited to a farming systems group looking to support member wellbeing.

## In emergencies please contact:

### 1 Your GP

to gain referral to specialist psychologist services (e.g. receive a Mental Health Shared Care plan or access the Rural Primary Health Service).

### 2 Lifeline

call 13 11 14  
for access to a 24 hour confidential telephone crisis support service.

### 3 Suicide Call Back Service

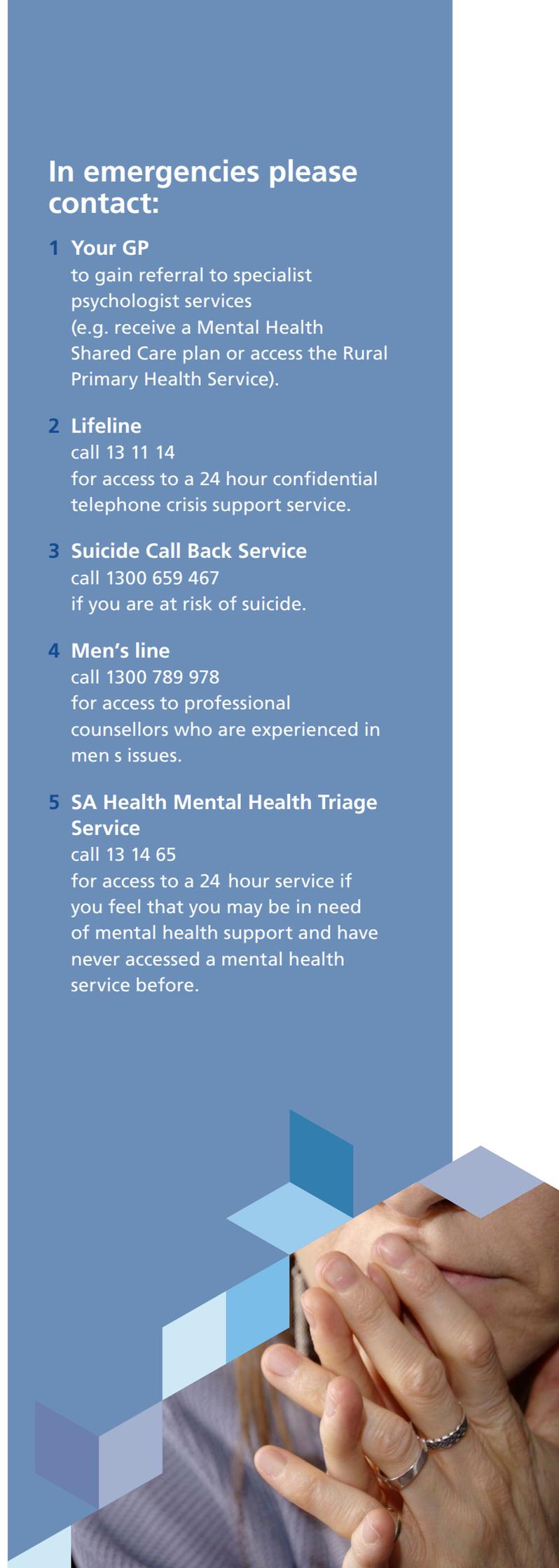
call 1300 659 467  
if you are at risk of suicide.

### 4 Men's line

call 1300 789 978  
for access to professional counsellors who are experienced in men's issues.

### 5 SA Health Mental Health Triage Service

call 13 14 65  
for access to a 24 hour service if you feel that you may be in need of mental health support and have never accessed a mental health service before.



## Drugs and alcohol

Use of alcohol and other drugs (before or while at work) becomes a work health and safety issue not only for workers, but for everyone else around them.

You have a responsibility to ensure that any worker affected by drugs/alcohol is not in a position of personal risk – and does not present a hazard or risk to the health and safety of others. Workers also have a responsibility.

### Safety solutions

Assess whether risks exist or may arise from alcohol and other drugs by considering:

- patterns of alcohol and/or other drug consumption – people who use large amounts on single occasions may create different risks compared to people who are regular heavy users
- type of workplace culture (e.g. do you encourage workers to drink after work?)
- isolation – workers in isolated areas or who are separated from family and friends sometimes consume alcohol and/or other drugs due to boredom, loneliness or lack of social activities
- levels of supervision – inadequate supervision and communication about expected roles and behaviour on the job may lead to unacceptable actions
- extended working hours or shift work – illicit drugs, such as amphetamines, or prescription medication may be taken to keep awake
- interpersonal factors (e.g. bullying at work may increase risks)
- working conditions – hot or dangerous environments may contribute to alcohol and/or other drug taking.

