



Corporate Mental Health  
Alliance AUSTRALIA



# 2021 Annual Report

Program of Work: September 2020 – September 2021



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# Message from the Chair

The Alliance was formed based on the realisation that more needs to be done to develop standards to address mental health in Australian workplaces. The case for action was clear – in 2019, the Productivity Commission estimated that mental ill-health in the workplace cost the Australian economy \$39 billion, in addition to the social, moral and legal obligations we all acknowledge.

When the CMHAA Board Members met in January 2020 to discuss the launch of the Alliance, no one could have predicted the 18 months that would follow. With the COVID-19 pandemic transforming the workplace as we knew it, we realised the mission and objectives of the Alliance were critical to corporate Australia.

CMHAA officially launched in October 2020. In its first year, the Alliance and its members have come together on a number of occasions to discuss the important topic of mental health and learn from one another.

Reflecting on the last 12 months, there are three key themes that have emerged for me in my role as Chair.

The first of these is that we are stronger together. We are reliant on each other now, more than ever, and by sharing what is working – and what is not – we can accelerate our learning together to improve the quality of our thinking and practices in our individual workplaces.

Secondly, an evidence-based approach to workplace mental health is essential. We need to go beyond window dressing – looking past the icing and rather at the cake itself – or as Lucy Brogden (Chair of the National Mental Health Commission and one of the Alliance's expert advisors) often quips 'it's more than just yoga and fruit bowls.'

The bedrock of psychologically safe workplaces is good job design and a supportive culture. We believe there is more to be done to create environments where people don't feel stigmatised or penalised for having conversations about their mental health.

The third realisation – and perhaps the most unsurprising – is that leaders and strong leadership are key. Leaders need support, education and coaching on topics related to mental health. They need to be authentic, prepared to lead and adept in navigating the challenges they will face.

Standards are in place in organisations that look after the physical safety of employees, in line with Workplace Health and Safety laws. We need the equivalent in the psychological context – normalising health and safety from a mental health perspective to ensure our leaders are psychologically informed.

Our vision, at the highest level, is that the Alliance serves not just its members but all 13 million working Australians. Our 'open' approach means our intellectual property, research and learnings are available to all and we hope that over time, we can contribute to the creation of more psychologically safe workplaces across the entire country. To this end, we believe increasing collaboration with government bodies (including the National Mental Health Commission), industry associations (including the Business Council of Australia) and the many leaders operating across the mental health landscape will be essential.



On behalf of the Corporate Mental Health Alliance of Australia, I'd like to thank the members of the Alliance's Expert Advisory Group (EAG) who volunteered their time to guide our approach and provide expert advice. We could not function effectively without their input. We look forward to continuing our work with the EAG next year to make mental health a strategic priority for all organisations and highlight learnings and practices to enable the best working environment for our people.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to offer my thanks and appreciation to CMHAA's Executive Director, Dr Kim Hamrosi. Kim's tireless efforts in supporting Alliance members is appreciated by all.

Finally, I offer my sincere gratitude to our CMHAA Alliance Members, in particular our Board Members, for their vision and support and our Functional Leads for driving our program of work. I am pleased and proud to present our first Annual Report.



Steven Worrall  
Chair, CMHAA



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# Message from the Executive Director

Joining CMHAA as Executive Director in March earlier this year, I had no idea that the uncertainty and disruption from COVID-19 would continue into the latter half of 2021. As we now emerge from the pandemic as a nation, we need to look at our learnings and how these have redefined a workplace now synonymous with COVID-19. How do we keep mentally healthy workplaces top of the agenda for business? With hindsight, it shouldn't have taken a pandemic to inspire change, but it has certainly shone a light on the need for it.

We need to keep our organisations thriving, and to do so, we need to support the mental health and wellbeing of working Australians. We need a culture of care, and leaders who are compassionate and confident in leading a mentally healthy organisation. Conversations about mental health should be the same as they are for a physical illness, and it should be ok to put your hand up to say, 'I'm not coping.' Sad days should be seen the same as sick days.

As a collective, CMHAA has the potential to make a significant and lasting impact on workplace mental health that is sustainable and measurable. I am a passionate advocate for the role Australian businesses can play in supporting and improving workplace mental health. We have gathered together an incredible alliance of organisations, and the passion, commitment, knowledge and insights of the Board Members and Functional Leads have raised the bar for all of us; they give their time freely and willingly above the 'business as usual.' Collectively, we strive to maintain the integrity around being business-led and expert-guided.

