

Mental Health Continuum - Guide

A tool to help evaluate your mental health and identify when you might need some extra support



What is the Mental Health Continuum (MHC) tool?

Have you ever noticed how some days you feel drained and low, while on other days you're energised and at your best? Just like our physical health, our psychological health shifts over time, existing on a continuum. The Mental Health Continuum is a tool you can use to help you make sense of these changes and provide you with some options to protect and support your mental health. This tool highlights the dynamic nature of mental health, reminding us that it's always evolving.

That's why it's crucial to recognise and address mental health concerns early on, before they become more challenging to handle.

When to use the MHC tool

The **Mental Health Continuum (MHC) tool** allows individuals to pinpoint where they currently are on the mental health continuum by identifying their thoughts, emotions, habits, and behaviours. Using these different shades of blue (from light to dark) on the MHC tool is an effective way to communicate your health and wellbeing with others. It also helps identify what actions you can take to remain in the lighter blue stages.



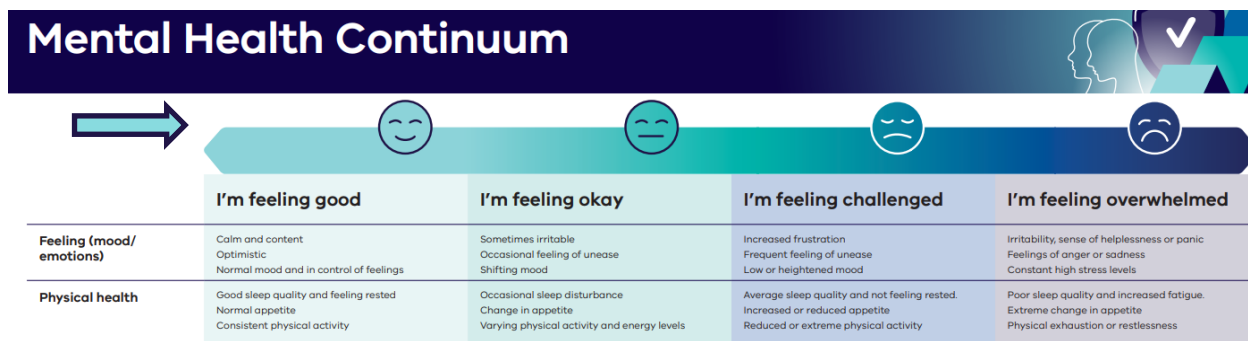
It can be used in several ways:

- **Self-reflection:** The tool provides a space for personal reflection and awareness, helping you evaluate your current mental health and discover steps to support and maintain positive mental health and wellbeing.
- **Supporting others:** Managers, leaders, colleagues, and Peer Supporters can also use the tool to better understand and assist others. It offers a framework for guiding meaningful conversations about mental health and connecting individuals with the right resources and support.

How to use the MHC tool

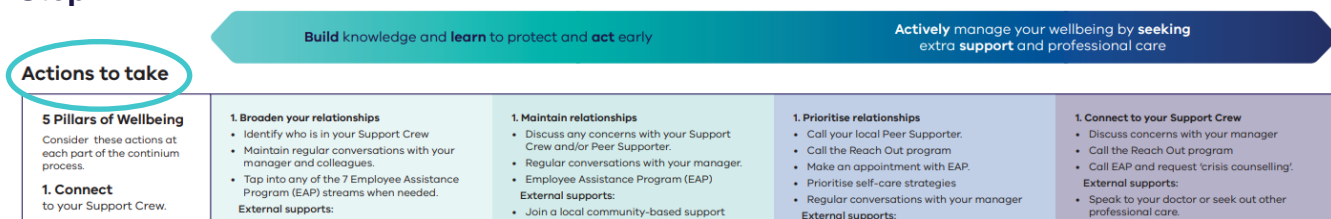
The **MHC tool** can be used daily, weekly, or whenever you sense shifts in your mental health and wellbeing. Just as you might track physical symptoms, this tool helps you stay in tune with your mental health. By following these simple steps, you can monitor your mental health and take action when needed:

Step 1.



Navigate to the top of the tool and take a moment to reflect on how you're feeling right now or how you've been feeling recently. Review the signs and symptoms listed under each mood category to identify which ones resonate with you in this moment.

Step 2.



Once you've identified how you're feeling, head to the '**Actions to take**' section to explore steps to support and maintain your mental health.

For example, engage in activities that promote health and wellbeing, and routinely include health and wellbeing and work stressors in your 1:1 discussion with your manager.

Seek support if you notice yourself moving toward the "darker blue" stages (feeling challenged or overwhelmed). This could involve talking to a health professional, reaching out to a trusted friend or family member, or using available workplace resources.

Tips to support your mental health

Research highlights five pillars of wellbeing, emphasising that individuals can actively contribute to improving and maintaining their sense of wellbeing.

Connect:

- ✓ Building close relationships and socialising with friends, family, and others is essential for good health and wellbeing.
- ✓ Expanding your social network and engaging with the wider community are also vital for enhancing your wellbeing.
- ✓ Recognising when to connect with external and professional supports, such as your doctor or an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider, as these services can provide tailored care and guidance when needed.

Be active:

- ✓ Staying active is important for good health at all ages and life stages.
- ✓ Find activities that you enjoy and think about how you can do them every day.

Keep Learning:

- ✓ Learning new things can be enjoyable and boost your self-confidence and self-esteem. It helps us find meaning and purpose in life and connects us with others.

- ✓ Learning doesn't necessarily mean acquiring more qualifications; it's about challenging yourself to try new things in different ways.

Be Aware:

- ✓ Take time each day to appreciate something positive already present in your life, this practice is known as 'gratitude.' Like any skill, gratitude improves with regular practice.

Give to Others:

- ✓ Even small acts of kindness, such as a smile or a "thank you," can make a difference.
- ✓ Volunteering at a local community centre, can also positively impact others and yourself.
- ✓ Helping others, whether in big or small ways, can enhance your happiness, satisfaction with life, and strengthen relationships

"5 Ways to Wellbeing." *Five Ways to Wellbeing Australia*, www.5waystowellbeing.org.au.