

# Organisational Tips: Supporting staff wellbeing

While staff find meaning and value in their work in aged care services, they can also feel pressures. Some stresses arise from individual characteristics and circumstances while others can result from organisational practices and processes. Burnout contributes to staff turnover.

Caring for people coming to the end of their life or who are dying can be an additional source of sadness and distress. This is, however, an important part of aged care. Below we have put together a series of ideas that organisation can implement to support their workforce.

## **Tip 1** Let's talk about it

Provide opportunities for staff to talk about moral distress or ethical concerns. Aged care workers come from many different backgrounds and can have different cultural or religious perspectives. Getting together to talk about how the team felt about a recent death can provide you with important insights into concerns or worries.

## **Tip 2** Check in

Check in with those who provided care at end of life to an older person living in your facility or who was receiving care in their home. Acknowledging the loss is validating. It is also a good way to see if the staff member felt comfortable and confident in their skills.

## **Tip 3** Sort out formal Employee Assistance options

If you have an Employee Assistance program, make sure staff are aware that it is available. Early engagement can help them recognise and manage their sense of grief and loss. Make a list of groups providing support to health and aged care professionals.

## **Tip 4** Make sure workloads are okay

Work conditions can contribute to burnout in aged care. This can be too much work and too many time pressures. It can also be about the feeling that the staff member did not have the time or skills to provide the care they would have wanted.

## Tip 5

### Build your teams

Your staff work in teams, and their work team is generally the first point of contact when someone is distressed. Be flexible if someone needs a bit of time and support to manage their feelings.

## Tip 6

### Acknowledge what they do

Providing care to someone who is dying requires human engagement. As well as considering formal reward systems, make sure you respect, value and care about your teams. Remember your staff represent your service.

## Tip 7

### Help them grow

Give staff the chance to develop their knowledge and skills. Support them when they are providing end-of-life care for the first time. Offer opportunities for them to learn more.

## Tip 8

### Encourage self-care

Suggest staff visit the ELDAC Self-Care Room or consider completing palliAGED's Self-care plan. Self-care encourages them to be active in monitoring their personal wellbeing at the same time you are providing a supportive and responsive employment environment.

## Finding out more

**palliAGED:** There is an evidence summary on [Workforce Wellbeing](#) that summarises current evidence.

**ARIIA:** The [Knowledge and Implementation Hub](#) has an aged care theme on [Staff Burnout](#).