



**Corporate Mental Health
Alliance** AUSTRALIA



2024 Annual Report

Contents

Message from the Chair	pg 03
Message from the CEO	pg 05
CMHAA Members.....	pg 07
Key Workplace Statistics	pg 08
CMHAA: An Overview	pg 09
Mission and Vision Statements.....	pg 10
Evolving Nature of Work	pg 11
CMHAA Strategic Priorities 2023-25	pg 13
Membership Overview	pg 15
Governance	pg 16
Activity in 2024	pg 18
Events.....	pg 19
Training and Learning.....	pg 23
Research	pg 24
Resources	pg 25
Case Studies	pg 26
Early in Career Program	pg 27
Communications	pg 29
Outlook for 2025	pg 31



Message from the Chair

I'm delighted to share the CMHAA's annual report for 2024.

It's been just over four years since the Alliance launched to promote mentally healthy workplaces for all Australians. Today, 28 CMHAA member organisations represent more than 500,000 working Australians. This extraordinary growth would not have been possible without the unwavering commitment of these pioneering organisations to address issues relating to mental health in the workplace.

In 2024, the Alliance continued to build on that momentum. CMHAA's reach and impact grew as we delivered on our plan with many new resources, guides, research and events that were held for both members and non-members.

Those events included a highly successful fourth annual gathering, hosted by Bunnings, which brought together leaders and diverse groups from academia, government and industry. Highlighting the importance of cross-sector collaboration, the event focused on addressing critical challenges such as leadership, managing psychosocial risks and rethinking work design.

As leaders at the annual gathering pointed out, it has never been more important to put mental health and wellbeing at the heart of the corporate agenda. Our recent 'Hitting the Limit' report reveals that the average number of days taken off at work due to mental health has increased by 39 per cent in the past four years. Meanwhile, research from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare indicates an epidemic of

loneliness among young Australians aged 18–24 and unprecedented levels of suicide for young Australian males.

At the same time, Australian organisations across sectors are grappling with persistent cost pressures, compounded by slower growth and economic uncertainty. With redundancies and budget cuts common across sectors, organisations must continue investing in their employees' mental health and wellbeing. Job insecurity can exacerbate stress and mental health issues, making support programs crucial.

Now more than ever, organisations must prioritise mental health support programs to help maintain employee productivity and long-term resilience. At CMHAA, we will double down on our efforts to support corporate Australia on this journey.

While there's still much work to be done to foster mentally healthier workplaces in Australia, a key theme that has emerged in my four years as Chair is that we are stronger together. By continuing to openly share what is working – and what is not – within our own organisations, Alliance members can change people's workplace experiences for the better. Working together in this way, we can also build a powerful collective voice – one that we can use to serve all 14 million working Australians.

I am also incredibly proud of the Alliance's work to foster collaboration between business, government organisations, healthcare professionals and other stakeholders at the intersection of mental health and productivity. Through these collaborations, we bring

together best-practice thinking from leaders and create resources to address a nationwide problem. Productivity is the key economic imperative for our nation's future prosperity and as the Productivity Commission has confirmed, the quality of psychological safety in Australian workplaces today is a significant drag on our nation's productivity. We believe we can and should do better for the benefit of all working Australians and their families.

Looking ahead, we have a strong agenda for the next 12 months that will provide even more opportunities for members to learn from one another and advocate for lasting change. This includes bringing to life a National Workplace Mental Health and Wellbeing Compact, uniting stakeholders on targeted projects to address emerging mental health and safety challenges for employees. Secondly, we will continue to focus on building organisational capabilities in leadership, mental health and safety and risk management to ensure strong, effective practices. Thirdly, we will leverage insights from our 2024 Leading Mentally Healthy Workplaces Survey to further refine workplace practices, with the aim of creating a safer and healthier psychological environment for all employees across Australia.

We will also focus on expanding the Alliance by broadening our membership base. I am excited to see how this growth will enrich our approach, help us develop new strategies for advancing our mission and enhance our capacity to make an impact.

I'd like to thank the Alliance's Chief Executive Officer, Dr Kim Hamrosi, for her steadfast leadership in advancing the private sector's understanding of mental health and making mental health a strategic priority for more organisations across the nation.

Lastly, a big thank you to all our member organisations for joining us on this vital mission and being proactive in supporting the Alliance's initiatives.



Steven Worrall
Managing Director, Microsoft
Australia and New Zealand,
& Chair, CMHAA



Message from the Chief Executive Officer

It is my pleasure to present our fourth Annual report.

This year has been challenging for both business and employees, with the impact of financial pressures, the pace and speed of change and a focus on core value delivery becoming evident. As an organisation, CMHAA has continued to focus on our 2023-2025 strategy, prioritising and delivering a more comprehensive, concentrated and relevant offering for our member organisations. At the same time, we have broadened our reach to the wider business community as awareness of our mission grows.

Our flagship events have a lasting impact each year, offering a dedicated time and space for our members and experts to exchange knowledge and ideas. We extend our sincere thanks to Bunnings for hosting our Annual Gathering this year, complete with their iconic sausage sizzle! Our second Wellbeing Week did not disappoint. The week enabled all employees to engage with CMHAA through 70 virtual sessions, led by experts and thought leaders across aspects of mind, life, and body, which were truly inspiring.