Work functions are an important way to thank workers and celebrate special occasions. To act responsibly you could consider:

- providing non-alcoholic drinks or limiting refreshments to lower alcohol drinks such as light beer or wine
- providing food and nibbles
- having a plan in place for those who cannot drive home safely (e.g. organising lifts, getting them to stay overnight, asking them to pack a swag).

If your assessment suggests some risk exists, then you will need to think about how to eliminate or reduce them.

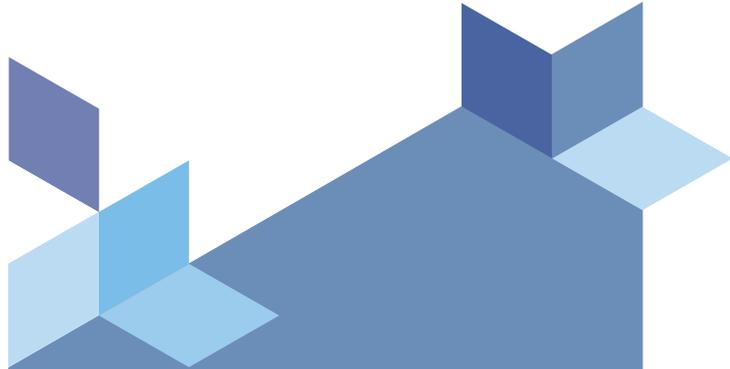
Except for alcohol testing, a positive drug test is not directly related to impairment nor does it provide a reliable indicator of impairment. It only detects whether somebody has been exposed to drugs.

Impairment tests, also known as 'fitness for work' or 'fitness for duty' testing systems, measure actual impairment rather than the existence of drugs or drug by-products in the system, and can be used as an alternative to, or in conjunction with, alcohol and other drug testing at the workplace.

As with drug testing, such testing has limits and should be part of a comprehensive workplace strategy that includes education, policy and procedures.

Having a drug and alcohol policy in place makes it really clear that your workplace will not tolerate the use of drugs and alcohol. Education and information also helps everyone at the workplace understand how to deal with drug or alcohol affected workers or visitors.

**A sample Drug and Alcohol Policy can be found on page 145.**



The use of alcohol and other drugs can impact on workplaces in a number of ways, affecting relationships, safety and productivity. New research has estimated that 2.5 million days are lost annually due to alcohol and other drug use, at a cost of more than \$680 million.

*Roche, A., Pidd, K. & Kostadinov, V. (2015). Alcohol and drug related absenteeism: a costly problem. Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health (online).*

## Resources and contacts

A range of resources and services are available to help PCBUs and workers talk about, manage and prevent alcohol and drug use.

### Safe Work Australia

*Work-Related Alcohol and Drug Use: A Fit for Work Issue*  
[safeworkaustralia.gov.au](http://safeworkaustralia.gov.au)

### SafeWork SA

#### Take 10@10 to talk safety at work

10-minute toolbox-type session on workplace drug and alcohol strategy.

[safework.sa.gov.au](http://safework.sa.gov.au)

### SA Health

Drug and alcohol emergency information.  
[sahealth.sa.gov.au](http://sahealth.sa.gov.au)

### Alcohol and Drug Information Service

The Alcohol and Drug Information Service is a confidential telephone counselling, information and referral service staffed by trained professionals with experience in the alcohol and other drugs field.

Phone 1300 13 1340 from 8.30am to 10pm every day (local call fee for South Australians) or visit [sahealth.sa.gov.au](http://sahealth.sa.gov.au).

### Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia

Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia has a range of information resources, pamphlets, posters, professional and research publications available for download. These resources are available online, with some available for order.

[sahealth.sa.gov.au](http://sahealth.sa.gov.au)

### beyondblue

Drugs, alcohol and mental health fact sheet

[resources.beyondblue.org.au](http://resources.beyondblue.org.au)

### Counselling Online

Free and confidential 24/7 online drug and alcohol counselling and referral line.