We are delighted to present our first Annual Report, detailing the origins and foundation of CMHAA, program of work accomplished during 2020-2021, and activities in the planning pipeline for 2022. We have hosted well-attended events, structured around hard-hitting topics that delve much further than the 'feel good' surface. We are prepared to go deeper,

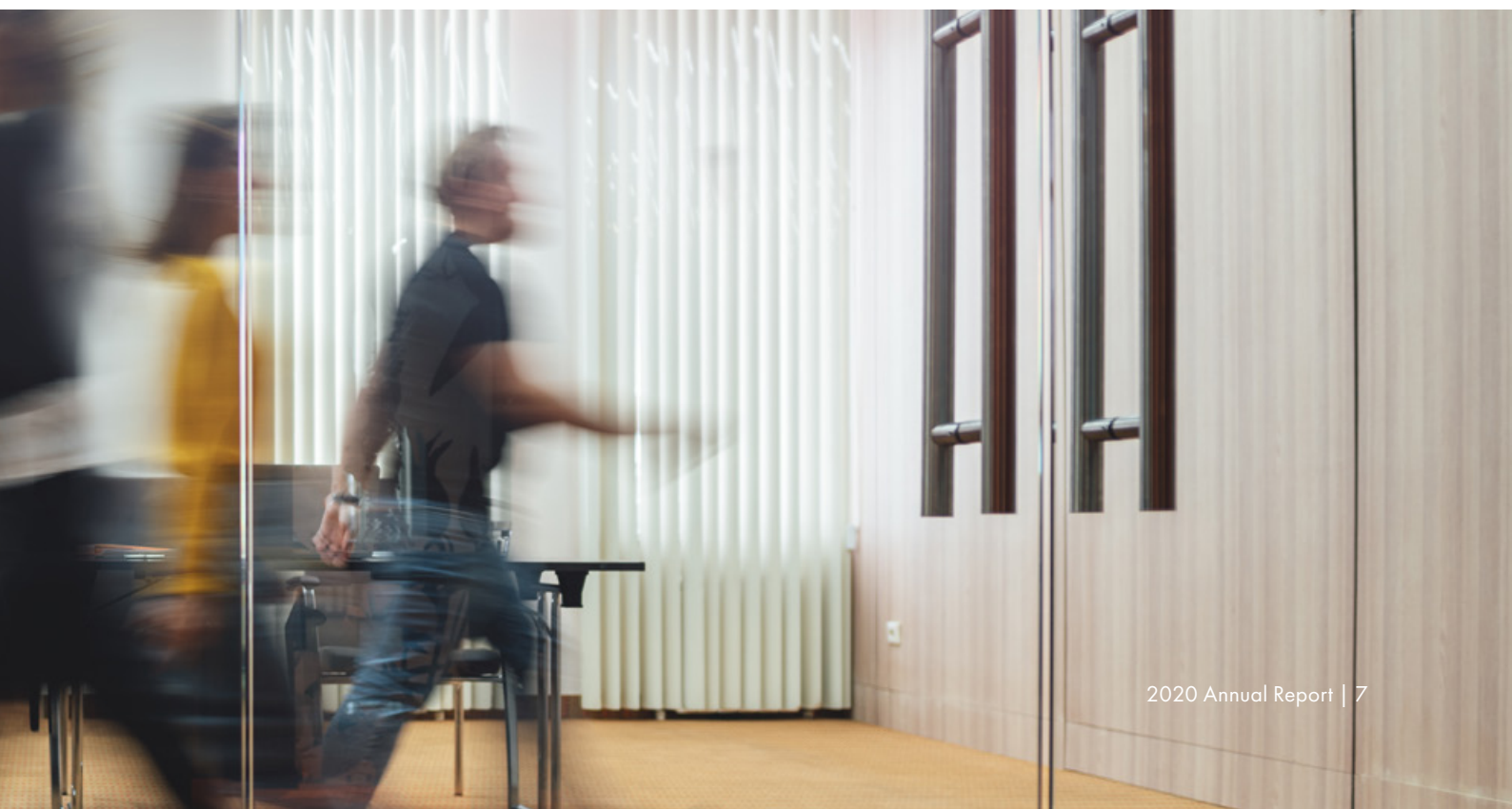


push the agenda and are unafraid to have the hard conversations. I am looking forward to another engaging and constructive year in 2022, supporting our members and continuing the focus on building and sustaining mentally healthy workplaces.

I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to our Expert Advisory Group for their insights and expertise, Alliance Members, Board Members and Functional Leads for their support and commitment, and to our CMHAA Chair, Steven Worrall, for his vision, guidance and passion in embedding mental health into the foundations of organisations across Australia.



**Dr Kim Hamrosi**  
Executive Director, CMHAA





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# CMHAA: An Overview

“

Mental health is the issue of our time. As business leaders, we truly care about the wellbeing of our people. The responsibility to support them in the workplace begins with us.”

**Kristin Stubbins,  
Partner, PwC Australia**

## Our Origins

The Corporate Mental Health Alliance Australia (CMHAA) officially launched in October 2020. CMHAA is part of the City Mental Health Alliance network, which began in the United Kingdom almost a decade ago. The network includes a chapter in Hong Kong as well as in Singapore, established in 2017 and 2021 respectively.

CMHAA aims to leverage the groundbreaking work of this international alliance network, alongside the research and insights from member organisations and others, to drive meaningful and targeted impact to support mentally healthy workplaces in Australia. Whilst the establishment of CMHAA was driven by a passionate and determined cohort of business leaders in Australia, the vision, objectives and achievements of the network are supported by some of the largest and most influential organisations in the country.