Creating mentally safe and healthy workplaces is at the heart of our collective efforts as an Alliance. In the latter half of the year, we launched our second Leading Mentally Healthy Workplaces (LMHW) survey. This survey has the potential to become the largest snapshot of working Australians, capturing their experiences of work and the psychological health and safety of their workplaces. Our first LMHW survey included nearly 8,000 employees from various sectors, providing valuable insights into workplace

mental health and highlighting key themes and actions important to employees. The results of our latest survey will be released in 2025.

A key pillar of CMHAA is to enhance the capabilities of our members, with a strong emphasis on upskilling. We were proud to present our expert series on crucial topics for members, such as getting the most out of your EAP, adopting a data-driven approach, and managing worker distress. Additionally, we partnered with Allianz Australia on a 10-part Return to Work from Mental Injury series, offering practical tips and resources to support both organisations and individuals. I am deeply grateful to these experts who generously shared their time and knowledge throughout the year.

Leadership buy-in, advocacy, and support are essential for creating thriving and mentally healthy workplaces. While much emphasis is rightly placed on the importance of leaders, research consistently shows that managers play a critical role in employee engagement and retention. Managers, especially new ones, are feeling the pressure. Our last survey revealed that new managers often feel the least empowered, effective, and confident in managing their teams. As we move into 2025, whilst we remain focused on senior leaders, our emphasis is on how to better upskill managers to be confident, empowered, and effective in supporting their teams' wellbeing and handling difficult conversations.

We also continue to prioritise young people starting their careers. Our members recognise the importance of focusing on the mental health of this group as they begin their employment journey. The Early in

Career program delivered excellent sessions this year, addressing topics that matter to them, such as career adaptability, balancing confidence with humility, and strengthening the manager relationship. The two-way mentor sessions between senior leaders and early career employees remained valuable and popular among our member organisations. A white paper on the mentoring program and our learnings so far will be released in 2025, along with further research.

To support our growth, we have implemented a new CRM system and established a dedicated Member Area on our website. This area provides members with access to all our content and a discussion forum. We believe a strong community fosters connection and trust, enabling our member companies to share and learn as they work towards ensuring a psychologically safe and healthy workplace, improving the work experience, and supporting the positive mental health of every employee. For both our members and non-members, there will be plenty of resources and events to connect with us on in 2025.

I extend my gratitude to our Chair, Steven Worrall, and the Board for their support and guidance. I know our team feels incredibly fortunate to be part of this Alliance, which we see as more a 'movement' towards creating better workplaces for all Australians. It is a daily privilege to work with incredible senior leaders, and wonderful individuals in our member companies, friends of our community, experts, and those in the broader ecosystem. Thank you for your time, energy, passion and action.



Dr Kim Hamrosi
Chief Executive Officer,
CMHAA



CMHAA Members

Founding Members



CLAYTON UTZ



DATAKOM

Deloitte.



GALDERMA
EST. 1981

Johnson & Johnson

KING & WOOD
MALLESONS
金杜律师事务所



MinterEllison.



Members

A&O SHEARMAN



MELBOURNE
AIRPORT



*Founding participant

Statistics

 43%

of Australians aged 16–85 have experienced a mental disorder at some point in their lives.¹ In the past 12 months, 22% of this age group reported having a mental disorder.²

 17.4 billion per year

Total costs to society from workplace-associated mental illness are estimated at \$15.8 billion to \$17.4 billion per year.³

 76 days

The average number of days taken off work due to mental health claims, an increase of 39% over the last 4 years.⁴

 10.5%

of serious workers' compensation claims were for mental health conditions, a 19.2% increase from the previous year.⁵

 52.2%

of serious mental stress claims were due to work-related harassment, bullying and work pressure.⁶

 4x

The median time lost for mental health conditions than that for physical injuries and illnesses.⁷

¹ AIHW (2024). [Australia's health 2024: in brief, Summary - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#)

² AIHW (2024). [Prevalence and impact of mental illness - Mental health - AIHW](#)

³ The Australia Institute (2021). [Workplace Mental Health May2021.pdf](#)

⁴ Allianz (2023). Realigning on workplace mental health. [Workplace Mental Health Post Covid-19 Pandemic | Allianz Australia](#)

⁵ Safe Work Australia (2024). [Workplace Mental Health Post Covid-19 Pandemic | Allianz Australia](#)

⁶ Safe Work Australia (2024). Psychological Health and Safety. [Snapshot: Psychological health and safety in the workplace](#)

⁷ Safe Work Australia (2024). Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace Report. [Psychological health and safety in the workplace report | dataswa](#)

CMHAA: An Overview

Corporate Mental Health Alliance Australia (CMHAA) is a coalition of Australian businesses, led by industry and guided by experts, committed to fostering mentally healthy workplaces for everyone. Our core belief is that coming together as a community, we can achieve more. By pooling resources, sharing openly, and working collaboratively towards a common goal, we can deliver sustainable mental health outcomes more quickly and effectively. Together, we have the power to transform workplace experiences for all working Australians for the better.

Our strength lies in the unique collaboration among our members. By combining the extensive knowledge, capabilities, and resources from each business, and with expert guidance, we aim to learn, test and implement solutions that truly benefit our people.

CMHAA has 28 member organisations across Australia representing diverse sectors. We invite for-profit businesses with a shared vision to join our movement. .

For more information on membership, visit <https://cmhaa.org.au/membership/>



Mission and Vision Statements

Our Mission

Our mission is to put mental health at the heart of the business agenda. We want to drive improvements in the way Australian businesses respond and adapt to the rapidly evolving challenges and opportunities to create a mentally healthy workplace environment.