Phone 1800 888 236

[counsellingonline.org.au](http://counsellingonline.org.au)

# Fatigue

Fatigue is more than just feeling a little drowsy. It is a state of mental and or physical exhaustion which reduces your ability to remain alert, and adversely affects your ability to perform work safely and effectively. It can occur because of prolonged mental or physical activity, sleep loss and/or disruption of the internal body clock.

Both work and non-work related factors or a combination of both can cause fatigue, which can also accumulate over time. Imagine 20 hours harvesting a crop and a long drive home, followed by a sleepless night with a sick child ... for three days in a row.

The effects of fatigue on work performance can be compared with the effects of alcohol.

Signs or symptoms that may indicate fatigue include:

- excessive yawning or falling asleep at work
- short-term memory problems and an inability to concentrate
- noticeably reduced capacity to engage in effective interpersonal communication
- impaired decision-making and judgment
- reduced hand-eye coordination or slow reflexes
- other changes in behaviour (e.g. repeatedly arriving late for work)
- increased rates of unplanned absence.

## Safety solutions

### Work scheduling

- Design working hours and rosters to enable enough recovery time between shifts.
- Ensure workers take adequate and regular breaks to rest, eat and rehydrate.
- Have access to on-call workers for unplanned leave, emergencies or during increased workload.

### Shift work and rosters

- Structure work demands so that they are highest towards the middle of the shift and decrease towards the end.
- Overlap consecutive shifts to allow for shift hand-over.
- Consider if night work is necessary and rearrange schedules so non-essential work is not carried out at night.

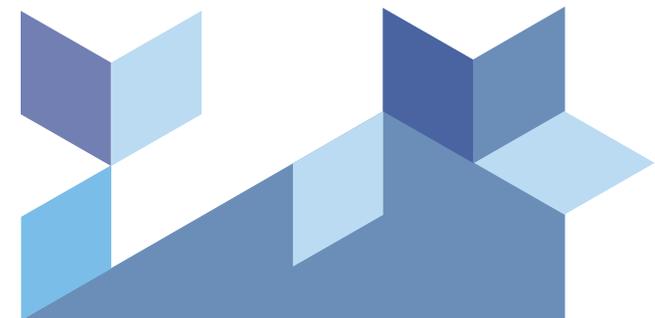
### Job demands

- Introduce job rotation to limit a build-up of mental and physical fatigue.
- Plan for expected changes in work flow, including anticipated peaks and troughs during the year.
- Encourage workers to report concerns they may have about work-related fatigue.

### Environmental conditions

- Avoid working during periods of extreme heat or cold, or minimise exposure time through job rotation.

Workers have a duty to take reasonable care for their health and safety, including getting enough sleep so they can arrive at work ready for duty.



## Did you know

Being awake for 17 hours impairs performance to the same level as having a 0.05 blood alcohol content. Being awake for 20 hours impairs performance to the same level as having a 0.1 blood alcohol content.

*Worksafe Victoria, WorkCover NSW, Fatigue prevention in the workplace, June 2008*

## Sun protection

Employing outdoor workers places sun protection responsibilities on a PCBU. To meet your work health and safety obligations you should address UV radiation as a workplace hazard and develop ways to prevent this hazard to ensure that workers are protected.

If you are a worker on a farming property, you have a responsibility for taking care of your own health and complying with reasonable policies.

## Safety solutions

- Always keep some pump applicator sunscreen in your workshops and vehicles for everyone to use.
- Use shaded areas where possible (e.g. a portable shade structure), take breaks in the shade and consider alternative hours which avoid direct sunlight.
- Wear suitable personal protective equipment (PPE) for sun protection – sunscreen, broad brimmed hat, clothing that covers additional skin surfaces and sunglasses/safety glasses that meet the Australian Standard.
- Check your skin regularly and see your GP immediately if you notice any changes. Mole mapping has become a popular safeguard and is now more available in rural medical practices.
- Provide window tinting for work vehicles.
- Move work away from reflective surfaces (e.g. concrete slabs).
- Rotate staff and work, so that the same person is not always working outside.

## Further information

### Cancer Council SA

Cancer Council SA is an independent non-government organisation that works across cancer research, prevention, awareness, support and advocacy.

A specific website section is devoted to the workplace and includes:

- how to develop a policy for your workplace
- online training
- booking a workplace education session.

Download a free SunSmart app for your smartphone and each day check the UV Index, times sun protection is required, as well as set a two-hourly sunscreen reminder.

