

Managing our **Mental Well-Being**



Looking after our mental well-being is something everyone needs. Being mentally healthy can be good for your overall sense of well-being and can help you be resilient and cope with life's many challenges.

Hearing loss can be one of the challenges many people face. The social and emotional impacts of hearing loss can be far reaching, and can cause considerable problems in our work, social and private life¹. Hearing healthcare clinicians can help you to improve your hearing, communication and social interactions². But if concerns about your mental well-being persist, then we can also help connect you to a range of resources and professionals.

Stepped care is an evidence-based, staged approach to the delivery of mental well-being support. It includes four stages, from the least to the most intensive, that can be matched to your current needs.





STEP 1

Recognise the need for help

Talk to people

Talk with me, your audiologist/audiometrist. We are trained to help you talk about and understand the various ways in which hearing loss may be affecting you.

Talk with your family and friends.

Talk with your neighbours, pastor/priest, social worker/support nurse.



STEP 2

Self-guided help

Review hearing and communication needs

Not hearing well can be stressful. It is therefore not surprising that use of hearing devices not only helps improve our ability to hear, but also helps to improve our social connections, relationships and emotional well-being.

If you're not hearing well, it might be time to consider hearing devices, or to have your existing hearing devices reprogrammed to ensure that they are working optimally. When was your last hearing check-up?

Get informed

Why we feel how we feel may not always be clear to us. Sometimes it can feel like we have no control over our own mood, which can be unsettling. Learning more about how we think, feel and act can help de-clutter our head and put our mind at ease.

These websites have lots of easy to read information to learn about the many ways we can manage our emotional and mental well-being

- 5waystowellbeing.org.au
- beyondblue.org.au
- blackdoginstitute.org.au
- lifeline.org.au
- headspace.org.au
- CCI.health.wa.gov.au

Relaxation techniques

Relaxation isn't only about peace of mind or enjoying a hobby. Relaxation is a process that decreases the effects of stress on your mind and body. Relaxation techniques can help you cope with everyday stress and with stress related to various health problems, such as heart disease and pain. Relaxation techniques can include deep breathing, massage, meditation, tai chi, yoga, music and art therapy, and aromatherapy.

Head to the ESIA website for more tips and resources.



Review diet, exercise & sleep

Have you heard the saying “health body, healthy mind”? Our physical health can influence how we feel, and vice versa.

Head to the ESIA website for more tips and resources.



Get actively social

Actively improve your social engagement, think about the family/friends that you would like to see more of, the social activities that you would like to partake in... and don't let your mind talk you out of doing these things. Take the first steps and make it happen!

Talk with your hearing healthcare clinician about how we can help you get socially active.

A great website for finding sport, groups and activities near you: actbelongcommit.org.au

Apps

Want to discover more ways to strengthen your mental well-being? Check out the following Apps for tools, tips and inspiration:

- **Headspace: Meditation & Sleep**

Headspace is meditation made simple. Learn meditation and mindfulness skills from world-class experts and develop tools to help you focus, breathe, stay calm, rest easy, and create balance in your life.

- **Smiling Mind**

Your guide to daily mindfulness and meditation. A unique tool to help bring balance to your life. Developed by a team of psychologists and educators.

- **IMoodJournal**

The ultimate personal journal and mood tracker. IMoodJournal will help you discover the causes of your ups and downs and get surprising insights into yourself.

- **Peak - Brain Training**

Peak is a fun, free brain training workout that uses games and puzzles to challenge your focus, memory, problem solving and mental agility. Keep track of your brain workouts and progress through the levels.

STEP 3

Guided help

Talk with someone in-the-know

- beyondblue.org.au
- headspace.org.au
- lifeline.org.au

Online therapy

- mindspot.org
- www.bupa.com.au

Employment support

- epicassist.org/jobseekers/get-started/job-tips-for-people-with-deafness-and-hearing-impairment

Support Groups – Join a face-to-face group, or link into an online community

- Many Facebook groups exist supporting people with hearing loss
- betterhearingwa.org
- blackdoginstitute.org.au/resources-support/support-groups/





STEP 4

Specialised individual help

Talk to your GP

General Practitioners (GPs) provide comprehensive care encompassing both mental and physical health needs. Mental health care provided by GPs can include counselling, psychotherapeutic interventions, medications and referral to specialist services. GPs play an important role in providing free and accessible services to Australians. Your GP can also help with referrals to other health professionals that can help.

Referral to psychologist or counsellor

Clinical psychologists or counsellors assess their client's concerns and life circumstances, and offer support, advice and treatment to address their client's specific needs. Psychotherapy, a "talking" therapy, can be effective for managing emotional distress, anxiety, depression, substance or alcohol abuse and many other conditions that can devastate an individual's personal, family, social and work life.

The fees that psychologists charge vary, and depend on the type of service being offered and the setting in which they work. Medicare benefits are available for a range of specified psychological services for people with certain conditions. To be eligible to receive psychological services under Medicare, a person must be referred by a GP or in some instances by a psychiatrist, paediatrician or consultant physician. Private health insurers may also rebate part of the cost of psychological consultations. Contact your health insurance provider for further information.

You can contact a psychologist directly to find out how much a consultation might cost.

How to access a psychologist or counsellor?

You can search for a psychologist or counsellor near you through these websites (psychology.org.au/Find-a-Psychologist, theaca.net.au/find-registered-counsellor.php & <https://www.asorc.org.au/memberdirectory>).

Alternatively, your hearing healthcare clinician or GP may be able to recommend someone in your area, or make a referral on your behalf.

References

1. Bennett RJ, Saulsman L, Eikelboom RH & Olaithe M (2021). Coping with the social challenges and emotional distress associated with hearing loss: A qualitative investigation using Leventhal's self-regulation theory. International Journal of Audiology - Accepted May 2021.
2. Bennett RJ, Barr C, Montano J, Eikelboom RH, Saunders GH, Pronk M,... & Bellekom SR (2020). Identifying the approaches used by audiologists to address the psychosocial needs of their adult clients. International Journal of Audiology, 60(2), 104-114.



www.earscience.org.au



Talk with one of our trained professionals

book@lionshearing.org.au or

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