We also know that creating mentally healthy workplaces is a shared responsibility that does not fall solely on employers. System change involves businesses working collaboratively with researchers, insurers, healthcare professionals and government organisations to play their role in a rapidly changing work environment, which now encompasses a surge in hybrid and remote working.

Our Vision

- For every Australian workplace to be mentally healthy. We want people to feel valued and supported in the workplace, and for conversations about mental health to be a normal part of people's working day
- To develop and share credible practice to help Australian businesses create mentally healthy workplaces
- To drive improvements in how Australian businesses respond and adapt to this rapidly evolving and growing challenge by providing evidence-based recommendations



Evolving Nature of Work

Businesses are navigating the evolving nature of the workplace and adapting to new ways of working as attitudes and behaviours catch up with technological advancements. The pace of change has been rapid, with the technological revolution, especially generative AI (Artificial Intelligence), transforming work in ways that previously would have taken decades.

In Australia, companies are proactively addressing the negative impacts of unfavourable work conditions on both mental and physical health. Many are championing the promotion of good health to engage their workforce and boost productivity. As understanding and maturity grow, more companies are recognising that supporting employee wellbeing is a key driver of long-term commercial success and a metric for their broader societal impact.

“

We seem to be much more complex beings as a society than we were a few years ago, that means we have many more challenges and much more complexity to solve for. We are working towards some really good outcomes, but this is a community issue needing industry and government to lean in and solve it together. There is no simple solution, but we all need to make an effort and ensure we are investing well to get the balance right for our teams and in doing so, our communities.

Annette Karantoni
Managing Director, Primary Connect & Chief Supply Chain Officer, Woolworths Group



Leaders Key to Mentally Healthy Workplaces?

Leaders play a crucial role in fostering mentally healthy workplaces, a fact now well recognised by Australian workplace laws. The focus on mental health and wellbeing has increasingly become a priority for Boards and Leaders, especially with new regulations and an increase in psychological claims.

Successful leaders understand that thriving workplace environments are essential for organisational success and sustainability. Beyond metrics and KPIs, these leaders see real people with unique strengths and challenges.

Creating a supportive environment for employee wellbeing is more than a legal and strategic necessity; it is a social and moral duty. Successful organisations prioritise the human experience alongside operational efficiency. By recognising the human impact of organisational changes, leaders can enhance employee satisfaction and retention, aligning performance improvements with workforce wellbeing.

Where can leaders lead in creating a mentally healthy workplace?

- Investing in mental health and wellbeing as a core pillar of your strategy
- Redefining employee engagement and productivity that balances mental health and wellbeing with business profitability
- Equipping leaders at all levels to navigate and cope with the human demands of their roles in a changing and often uncertain environment
- Encouraging the normalising of mental health conversations to reduce stigma and provide appropriate pathways that empower leaders at all levels to take appropriate actions to support their teams
- Meaningfully measuring and reporting on employee mental health

Our workplaces can create meaningful connections and communities of learning where emerging technology enhances productivity and workplace satisfaction. This is a challenge for all leaders, and one that the CMHAA is committed to supporting.

“

And we've seen some amazing examples of very senior leaders standing up on stage in front of thousands of people, sharing stories about their own vulnerabilities, how they felt in certain situations, and showing emotion. This has been really embraced and celebrated by the team.

For me, this is a cultural piece. You need to have the right programs in place, the right policies, and provide leaders with the right training.

But the cultural aspect of making it acceptable to talk about mental health issues and celebrating this is what truly opens the door to change.

Leah Weckert
Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Coles Group

CMHAA Strategic Priorities 2023-25

Our pillars

	 Provide Safe Settings	 Empower Our Leaders	 Drive Lasting Change
Vision	Every Australian business provides a mentally healthy workplace for its people	Every Australian business leader sees mental health as core to their business strategy	A trusted voice from Australian businesses on the importance of mental health in the workplace
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deepen organisational understanding • Create a culture of openness and trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and equip our leaders • Empower and influence our fellow business leaders through leader to leader connection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for system change within our business, supply chains and the broader community • Shape key public policy issues
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise that inclusive leadership capability is fundamental • Develop capability and mental health literacy across all levels of an organisation • Provide robust internal support networks • Provide the platforms for storytelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide other leaders with the support to influence change in their organisations • Ensure that good mental health practice is led and owned by leaders and integrated into strategic priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capture insights on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What businesses believe needs to change to support mental health in the workplace – Ideas and credible practice and policy solutions to support change – How CMHAA can best support and advocate for that change • Determine key public affairs issues the CMHAA will prioritise and advocate for
Initiatives and Programs being Undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early in Career Program • Work Practices • Flagship Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Best Practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector Specific • Research & Innovation • Advocacy, Policy & Regulatory

Each year our Board and member organisations meet as part of our Annual Gathering to reflect on our ambitions and offerings, the achievements of the past year and reset our agenda for the next.

Focus Areas



Events & Community Engagement

Annual Gathering

- Gathering of Members, experts, stakeholders and invited guests to connect with and learn from each other through a facilitated program of activity.

Wellbeing Week

- A week of expert speakers and practical advice focusing on Mind, Body and Life for all employees of member organisations.

Expert Speaker Series

- Focus on practical topics with expert speakers.

Member-led, Expert guided Meetings (internal)

- Network and discussion opportunity for Members to share their practical approaches, experience and insights in a closed-door setting. Sessions include expert speaker.

Global Webinars

- Member sharing across the global CMHA/MindForward Alliance network (UK, HK, Singapore, India).