## **CMHAA: Responding to the Pandemic**

'In the early stages of the pandemic in 2020, a number of CMHAA Board Members were feeling isolated and challenged, faced with leading large teams based at home. None of us had experienced anything like this before. It became clear that people in Melbourne were going to be locked down for some time and the CMHAA leaders were trying to adapt business models at the same time as reassuring their teams that we would all get through this. At this stage CMHAA had not been officially launched, we were merely a group of leaders who had come together to talk about changing the way businesses talk, and act, about mental health issues in the workforce. We decided at that moment to lean on each other and to ask for help.

A call was spontaneously organised with no notice and all CMHAA Board Members were invited – all turned up. There was no agenda. A couple of the leaders, including the CMHAA Chair and CEO of Microsoft, Steven Worrall, were vulnerable enough to share how they were feeling at this time and ask how others were feeling. We all shared a sense of anxiousness. This catalyst moment then led to conversations about what was working in our organisations. We started to talk about the positive strengths that we could draw on both individually and as a collective.

The key message: clear, regular communication with all staff members – and no sugar coating. We needed to communicate whatever information was available and provide reassurance that we would all get through these strange times. And we did.

This call turned out to be a galvanising moment for CMHAA, which has gone on to achieve great things in its official 12 months of existence.'

**Kristin Stubbins,**  
**Partner, PwC Australia**

'COVID-19 has taught many senior leaders how it is possible to show vulnerability without undermining authority, which is a very important piece in storytelling around mental health.'

**David Brewster,**  
**Chief Legal and Safety Officer, Coles Group**

'Wellbeing is a clear priority. With all the challenges people have been facing over the last 12 months due to COVID-19, the need to prioritise wellbeing and provide support for mental health in particular has been highlighted more than ever. The response our people had to our Wellness Awareness Week and engagement with wellbeing initiatives has shown how important this is for our people and what a difference our workplace can make in offering these resources and support.'

**Andrew Culleton,**  
**Executive General Manager, Group People Services, Commonwealth Bank of Australia**

'Navigating the health and financial challenges of COVID-19 has taught us new ways of 'being' at work, both as leaders and as individuals (parents, carers, team members etc). It's now critically important to notice what's going on for each other, in all aspects of our lives, in order to produce our work in sustainable ways. The last 12-18 months have highlighted the need for us to care for the whole person at work, including in peer-to-peer leader relationships.'

**Virginia Briggs,**  
**Chief Executive Officer, MinterEllison**

## Strategy Development

In November 2019, senior leaders came together from across corporate Australia to engage in an independently facilitated strategy session to share their experiences, opportunities and challenges about mental health in their workplaces and their desire for change. The outcome was a clear commitment to exploring a collaborative workplace mental health and wellbeing model that would deliver real impact for their people.

A second strategy session was held in January 2020, bringing a group of 40 participants together, including expert advisors, to align on CMHAA's areas of focus, intended impact and unique offering within the mental health landscape in Australia.





A close-up, profile view of a woman with grey hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a dark blazer over a light-colored top. The background is softly blurred, showing hints of an office environment with greenery and light. The overall mood is positive and professional.

## What is a mentally healthy workplace?

There are a number of definitions of a mentally healthy workplace. The common thread is that they all encompass culture and purpose, where:

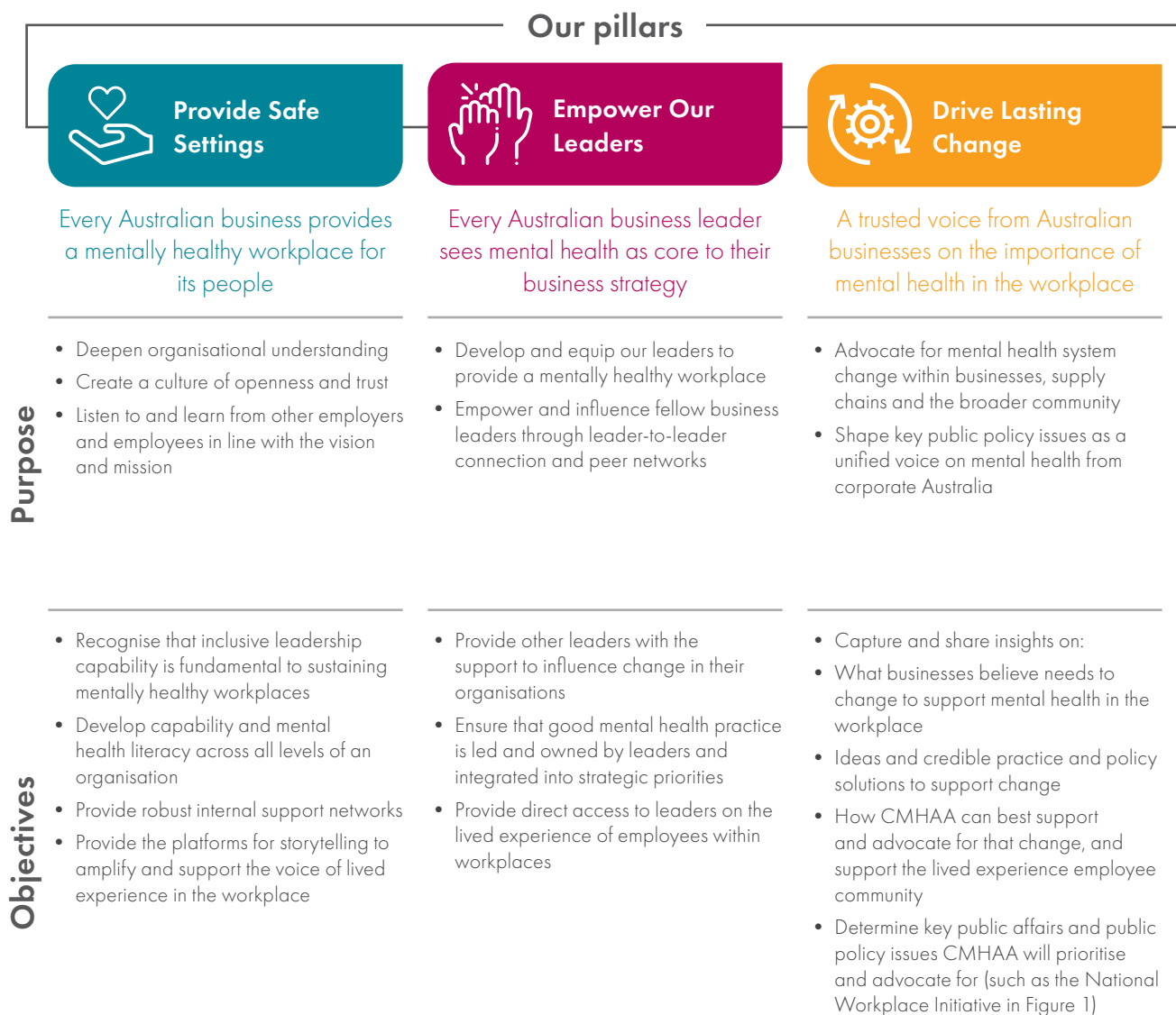
- people feel supported and able to do their best work, regardless of whether or not they have a mental health condition
- the same importance is placed on both mental and physical health and safety in the workplace
- leaders and team members actively promote and invest in the mental health and wellbeing of themselves and their colleagues
- cultures and practices protect people during challenging times, support and enable recovery from mental ill-health and provide opportunities to develop and thrive

# Strategic Plan

The CMHAA Strategic Plan was developed utilising the outcomes of the strategy sessions and working groups and outlines:

- Vision, purpose and objectives
- Measures of success
- Project delivery timeline
- Program of work for 2021
- Calendar of key events and milestones
- Program of work activities timeline
- Agreed workstreams for 2021: Research and Data, Psychosocial Risk Assessment & Modules, Defining Role of Work for CEOs

Three pillars underpin all CMHAA initiatives:







## Bringing to life CMHAA's objective to shape public policy through the National Workplace Initiative (NWI)

CMHAA has contributed to the NWI, through participation in working groups and workshops, on the development of a suite of practical tools and guides to support mentally healthy workplaces.

Last year, an investment of \$11.5 million over four years was announced by the Federal Government for the NWI, which aims to:

- create an evidence-based framework for workplace mental health strategies
- help people at work and those connected to them find suitable initiatives and resources
- showcase successful approaches to mentally healthy workplaces
- strengthen the many programs and interventions already underway in Australia

“

We need to be courageous as leaders and get comfortable with uncertainty and learning. It's up to us to lead the shift to an adaptive performance culture that creates space for creativity, re-imagination and experimentation.”

**Melinda Upton, Independent  
CMHAA Board Member**

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# Mission and Vision Statements

## Our Mission

Corporate Mental Health Alliance Australia is a business-led, expert-guided alliance of Australian businesses dedicated to providing mentally healthy workplaces for all people. We believe that as a community we can do better and when businesses pool their resources, share openly, and work collaboratively towards a common goal, we can achieve sustainable mental health outcomes for more people, sooner. Together, we have the power to change people's experience of the workplace for the better.

Our strength lies in the unique collaboration of our members. Together, we bring a vast pool of knowledge, capabilities and resources from each of our businesses. With guidance from experts, we seek to find ways to test and deliver solutions that work for our people.

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

Our vision is:

- 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

“

The importance and power of a good conversation is essential to a healthy and thriving workplace, whether that be in a remote working environment, in an office, or at a work site, where workers feel supported and encouraged to discuss their mental health.”

**Julie Mitchell, Chief General Manager, Personal Injury, Allianz Australia Insurance Ltd**



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# Governance

## CMHAA Board

The CMHAA Board comprises leaders from within its Founding Member organisations. The Board is supported at an operational level through a working group, constituting representatives from each member organisation (Functional Leads). The role of the Board is to drive the strategic direction of CMHAA, provide

a framework for its operations and focus on supporting member organisations. We are very grateful to our Board Members for their dedication and commitment to building and sustaining mentally healthy workplaces in corporate Australia.