For more information please visit [cancersa.org.au](http://cancersa.org.au) or call 13 11 20.

## A common question

### What is appropriate PPE to reduce your risk of exposure to UV radiation?

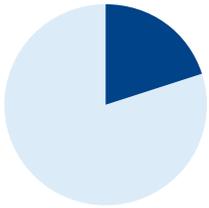
- **SLIP** on a lightweight long sleeved shirt with a collar and trousers (or longer shorts) made from material with an ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) of 50+.
- **SLOP** on broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30+ or higher. Apply sunscreen 20 minutes before going out in the sun and reapply every two hours.
- **SLAP** on a sun protective hat that shades the face, head, ears and neck.
- **SEEK** shade, particularly when you take breaks.
- **SLIDE** on wrap around sunglasses that are close fitting and meet the Australian Standard.

## Health and wellbeing

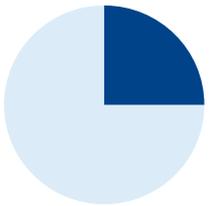
It's often assumed that farming is a healthy occupation with plenty of exercise and fresh air. However, the reality is that modern farmers face a number of different impacts on their health and wellbeing which need consideration to remain fit and well.

Obesity is on the rise due to the increasingly sedentary nature of farm work (sitting in tractors); stress levels can be high due to the number of aspects of farm business which are difficult to control; and alcohol is used widely and often at high levels in rural and regional areas.

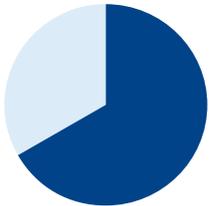
### Typical agriculture, farming and fishing workers



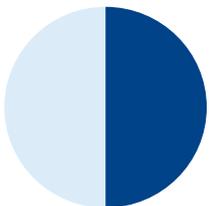
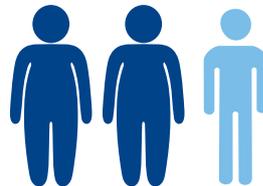
Almost  
**1 in 5** are  
**SMOKERS**



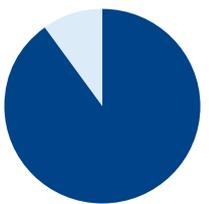
Over a  
**QUARTER** drink  
**ALCOHOL** at  
**RISKY** levels



More than  
**2 out of 3** are  
**OVERWEIGHT**  
or **OBESSE**



More than  
**HALF** do very  
low or **NO**  
exercise



**9** out of **10**  
do not eat the  
recommended  
intake of **FRUIT**  
and **VEGETABLES**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2013, data generated June 2015 in Table Builder using Australian Health Survey: Updated Results 2011-12, cat. no. 4364.0.55.003

## Business impacts

The impact of poor health and wellbeing on farm businesses is significant, regardless of whether farmers are employing people or not. If you have no workers, it is worth considering if your business could cope without you if you had a significant health issue, and manage this risk to the business.

For those with workers, farmers need to consider the costs of sick leave and replacing those who are forced to leave due to health issues. Poor health and wellbeing can be a hidden productivity issue amongst many Australian businesses.

## Why you can't afford not to invest in a healthy workforce

- Absenteeism costs Australian businesses \$7 billion annually, or an estimated \$2700, per worker, per year.
- Unhealthy workers take on average nine times more sick days than a healthy worker.
- Presenteeism (not functioning fully whilst at work, due to poor health) is estimated to cost Australian business \$26 billion per year in lost productivity (2005/06).
- Stress-related claims cost Australian business more than \$200 million annually.
- Obesity related poor health is estimated to cost South Australian businesses \$273 million (in 2008).

### Cost of sick leave

*It is estimated that implementing a successful workplace health program can decrease staff absenteeism due to sick leave by an average of 30%.*

### Cost of replacement staff

*It is estimated that implementing a successful workplace health program can decrease staff turnover by an average of 10%.*



cost of sick leave \$7200  
based on 30 sick days per  
workplace per year @ \$30/hr



cost of replacement  
staff \$135 000  
based on 3 workers resigning  
each year @ 75% of \$60 000  
annual wage

## implement a workplace health program

Estimated savings

\$2,160

+

\$13,500

=  
\$15,660



## Further information

### PPSA

A wide range of resources and links to tools and programs supporting farmer health and wellbeing are available on the PPSA website.