CMHAA quarterly newsletter

- Thought leadership articles, case studies and signposts to events and resources.



Mentorship & Advisory

- Annual CEO Forum for leaders on specific issues, to support their prioritisation of mental health in their businesses.
- Engage other leaders through Member networks.
- Access to Global and other Chapter leadership.
- Facilitated interactions and connections.



Tools & Resources

- Provision of evidence-based resources, guides, tools and resources developed by CMHAA, members and collaborators to be made available (where possible) for all business.



Research & Data

- Biennial mental health survey of member employees.
- Translate existing research and member initiatives into mental health strategies and best practice of CMHAA.
- Fund and contribute to research projects looking to answer new questions relating to mental health in the workplace.



Policy & Advocacy

- CMHAA representation on relevant government working groups and committees.



Membership Overview

This year, CMHAA continued working with existing members as well as building and strengthening relationships with stakeholders across industry, government, academia and not for profit organisations.

The website details the benefits enjoyed by members and their responsibilities. Membership is open to for-profit businesses operating in Australia. In the future, we aim to extend our operations to include New Zealand.



It's been fantastic for us to learn from organisations across corporate Australia. When we look at the risks and hazards that are facing employees across organisations, they're all very similar so its nice to learn from that."

Brooke Dwyer,
Head of Employee Inclusion,
Wellbeing & Belonging, Qantas

Membership benefits:

- Contribute to a significant shift in creating mentally healthy workplaces across Australia
- Gain access to a global Alliance network of leadership and engage individually with CMHAA's network of experts
- Participate in benchmarking and research opportunities related to mental health issues
- Access to and use of guides, tools, and resources developed by members and external experts
- Collaborate with other members and organisations focused on mental health through events, workshops, and roundtables
- Enhance your brand as a recognised leader in workplace mental health, with opportunities to engage with the media and speak at relevant events
- Influence research and policymakers to improve the quality of the work experience for millions of Australians
- Access a member-only collaboration platform

For more information on membership, visit <https://cmhaa.org.au/membership>

Governance

CMHAA Board

The governance structure of CMHAA supports the day-to-day operations and its delivery on the program of work, enabling the measurement of progress and supporting the development of an evidence base.

CMHAA has a 9-person Board consisting of representatives from our Founding members, members and a non-member representative.

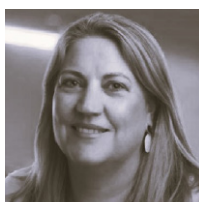
The Board is strengthened by our Founding Member Ambassadors and operationally supported by representatives from each member organisation (Functional Leads). The Board's role is to steer the strategic direction of CMHAA, establish an operational framework, and address the needs of member organisations.

We deeply appreciate our Board Members for their time, dedication, and commitment to fostering and maintaining mentally healthy workplaces across corporate Australia.



Steven Worrall

Managing Director,
Microsoft Australia and New Zealand,
& Chair, CMHAA



Alison Croweller

Senior Director, Government Affairs
and Policy, Johnson & Johnson
Family of Companies



Andrew Culleton

Executive General Manager
Group People Services
Commonwealth Bank of Australia



Annette Karantoni

Chief Supply Chain Officer
Woolworths Group



David Brewster

Chief Legal & Safety Officer
Coles Group



Ellen Derrick

Managing Partner, Consulting
Deloitte Australia



Julie Mitchell

Chief General Manager, Personal Injury
Allianz Australia Insurance Ltd



Lucinda Brogden AM

Independent Board Member



Renae Lattey

Chief Executive Partner
King & Wood Mallesons

Expert Advisors

CMHAA is a business-led, expert-guided organisation. We actively collaborate with some of Australia's foremost experts in workplace mental health and wellbeing, who generously share their insights and knowledge. This collaboration ensures that we provide accurate, relevant, and appropriate information and resources.

We wish to thank the following experts that have participated in and contributed to CMHAA initiatives throughout 2024.

Kate Connors

Elemental Coaching & Psychology

Jim Kelly

SafeWork NSW

**Rachel Clements and
Debra Brodowski**

The Centre for Corporate Health

Audrey McGibbon

Global Leadership Wellbeing Solutions

Jono Nicholas

The Wellbeing Outfit

Robert Fitzgerald AM

Australian Human Rights Commission

Dr Sarah Cotton and team

Transitioning Well

Professor Sharon Parker

Curtin University

**A/Prof Carlo Caponecchia and
Dr Vanessa Huron**

UNSW

Luan de Burgh

de Burgh Group

Professor Brock Bastian

Melbourne Business School

We are grateful for their ongoing support and guidance.

CMHAA Activity in 2024

The Alliance continues to focus on system change and encouraging evidence-informed practice to promote mentally healthy workplaces in Australia. The Program of Work for 2024 reflects this direction through our public and member events, growing pool of resources, new research and ongoing communications through various channels.

The Flagship events held this year included our hugely successful 2nd Wellbeing Week and the 4th Annual Gathering, kindly hosted by Bunnings. Throughout the year, other events included member-only sessions which provide an opportunity to bring our community and experts together to share knowledge. This year topics included how to get the most of your EAP provider, using data to inform your mental health strategies, hybrid working and managing mental distress in the workplace as well as SafeWork NSW on directions in workplace mental health regulations.

We were delighted to collaborate with Allianz Australia on two significant initiatives. The first was a 10-part series on 'Return to Work from Mental Injury,' designed to equip our members with essential skills to manage this critical issue. The second was a senior leader event that addressed the legal, social, and risk factors related to psychological health and safety in the workplace.