**Steven Worrall**

Managing Director,  
Microsoft Australia  
Chair, CMHAA



**Martin Adlington**

Group Chief People Officer, nib



**Ercument Ates**

Managing Director, Australia &  
New Zealand, Galderma



**David Brewster**

Chief Legal and Safety Officer,  
Coles Group



**Virginia Briggs**

Chief Executive Officer,  
MinterEllison



**Bruce Cooper**

Chief Executive Partner,  
Clayton Utz





**Berkeley Cox**

Chief Executive Partner,  
King & Wood Mallesons



**Skye Crawford**

Chief People & Culture Officer,  
AIA Australia



**Andrew Culleton**

Executive General Manager  
Group People Services  
Commonwealth Bank of Australia



**Ellen Derrick**

Managing Partner, Consulting,  
Deloitte Australia



**Mac Ghani**

Global Growth & Strategy  
Executive, Avanade



**Brian Long**

General Manager, Safety, Health  
& Wellbeing, Woolworths Group



**Amber Matthews**

Managing Partner, Australia,  
DLA Piper



**Felicity McDowell**

Legal Director, Consumer Health,  
Johnson & Johnson Family  
of Companies



**Julie Mitchell**

Chief General Manager,  
Personal Injury,  
Allianz Australia Insurance Ltd



**Michael Schneider**

Managing Director,  
Bunnings Group Ltd



**Melinda Upton**

Independent CMHAA  
Board Member



**Sarah Vega**

National Managing Partner,  
Innovation, Solutions and Ventures,  
KPMG Australia

## CMHAA Governance

The Strategic Plan details the governance structure of CMHAA. This structure supports the day to day operations of the CMHAA and its delivery on the program of work, enabling the measurement of progress and supporting the development of an evidence base. A working group was formed in December 2020 to consider approaches to the governance model, as set out below.







### **Risk Framework**

A focus of CMHAA in FY22 will be the development of a risk management strategy, framework and appetite statement to govern the network and its governance processes. This program of work will be undertaken by a Board sub-committee.

“

We are stronger together – by sharing what is working – and what is not – we can improve both the quality of our thinking and the practice of creating the most psychologically safe workplaces in Australia.”

**Steven Worrall,**  
Chair, CMHAA

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# Expert Advisory Group

CMHAA has engaged with leading thinkers in mental health and wellbeing in Australia who provide their advice and expertise to ensure accuracy, appropriateness and relevance of resources for our member audience. Members of the Expert Advisory Group span a diverse range of sectors, including health, technology, academia and not-for-profit organisations. CMHAA extends its sincere gratitude to the Expert Advisory Group members for their voluntary contribution to the Alliance.

## Lucy Brogden AM

Chair, Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance

## Rachel Clements

Director of Psychological Services  
The Centre for Corporate Health

## Georgie Drury

Managing Director  
Hummingbird Innovations

## Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Gallop AC

Director, Graduate School of Government,  
The University of Sydney (2006-2015)  
Member, Western Australia's Legislative Assembly  
(1986-2006)  
Premier of Western Australia, 2001-2006

## Georgie Harman

Chief Executive Officer  
Beyond Blue

## Associate Professor Samuel Harvey

Deputy Director  
Black Dog Institute

## Professor Ian Hickie

Co-Director, Health and Policy  
Brain and Mind Centre, The University of Sydney

## Greg Miller

Executive Director  
Faethm

## Colin Seery

Chief Executive Officer  
Lifeline Australia

## Mitch Wallis

Founder and Chief Executive Officer  
Heart On My Sleeve

## Claire Allen

National Program Manager  
Pride in Health + Wellbeing

## Margo Lydon

Chief Executive Officer  
Superfriend

## Rachel Green

Chief Executive Officer  
SANE Australia

## Professor Sharon Parker

Director  
The Centre for Transformative Work Design



“

We cannot create mentally healthy workplaces without the support of our business leaders. Corporate Mental Health Alliance Australia is building a group of Australian business leaders committed to improving our workplaces to enable all workers to thrive and feel safe and valued. The business-led, expert-informed model will ensure that the best science, the best evidence is implemented effectively into organisations by people who live and breathe that business. The returns to businesses that get this right are significant, the costs to businesses and people of inaction can be tragic. It has been wonderful to see CMHAA get off to such a strong start – there is more to be done and we look forward to more collaboration.”

**Lucy Brogden, Chair, Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance**



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# CMHAA Members

## Founding Members

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THE REAL LIFE  
COMPANY

Allianz 

 **avanade**

**BUNNINGS**  
warehouse

CLAYTON UTZ

**coles**  
group

  
Commonwealth Bank

**Deloitte.**

 **DLA PIPER**

GALDERMA  
EST. 1981

*Johnson & Johnson*

KING & WOOD  
MALLESONS  
金杜律师事务所

 **KPMG**

 Microsoft

MinterEllison

**nib**

  
**pwc**

WOOLWORTHS GROUP  


## Annual Members

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 **Latrobe**  
HEALTH SERVICES

 **REA Group™**

\*Founding Participant



## Membership Overview

This year, CMHAA welcomed three additional Founding Members – Avanade, Galderma and nib. We welcomed REA Group and La Trobe Health Services as our most recent members, with other organisations in the pipeline for confirmation in 2022. The website details benefits enjoyed by members and their responsibilities. Membership is open to for-profit businesses operating in Australia and extends for a minimum of two years.