[ppsa.org.au/our-work/health-and-safety](http://ppsa.org.au/our-work/health-and-safety)

### SA Health

The 'Healthy living' section of the SA Health website is full of tips and tools to foster better health, wellbeing and healthy lifestyles.

- Try *Get Healthy*, a free, confidential information and telephone based coaching service that helps adults make lifestyle changes in relation to healthy eating, being physically active and achieving and maintaining a healthy weight.
- Download the *Healthy Workers Healthy Futures* toolkit, a guide to developing a successful workplace health program.
- Utilise Step 2 of the *Healthy Workers Audit Tool* to do an audit of how well your workplace currently supports worker health and wellbeing.
- Access the *SA Brief Health Check* which assesses current lifestyle and provides tips and referrals to support change.
- Search for SNAP resources (Smoking, Nutrition, Alcohol, Physical Inactivity).

[sahealth.sa.gov.au](http://sahealth.sa.gov.au)

## Case Study: *Fat Farmers* rural health initiative

The *Fat Farmers* began as a group of Yorke Peninsula farming families who train together and participate in community events such as the *City Bay Fun Run*. *Fat Farmers* groups are led by local farmers (team coordinators) who provide the motivation and support for other farmers to set a fitness goal and develop social networks in the process. The initiative has also been developed as a great family activity which includes all fitness levels, gender and age groups.

Anna Binna Pty Ltd is a family owned and operated farm on the Yorke Peninsula, and has been in the family for five generations. The farm produces wheat, barley, lentils and canola over several sites. Workers are involved in seeding, spraying and harvesting crops throughout the course of the year, and spend many hours driving tractors which increases the risk of a highly sedentary workplace.

To counteract this Anna Binna started a group of *Fat Farmers* where gym memberships are paid for all permanent workers to work out in the local town. They meet at the gym several times a week to exercise, and each year they take part in the *City to Bay*.

For further information about *Fat Farmers* visit [fatfarmers.com](http://fatfarmers.com) or email [info@fatfarmers.com](mailto:info@fatfarmers.com).



## Quick safety scans

Use these quick safety scans to look at key work health and safety issues on your property. Those items where you tick 'Sometimes' or 'Never' will need action to fix or do better. Use the safety solutions suggested earlier in the guide to help you improve.

Psychological health	Always	Sometimes	Never
You have looked for inherent risk in systems of work design and management.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An employee assistance program is available to workers (e.g. NewAccess).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other support systems are in place for workers to allow feedback to employers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A range of education and support programs are provided specific to workers, including emergency crisis support services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An anti-bullying policy has been developed in consultation with workers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workers are aware of the bullying reporting process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You have a process for dealing with bullying complaints.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Drugs and alcohol	Always	Sometimes	Never
You have a drug and alcohol policy, developed in consultation with workers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workers have signed the documentation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The policy is displayed in the workplace.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
When allowing alcohol at work functions, you provide food and low alcohol/non-alcoholic alternatives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alternative travel arrangements are provided for workers affected by drugs/alcohol.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education and information is available on the risks associated with drug and alcohol use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Fatigue	Always	Sometimes	Never
Fatigue risks have been assessed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategies/policies are in place to handle risks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fatigued workers are given time off work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rosters allow adequate recovery time between shifts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sun protection	Always	Sometimes	Never
Sunscreen is provided for everyone to use.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shaded work areas are used where possible, and alternative hours which avoid direct sunlight are considered.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PPE for sun protection is provided – broad brimmed hats, UV protectant clothing, sunglasses.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work vehicles have window tinting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workers and work tasks are rotated to ensure the same person is not always working outside.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shaded areas are provided for breaks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Health and wellbeing	Always	Sometimes	Never
A smoke free workplace environment is promoted and workers seeking to quit are supported.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Healthy food choices are offered in the workplace.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You promote and provide a workplace that encourages responsible alcohol consumption, through action, promotion and education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workers are supported to participate in regular physical activity and reduce sedentary practices through promotion, education and access to physical activity and movement opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Worker wellbeing is supported and promoted through work practices, a positive culture and leadership.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work-related violence risks have been assessed, strategies/policies are in place to handle incidents, and education information and support is available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work-related stress risks have been assessed, strategies/policies are in place to handle risks, and education information and support is made available.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