Communication efforts have focused on change and normalising conversations about mental health in the workplace with a particular emphasis on managers and leaders at various levels. Our public events have included webinars for early in career employees, supporting the ageing workforce and using AI to bridge the access and wellbeing gap.

This year, our research centred on leadership. A CEO report, 'Hitting the Limit,' based on interviews with leaders, sought to deepen the understanding of their perspectives and actions concerning employee mental health, wellbeing, and productivity in the rapidly changing workplace environment. The report was launched with an insightful and candid panel discussion featuring leaders.

In 2024, we upgraded our website to enhance the events and resources section, which now hosts an expanding collection of resources available for free to all businesses. Additionally, we created a new members-only area featuring news, events, resources, and meeting recordings accessible throughout the year.



Events

Wellbeing Week 2024

Our second annual **Wellbeing Week** in February 2024, aimed at supporting self-care and building capability within member employees, saw 70+ virtual and hybrid sessions watched live by over 6,500 people. The topics of Wellbeing Week covered Life, Body, Mind, Leadership and Financial Wellbeing. The virtual sessions were recorded, allowing people to watch the replays later and were also distributed to our members to use internally throughout the year. There were over 3,500 replays in the month following Wellbeing Week.

With keynote sessions throughout the week our attendees were able to hear inspiring stories from Olympian Jelena Dokic, the founder of Movember, Adam Garone and iconic Australian celebrities Alison Brahe Daddo, Jessica Watson and Jessica Rowe. They were also treated to a Masterchef live cooking session with Brent Draper.

The top five sessions were:

- Sleep Glorious Sleep; why it is important and how to get better at it
- Building an optimistic mindset
- Working on your financial wellbeing in 2024
- Five money conversations to change your life
- Protect your spark, workplace burnout prevention for individuals.



Annual Gathering

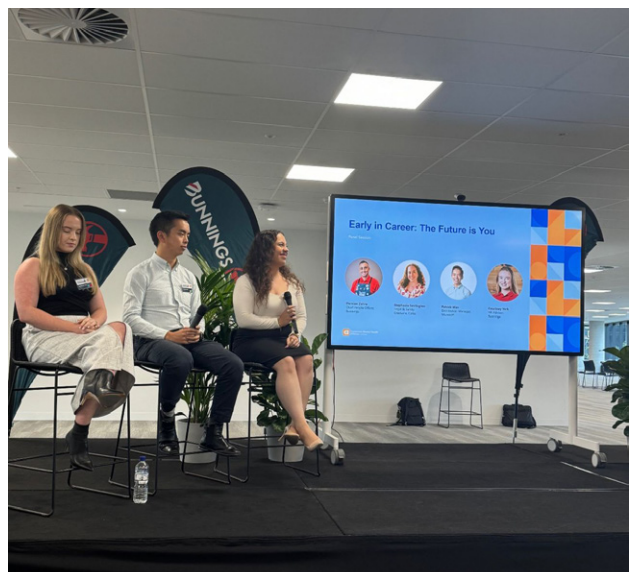
Bunnings very kindly hosted the fourth CMHAA Annual Gathering, which took place at their National Support Centre in Melbourne. The Annual Gathering brings together business leaders, experts, and companies from diverse sectors to exchange insights on workplace mental health. Each year, it creates a welcome platform for crucial discussions and the sharing of knowledge and experiences among like-minded individuals eager to contribute to improving the state of workplace mental health in Australia.

In the morning many of our Board, Senior and Functional Leads and Early in Career Committee came together to discuss a national approach to mental health and wellbeing and corporate Australia's role in addressing the challenges and opportunities to improve how employees experience work every day.

The afternoon brought together in-person approximately 150 members and guests from different sectors and industries. The program of interesting, candid and insightful keynotes, roundtables and a panel discussion included:

- How **Bunnings** walk the talk through their human centred leadership approach
- A **SMART work design** perspective on future work
- Three interactive roundtables on the topics of **leadership, the future of work design and psychosocial risks and hazards.**
- An **Early in Career Panel** discussing topics from managers, mentors to being CEO for a day.

Each year, our members look forward to our Annual Gathering, which continues to grow in size and impact. Members value the wide range of topics discussed, the expertise and insights of our guest speakers, and, most importantly, the sense of community. This event offers a wonderful opportunity to connect with peers, friends, and colleagues.



Leadership: Mental Health Moments That Matter Breakfast

In partnership with Allianz, leaders from across major Australian organisations came together for a breakfast roundtable to discuss the crucial aspects of addressing workplace mental health and taking an enterprise approach to psychological health and safety.

The morning was hosted by Julie Mitchell (Allianz Australia), with guest speaker Richard Feledy (Allianz

Australia) and included industry-leading experts, Lucinda Brogden AM, Kristy Edser (MinterEllison), Jono Nicholas (Wellbeing Outfit) and James Fitzpatrick (Allianz Australia), who enriched a panel discussion with their invaluable insights and practical strategies.

Webinars:

Is your organisation ageing workforce ready?

CSIRO identified the ageing workforce as one of six megatrends in work health and safety, and workers compensation over the next 20 years. Combine that with ongoing skills shortages, succession planning concerns, and cost-of-living pressures keeping mature workers in the workforce for longer and supporting an ageing workforce has never been more important for organisational success.

In this webinar, our expert speakers, including the Age Discrimination Commissioner, discussed the value and benefits of the late in career worker including physical and psychosocial considerations, why being ageing workforce ready is important, and what being ageing workforce ready looks like in practice.