### Membership benefits:

- Contribution to a step-change in the creation of mentally healthy workplaces in Australia
- Access to the global Alliance network leadership and individual engagement opportunities with CMHAA's Expert Advisory Group
- Access and opportunities to participate in training, benchmarking and research in regard to mental health issues
- Access to guides, tools and resources created by experts for CMHAA members
- Collaboration with other members and organisations who are interested in mental health on a common agenda, through participation in events, workshops and consultations
- Brand eminence as a recognised leader in workplace mental health and opportunities to engage with the media and speak at relevant event
- Opportunity to access and drive research and influence policymakers to improve quality of life of millions of Australians
- Access to a member-only collaboration platform

Founding Members receive the following additional benefits:

- CMHAA Board position
- Preferential access to speaking and media opportunities
- Prominent recognition as a Founding Member on CMHAA's website and in externally-facing campaigns and materials

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



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# CMHAA Activity: 2020-2021

Officially launching in October 2020, the Alliance has focused on developing evidence-based best practice in order to build mentally healthy workplaces in Australia. The Annual Gathering was held in February 2021, at which the program of events and activity was agreed for the year.

The program of activity in 2020-2021 was delivered through three key channels: Resources, Events and Communications, and are outlined in detail in this report.

**Resources** are publicly available on the CMHAA website and include blogs, case studies, guides and toolkits, as well as news, personal stories and research.

**Events** held since the Alliance's inception include the initial Strategy Sessions, CMHAA Official Launch, CEO Forum, Member Insight and Exchange Sessions, the Annual Gathering and a Global Webinar.

**Communications** have focused on Alliance members and raising awareness about mental health in the workplace more broadly to leaders at all levels. Our communication channels include website content, newsletters, social media platforms, panel and conference presentations, press coverage and marketing materials.







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# Resources

CMHAA aims to provide resource material that support organisations in planning, improving and measuring their approach to mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. Resources are practical and relevant to the corporate landscape in Australia and are publicly available to all organisations via CMHAA website.

The resource strategy leverages appropriate material from the global Alliance network and other trusted sources. We maintain a clear focus on generating independent resource material with our member organisations and expert advisors, as well as collating and linking to credible government and other expert organisations producing resources, materials and guides around workplace mental health.

The CMHAA's website is regularly reviewed and updated, and features information on its organisational structure and strategic priorities, as well as information on CMHAA membership. For ease of navigation, resources are themed in sub-sections:

## Case Studies

The following five case studies focus on improving workplace culture and assessing organisational approaches:

- It's about the cake: baking in psychosocial risk assessment for a mentally healthy workplace
- Commonwealth Bank Thrives
- Microsoft Australia's Culture Shift
- Commonwealth Bank's 'A Better Day' Program
- PwC's 'Green Light to Talk' Program

## Blogs

Blogs featured on the CMHAA website are aimed at sharing of information, providing discussion leads and offering personal views:

- Make RUOK Day Every Day – Not Just September 9
- Surf icon Layne Beachley steers clear of dream thieves in life's lineup
- CMHAA Annual Gathering: February 2021

## Guides & Toolkits

The Thriving at Work Global Framework was launched by the City Mental Health Alliance in the United Kingdom in November 2020 and is available on the CMHAA website.

## Personal Stories

CMHAA members have shared personal stories which are featured on the website, detailing experiences with mental health issues. The intent is to amplify and highlight the lived experience of our members and their employees to ensure that the lived experience voice continues to guide CMHAA.

## News & Views

This sub-section of the Resources page features articles published by CMHAA on a range of topics:

- It's time to change the way we talk about mental health in the workplace
- Welcoming our newest Founding Members
- CMHAA sets healthy workplace agenda for 2021
- Poppy Jarman on the launch of the Global Thriving at Work Framework
- Australian businesses unite to tackle mental health in the workplace

## Thriving at Work Global Framework: A Snapshot

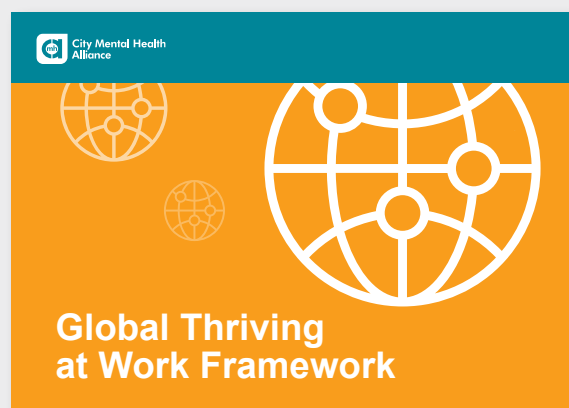
The first resource of its kind to help businesses accelerate the pace of change and become mentally healthy workplaces.

- Mental health stigma remains high: it is imperative access to support is improved.
- Global employers have an opportunity to make a difference.
- The framework is for businesses seeking to develop mental health and wellbeing approaches or as a baseline for the development of programs of work.
- Developed in collaboration with global businesses, and informed by mental health experts, academic research and workplace reports, the framework is based on ten years of workplace mental health experience and reflects the evidence and learning from the CHMA member organisations.
- The framework lays out the three Global Pillars – strategic aims for building mentally healthy workplaces – which provide businesses with a template for building a sustainable mental health strategy:

1.  
Create a **culture of wellbeing and psychological safety**

2.  
Develop a **mentally healthy working environment**

3.  
Provide and signpost to **accessible resources, tools and support**



“

The development of this framework shows the strength of the CMHA global community as it pools its knowledge, data and experience to create a unique guide.”