AI and Technology: The gap between access and wellbeing

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and technology are transforming the workplace. One of the most significant impacts is the automation of routine and repetitive tasks. This shift allows employees to focus on more complex and creative aspects of their jobs, potentially increasing productivity and job satisfaction.

But what does this mean for employees and their wellbeing? In this webinar our panellists explored how the integration of AI and technology into the workplace may improve employee wellbeing, make the workplace more accessible and manageable for employees and understand the implications from a societal and sociological lens.

Bridging the Workplace Gap

Many early in career employees (EiC's) are interested in understanding how they can develop positive and constructive relationships with their managers. Managers are also keen to understand the challenges and perspectives of EiCs better.

Our panellists in this webinar unpacked the perspectives of early in career employees, managers and senior leaders, aiming to understand the competing pressures and demands experienced by each. From the unenviable position that Managers are in - squeezed between the demands of senior executives and the needs of their team members - to the often, unappreciated pressures on senior leaders which have potential flow on effects to workplace culture. And, ultimately how in understanding each perspective we can go some way towards bridging these differences for the benefits of all employees.

Expert Series

Every two months CMHAA hosts its member only expert series meetings which bring together member leads and relevant teams to learn about a specific topic related to building knowledge and capability around workplace mental health. The sessions provide the opportunity for members to share, as well as listen, to an invited expert in their field.

This year we had the privilege of learning more about:

- How to get the most out of your EAP provider (Debra Brodowski, Centre for Corporate Health)
- Using data to inform your mental health strategy (case studies from CBA, Coles, Latrobe and Suncorp)
- Navigating the new world of work (case studies CBA, Clayton Utz, EY and REA Group)
- Unpacking the Workplace Mental Health Strategy and Priorities (Jim Kelly, SafeWork NSW)
- Psychological Safety and Distress Management (Jono Nicholas, The Wellbeing Outfit)

In addition to our expert series, occasionally our members invite the broader member community to their exclusive hosted events.

Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA)

- Rachel Clements, Centre for Corporate Health (World Mental Health Day)
- Osher Günsberg, mental health advocate hosted by Dr Laura Kirby, CBA (Men's Mental Health Week)

Allianz Australia

- Libby Trickett, Olympian (RU OK? Day)
- Martin Heppell, The Resilience Project (Men's Mental Health Week)

Our sincerest thanks to these member organisations for generously making the events available.



Training and Learning

Return to Work from Mental Injury series

Following the response to the 'Return to Work from Mental Injury' member meeting in 2023, CMHAA and Allianz partnered to create a 10-part webinar series to educate and upskill managers at all levels. The series was available to Allianz customers and CMHAA members.

The series covered early preventative conversations around supporting good mental health through to navigating the return-to-work process after a mental injury. Each webinar was supported by a resource, freely available on the CMHAA and Allianz Australia website.



Return to Work from Mental Injury Series

This 10-part webinar series, for CMHAA members and Allianz Clients, is relevant to all levels of management.

- | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| 1
Pre-claim moments that matter | 2
Balancing performance & mental health | 3
Engaging the injured worker | 4
Understanding capacity for work | 5
Identifying meaningful duties & removing barriers |
| 6
Building a personalised return to work plan | 7
Collaborating with treaters about to return to work | 8
Supporting managers to implement a return-to-work plan | 9
Setting goals & review points to monitor progress | 10
Achieving sustainable recovery & return to work |



Corporate Mental Health Alliance AUSTRALIA



Research

Leadership: Hitting the Limit Report

The CMHAA team conducted interviews with 18 CEOs from our member organisations and other aligned leaders to gain a deeper understanding of their perspectives and actions concerning employee mental health, wellbeing, and productivity in a changing workplace landscape.

A launch event of the report 'Hitting the Limit: – Understanding the nexus between Mental Health and People Performance' was hosted by Microsoft with a leader's panel discussion which included Steven Worrall (Microsoft) Laura Malcolm (formally Avande Australia), Richard Feledy (Allianz Australia) and Amber Matthews (DLA Piper) and a presentation by Sarah Carney (Microsoft) on the opportunities, challenges and future of technology in workplace productivity and wellbeing.

“

When we think about reward and recognition alongside productivity-based measures, it's all about giving people back quality time - and creating a culture where it's acceptable to take it. Since the pandemic, I've had more conversations about flexibility in meeting times than I've had in 30 years. That's a positive, because it shows people are comfortable to have the conversation and acknowledge that work is just one part of their life, not their entire life.

Michael Schneider,
Managing Director, Bunnings



Resources

CMHAA is dedicated to providing resource materials that help organisations plan, enhance, and implement their workplace mental health and wellbeing strategies. Our resources are designed to be practical and relevant to the Australian corporate environment, with many available to all organisations via the CMHAA website.

We are committed to developing independent resources in collaboration with our member organisations, partners, and expert advisors. Additionally, we gather and connect with reputable government bodies and other expert organisations to compile resources, materials, and guides related to workplace mental health.

Acquiring Wellbeing: A Guide to Better Solutions and Services.

There has been an exponential increase in the number of providers offering mental health and wellbeing services in the workplace, including programs, initiatives and digital solutions. Often the procurers of these services are often time poor and may not know what to ask to determine the quality and value of the services being offered.

CMHAA developed a short guide which aims to take some of the work away by providing:

- An overview of the importance of evidence-based wellbeing or mental health programs in the workplace
- Questions you can ask providers about the programs or services they are offering
- Factors to consider within your organisation when looking to implement and evaluate the program, service or initiative.

Employee Resources

In collaboration with the Centre for Corporate Health and the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, CMHAA released a series of resources throughout the year which directly link to challenges and themes that are important to our members, and the wider Australian workforce. Our resource library will continue to grow with freely available factsheets, guides and information sheets as well as member only case studies in 2025.

The top 5 resources accessed resources in 2024:

- How can I manage disagreements with people at work?
- Leading through change
- How can I effectively manage my time and delegate?
- How can I develop my interpersonal communication skills?
- What are the barriers to good communication?

FACTSHEET:

Spotlight on Supporting Men's Mental Health in the Workplace

Despite significant progress in mental health discussions, one crucial area remains under addressed: men's mental wellbeing. To mark International Men's Health Week, CMHAA created a factsheet of helpful suggestions and case studies from our members Clayton Utz, KPMG and Lendlease on why supporting men's good mental health in the workplace is relevant to businesses and what organisations can practically do.

Case Studies

CMHAA continues to aim to share what companies are doing to support a thriving and mentally healthy workforce so other organisations can learn from their experiences.

**KING & WOOD
MALLESONS**
金杜律师事务所

King & Wood Mallesons (KWM) 'Words Can' series is a call to action to strip away the fear that can come from being faced with difference, and to equip people with the knowledge to build more positive interactions with one another. 'Words Can' are 3 short videos showing the significant impact words can have on people's everyday sense of personal safety health and wellbeing.

King & Wood Mallesons also shared how they are supporting seasonal clerkships through the recruitment process. KWM recognised that the highly competitive seasonal clerkship recruitment campaigns are very stressful and partnered with Centre for Corporate Health to develop resources for applicants to manage their mental health and wellbeing through the process.

Words can harm

Words can heal

Words can empower

Early In Career Program

The CMHAA 'Thriving from the Start' Early in Career (EiC) Program was developed to understand the challenges and concerns young employees face as they embark on their careers, and to highlight to organisations the impact workplace experiences can have on the mental health of early in career employees.

CMHAA officially launched its 'Thriving from the Start' (TftS) Early in Career Network and Program in December 2021. Since then, our Early in Career Committee (comprised of early in career employees from our member organisations) have worked collaboratively with CMHAA to run and promote the Network as well as provide lived experience insights to inform the direction of the overall EiC Program.

This year the EiC Committee voted on three themes that became the focus of the program's activities.

They were:

- Career Adaptability
- Balancing Confidence with Humility
- Strengthening the Early in Career Employee – Manager Relationship.

The key activities of the EiC Committee this year were an expanded engagement strategy and the delivery of inspiring Connect Sessions. These activities were overseen by Jana Letnic from CMHAA and the Early in Career Functional Leads:

Engagement

Similar to 2023, the EiC Committee produced quarterly newsletters for the TftS Network. Each newsletter this year was themed around one of the key topics and highlighted the Early in Career committee members and the Thriving from the Start activities. In 2024, we also increased our use of LinkedIn (TftS LinkedIn page) to promote our activities and expand the network's reach.

A highlight of this year's Engagement Strategy, with the support of CBA, was the creation of a series of short videos featuring EiC Committee members and senior leaders from CMHAA member organisations. These videos, which focus on Planning, Curiosity, Confidence, and Control, share personal experiences of career adaptability. Released on LinkedIn, they are used by members and the TftS Network as part of their engagement campaigns. Given the high demand for insights from senior leaders and lived experiences among Early in Career individuals, these videos are an invaluable asset for CMHAA and its member organisations





Connect Sessions

The highly popular Connect Sessions continued to deliver this year with consistently high registration levels and engagement. Each session was facilitated by a different Committee Member and featured insights from both experts and individuals with lived experience.

Sessions over the last 12 months were:

**Lessons in Resilience –
Jessica Watson**

2-Way Mentoring Program

In 2024, we continued the Early in Career 2-Way Reverse Mentoring Program, pairing small groups from our Early in Career Committee with eight senior leaders from CMHAA member organisations.

Each session focused on specific themes, with mentoring groups receiving guided discussion materials beforehand. The program received positive feedback throughout the year, as measured by pulse surveys, and is currently being further evaluated to draft a whitepaper and shared resource on 2-way mentoring programs centred on early career wellbeing.

Communications

A primary goal of our communication strategy is to ensure that Australian organisations recognise mental health as integral to their business strategy. CMHAA leverages various events and multiple communication channels to raise awareness, facilitate discussions, and provide practical information on creating and maintaining a mentally healthy workplace.

Newsletters

- The Pulse: monthly member newsletter
- The Sprint: quarterly news and events newsletter

LinkedIn

- Themed campaigns
- Thriving from the Start Articles and Videos

Affiliate Events

CMHAA was proud to support and/or be a part of the following conferences and forums:

- PHSCon (Psychological Health and Safety Conference) 2024
- 2024 Wayahead Workplaces Annual Members' Forum
- Loneliness and Social Isolation: Research & Lived Experience Informing Practice and Policy
- Neurodivergence in the Workplace with Transitioning Well
- Wellbeing at Work Summit 2024
- Employee Assistance Professional Association of Australia National Conference

Membership Assets

In 2024, CMHAA were kindly supported by members Coles and Woolworths in creating a suite of marketing assets to help us share CMHAA's mission.

2024 Highlights

Founding Members:

20

Annual memberships:

8

CMHAA Employee reach:

520,000 approx.