**Poppy Jarman, CEO,  
City Mental Health Alliance UK**

<https://citymha.org.uk/Resources/Thriving-at-Work-Global-Framework>



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# Events

A number of events were held during 2020-2021, designed either for members or a broader audience. Member events were created for the sharing of member organisation experiences, knowledge and information around topical areas that would provide the support required to influence and improve mental wellbeing in their workplaces.

Other events were focused on highlighting and raising awareness of workplace mental health as a business-critical issue with leaders, highlighting the focus of CMHAA as a collaborative group for corporate Australia in building mentally healthy workplaces.

## Official Launch

The official launch of CMHAA was held virtually in October 2020, officiated by the Federal Minister for Health, The Hon. Greg Hunt MP, and attended online by over 1000 people, comprising Alliance members, representatives from across corporate Australia, mental health advocacy groups, government and academia. A panel discussion was held as part of the launch, facilitated by leading journalist Ellen Fanning, and included Federal Minister for Health, The Hon. Greg Hunt MP, Steven Worrall, Lucy Brogden, Poppy Jarman OBE, Samuel Harvey and Marg Walford (Bunnings). The discussion focused on the role of business in providing workplace environments that support the mental health of their people.

## CMHAA Annual Gathering

In February 2021, CMHAA held its inaugural Annual Gathering. The aims were to review progress to date, outline key ambitions and develop the program of work. Alliance members discussed:

- the critical role of data as an evidence base for developing processes and practices, and to shape metrics for measuring progress
- the need to boost the mental health literacy of employees, managers, and particularly hiring teams in order to structure and design jobs so they are stimulating, without being onerous
- the journey leaders are undertaking to helm mentally healthy workplaces in organisations

Reports were presented that documented the scale of the mental health challenge facing corporate Australia and the opportunities, including:

- Indicators of a Thriving Workplace: Australia's largest workplace mental health study
- The National Stigma Report Card: Findings from a survey conducted on the impact of stigma and discrimination experienced by people living with complex mental health issues
- The Productivity Commission Mental Health Inquiry: Findings note mental health is a key driver of economic participation and productivity in Australia
- Commonwealth Bank Thrives: The success of the Thrive and A Better Day mental health initiatives developed for CBA employees
- NSW Draft Code: Managing Risks to Psychological Health
- National Workplace Initiative: Federal funding for the support of workplace mental health



### Member Insight and Exchange Sessions

Member Insight and Exchange Sessions (MIES) are scheduled on a twice-yearly basis and provide a structured environment for CMHAA members to listen to experts in the field, as well as other Alliance members, and learn about the activities and strategies organisations are implementing to improve workplace mental health.

During 2020 and 2021, two MIES sessions were held delivered both in-person and virtually, focusing on topics such as Leadership and Mental Health and Psychosocial Risk Assessments. A panel session was held in September 2021 on How to Create a Speak Up Culture for Psychosocial Risks in the Workplace. Attendee numbers ranged between 90 and 140 per session.

### CEO Forum

In October 2021, a virtual CEO Forum was held in conjunction with the Business Council of Australia (BCA), entitled Leading Mentally Fit Workplaces. The event attracted approximately 50 CEOs of Australia's largest companies and was hosted by Steven Worrall and Jennifer Westacott.

Keynote speaker, Dr Brian Marien from the Positive Group (UK), along with a panel of experts and business leaders including Penny Armytage, Brad Banducci, Berkeley Cox and Julie Mitchell explored the importance of providing psychologically safe workplaces, the role of upstream interventions and the essential role senior leadership plays in promoting mentally fit workplaces.

### Global Webinars

Leveraging the global Alliance network, a series of webinars are freely available to CMHAA members, offering access to international perspectives and a sharing of global case studies.

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# Communications

The objective of CMHAA's Communications Strategy is to ensure Australian business leaders view mental health as core to their business strategy, and provide them with the resources required to support their implementation of culturally and business-appropriate mental health strategies.

## Communication Channels

- CMHAA website content is refreshed weekly, featuring a comprehensive resources section and information for prospective members.
- LinkedIn: Features newly created The Sprint: Leading Mentally Fit Workplaces – CMHAA's fortnightly newsletter covering items such as regulatory change, corporate initiatives, research roundup, legal cases, CMHAA initiatives (survey results, white papers) and hybrid work environments.
- Media: media publications for business leaders and industry bodies. Media articles are made available on the website, such as Business unites to tackle mental health which appeared in the AFR, October 2020.
- Public representation: CMHAA was represented by speakers at the Wellbeing at Work Conference, Chapmans panel discussion for senior HR leaders, BCA CEO Forum and Black Dog Institute panel discussion.