Number of member and affiliate events:

21

Attendees at events:

12,900 approx.

LinkedIn followers:

3.5k (22% increase)

Website visits:

29k/12k new users

Guides, Resource and Articles created:

43

Webinars:

5

Newsletter Subscription Increase:

42%
increase in 2024



Extending our reach globally

In 2022, the MindForward Alliance emerged as a global initiative from the City Mental Health Alliance (CMHA), aiming to broaden its outreach and impact. Positioned as the foremost global non-profit organisation, it is dedicated to reshaping workplace culture into one that prioritises the mental wellbeing of its workforce.

CMHAA is proudly affiliated with MindForward Alliance, sharing insights and resources with their chapters in the UK, Hong Kong, Singapore and Portugal.

MindForward Alliance Global Summit

The 2nd MindForward Alliance Global Summit was held in May 2024, highlighting the belief that businesses, as a cornerstone of society, can play a crucial role in addressing the global mental health crisis. And, by uniting businesses to share ideas and focus on prevention, we can significantly improve mental health and save lives.

The event featured worldwide insights from businesses, academics, and workplace mental health experts. As an affiliate, CMHAA presented insights from our research report 'Hitting the Limit: Understanding the Nexus between Mental Health and People Performance' and a session with Sarah Carney, Microsoft on 'Technology, Productivity, and Wellbeing – the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly.'

For more information about the MindForward Alliance go to: <https://mindforwardalliance.com/>

Outlook for 2025

In the face of challenging economic conditions and uncertainty, businesses in Australia are grappling with tighter budgets, often leading to cuts in expenditure, including on employee mental health and wellbeing initiatives. Despite these financial constraints, CMHAA and its members continue advocating for and prioritising mental health and wellbeing as a core part of any business strategy in 2025. We know that investing in these areas supports employees' overall health and productivity and results in an engaged workforce, which is essential for navigating and thriving in uncertain times.

Recently, CMHAA consulted with members to better understand how CMHAA can continue to deliver benefits in supporting mentally healthy workplaces. As a member led alliance, we are committed to evolving with our members.

An exciting agenda is planned for 2025, in line with our strategic priorities and building on our core pillars of providing safe settings, empowering our leaders and driving lasting change.

Wellbeing Week

Following the success of the 2nd Wellbeing Week we will host our 3rd Wellbeing Week from 24-28 February 2025 for all employees of our member companies. Over 5 days we will host over 50 sessions that are designed to support all employees with their wellbeing and positive mental health skills.

Annual Gathering

Taking place at Microsoft in Sydney, plans are underway to ensure this event delivers maximum value to our members. Case studies on important topics will be shared by our members, as well as key experts presenting. Ensuring that members have the chance to network and connect will be pivotal throughout the day.

Thriving from the Start Early in Career

Following consultation, the EiC program is being restructured to better suit the needs of early in career members for 2025. This restructure will see a core group of EiC Committee Representatives leading the Thriving from the Start Network as well as the formation of new and larger community of EiC individuals who will help to advocate for the Network within their organisation and personal networks. The Network will continue to deliver Connect Sessions and communications that engage and provide learning opportunities on topics that are pertinent to EiC's.

The broader EiC program in 2025 will continue with our successful 2-way mentoring program involving more EiCs and mentors. In addition, and informed by results from our Leading Mentally Healthy Workplaces survey, CMHAA intends to revisit our 2021 research, "Early in career: laying the foundations for good mental health."

Leadership

CMHAA will continue to partner with organisations to empower our leaders and support peer to peer discussion opportunities. In partnership with organisations like the Business Council of Australia and Allianz Australia we will be hosting a series of roundtables for C-Suite representatives covering regulations and legislations, mental health and risk management and psychological hazards impacting on employees.

Building Knowledge and Capability

This coming year CMHAA will continue to aim to create lasting change through building knowledge and capability, sharing what works and doesn't and learning from experts.

Our expert series held bi-monthly will continue to provide our member leads and other member employees access to trusted experts on important issues relevant to improve mental health and safety practice in the workplace. Topics in 2025 include updates to legislation and regulations, supporting managers with neurodiverse teams, ethical leadership, AI and mental health, peer to peer mental health support networks and case studies from our members.

In 2025, members will take the lead across 10 sessions as part of our psychosocial risk series sharing their practical application of a particular identified psychological hazard and the controls in place to address the risk. These case studies will form part of our member only resources and be used as a reference library for other members to learn from and develop best practice.

Lastly, building capability and expertise, while learning from each other is integral to CMHAA's vision. This year CMHAA will be offering quarterly workshops on critical topics to upskill our members and create communities of practice. Workshops may include vicarious trauma and trauma-informed care, managing distress and critical incidents and work design.

Research

In 2022, CMHAA launched an inaugural survey with 7,800 employees participating across various sectors to benchmark progress and inform our practice. The 2nd Leading Mentally Healthy Workplaces Survey was conducted across several members in the second half of 2024. We will be pleased to report the results and our progress in this benchmark report in early 2025, the findings of which will guide our work throughout the year.

CMHAA will continue to look at research opportunities and partners throughout 2025 to ensure we contribute to a business-led, practical and measurable approach to research.

Advocacy

CMHAA has continued to strengthen relationships with government, academia, and other aligned organisations to drive broader changes in workplace mental health. Additionally, we are expanding our reach to ensure that our free events and resources are accessible to all businesses, irrespective of size. This will remain a priority in 2025.



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