## Alliance Member Communications

A recently launched newsletter will be sent to members every second month by the Executive. The newsletter includes a note from the Chair, member and board profiles, member activities, research articles, case studies, event information and promotions, as well as podcast recommendations. An update on the global Alliance network is also included.





## National Communications Charter: CMHAA proud to become a signatory to the National Communications Charter in August 2021

- The Charter is a resource that guides the way organisations communicate on mental health and suicide prevention.
- It serves as a formal commitment to working together and promotes safe, inclusive language with the aim of reducing workplace stigma and promoting help-seeking behaviour.
- The Charter has existed for some time, and the Everymind Institute and suicide prevention organisation Life in Mind have been redeveloping it since 2017, working in consultation with a diverse group of stakeholders.
- CMHAA signed the Charter in August 2021, and encouraged member organisations to do the same.

### National Communications Charter

Signatories of The Charter agree to the following eight core principles:



## 2020-21 Highlights

CMHAA Official Launch attendees:

1,335

Average MIES attendees per session:

120

Invitations to represent CMHAA at  
conferences and panel discussions:

5

Number of member and affiliate events:

4

Linkedin followers:

1,400

Website visits:

9,200

Resource downloads:

34,000

Most viewed resource:

Thriving at  
Work Global  
Framework



# Measures of Success

The CMHAA Strategic Plan identifies the following long-term measures of success:

1. Improved people mental health and wellbeing in member workplaces
2. Employees feel that senior leaders are committed to mental health and wellbeing
3. Leaders feel confident, and are competent to enable mentally healthy workplaces
4. The Alliance is sought out by business and business leaders seeking to improve their approach to mental health and wellbeing in the workplace
5. Members feel that the Alliance is meeting its objectives and delivering value to members

The results of the Annual Survey in 2022 will provide clarity on CMHAA's success in achieving sustainable mental health outcomes in the workplace and inform our future objectives and focus areas. The survey will be offered to employees of member organisations and will be looking at indicators across improved employee wellbeing at work, employee perceptions of senior leadership commitment to employee mental health and whether leaders themselves feel confident and competent to enable mental health workplaces.







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# Outlook for 2022

The Program of Work for 2022 seeks to build on the activities undertaken in 2021, with workstreams agreed and planning under way. Work has commenced on a number of activities in the pipeline to be launched next year.

## **Thriving from the Start: Early in Career Program**

The Early in Career Program was endorsed by the Board to commence in September 2021 and will be launched in December 2021. The aim of the program is to understand the challenges and concerns faced by young people as they enter the workplace and begin their careers. CMHAA will utilise these insights to drive improvements in organisational responses and support.

The program of work includes:

- an annual survey of participants aged 18-30 regarding their perspectives, concerns and experiences relating to mental health and wellbeing as they enter the workforce
- an audit of the support currently provided to young workers by CMHAA member organisations
- CMHAA annual survey publication based on survey insights
- creation of a Thriving from the Start network, offering social networking and educational events to young employees of member organisations

## **Leadership Toolkit**

The Leadership Toolkit is in progress, due to be launched in 2022. The aim of the toolkit is to provide a practical suite of leadership tools and resources based on best practice and evidence, bringing together learnings from across sectors. The objective is to define what good leadership on mental health in the workplace looks and feels like.

Each organisation has been asked to share credible practice resources on leadership behaviours and capabilities in order to produce a toolkit aimed at developing and rewarding leaders for mentally healthy workplaces. The toolkit will also include links to other trusted organisations with leadership resources. To ensure we continue to build on businesses learning and sharing, the toolkit will include podcasts with CMHAA Board Members and Functional Leads as well as other employees at various levels in organisations, discussing their experiences in finding ways to improve mental health in their workplace.



### Annual Survey

The survey will be extended to the approximately 450,000 collective employees of member organisations in early 2022. Questions are designed to gauge employee wellbeing at work, factors that support thriving as well as stress factors within the workplace, and their perception of the organisation's success in creating a mentally healthy workplace culture. The survey will include questions for leaders on their confidence and ability to support their employees and sustain a safe and healthy working environment. The detailed survey findings will be made available to members and an overview of the themes identified will be shared on the CMHAA website.

### Development of Psychosocial Risk Assessment Resources

Four psychosocial risk assessment modules will be launched in 2022. These will outline the case for identifying psychosocial risks and hazards in the workplace, the challenges and issues organisations face in relation to better understanding psychological health and safety, case studies of organisations undertaking or completing psychosocial risk assessments as well as an outline of the currently available survey tools and methodologies.

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# Statistics

⌘ \$39 billion

The Productivity Commission estimates that mental health costs Australian workplaces \$39 billion in lower participation, absenteeism and presenteeism.

👤+ 3 million

Three million working Australians have mental ill-health or care for someone with mental ill-health.

📈+ 65%

Work pressure and work-related harassment and bullying make up 65% of workers' compensation claims for mental health.

💻 70%

70% of employees do not seek help for their mental health, and less than 3% use an Employee Assistance Program.



Organisations whose employees are thriving see improved productivity and profitability.

📄+ 4.25x

Taking action on workplace mental health and job satisfaction is good for business, with an estimated 4.25 times return on investment for every dollar spent.







**cmhaa.org.au**

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