

# emale

improving male health & wellbeing  
issue 179 September October 2020



TOM HELPS MEN TO REDUCE DRINKING  
GIVING MEN A HAND REPORT RELEASED  
BLOKES UNITED 18K FOLLOWERS | NEW MR P DIRECTORY  
TOLL PANDEMIC IS TAKING ON MEN  
ENGAGING MEN ONLINE  
MENTAL WELLBEING SUPPORTS

## New campaign supports men wanting to reduce drinking

The Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) has launched a campaign supporting men who want to reduce their alcohol intake, following an ACT survey that reported a third of men wanted to cut down on drinking.

Named after those Third of Men, the new [TOM website](#) gives men the tools to cut down on drinking and outlines the benefits of why they might want to do so.

Supported by the ACT Government, FARE promotes a free app called [Daybreak](#), which offers self-directed activities to help people cut back or quit drinking completely, offering one-on-one professional coaching and community support. It is available for Australian residents and all information is confidential, anonymous and secure.

The website also promotes a [Drinksmeter app](#), which includes an interactive drinks pouring tool that sets out clearly what a standard drink is, how much is being spent on grog and how much each drink contains in kilojoules and calories.

Aside from the information about drinking guidelines and health risks, the website presents shareable animations pointing out the benefits of drinking less.



Targeted at men aged 25-55 years, FARE says men are more likely to drink alcohol than women at levels that place them at short-term and life-long risk of harm. They are also less aware of the [Australian Guidelines around reducing health risks caused by drinking alcohol](#).

Key findings of the [FARE survey](#) – Alcohol use and awareness among men in the ACT – included:

- Men are twice as likely as women to drink at least four times each week.
- One in five men (10%) drink five or more standard drinks on a typical drinking occasion, compared to nine% of women.
- One in ten men (10%) drink five or more standard drinks two or more times a week, compared to 5% of women.

Nearly one third of men (31%) surveyed in the ACT want to reduce their alcohol intake over the next 12 months, compared to 21% of women.

The survey was conducted in February 2020, aiming to understand awareness of Australian guidelines around alcohol, alcohol use and help-seeking relating to alcohol use. The sample group of 500 were aged between 18 and 65 years.

“The TOM campaign aligns with the ACT Government’s commitment to supporting the health and well-being of the community,” said ACT Health Minister Rachel Stephen-Smith.

“TOM may be a partner, brother, neighbour, friend or colleague – I encourage everyone to visit the website for more information and advice on supporting men to make positive lifestyle changes for themselves, their families and the community,” the Minister said.

The [Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education \(FARE\)](#) is an independent, not-for-profit organisation working to stop the harm caused by alcohol. Alcohol harm in Australia is significant. Nearly 6,000 lives are lost every year and more than 144,000 people are hospitalised making alcohol one of our nation’s greatest preventative health challenges.

### [SAY HELLO TO TOM](#)

Source: Kim Trengove AMHF

## GIVING MEN A HAND report released

The **Australian Men's Health Forum** is calling on the Government to develop a national plan to prevent male suicide. In a new report published on World Suicide Prevention Day, Thursday 10 September 2020, AMHF says the Government is spending \$5 billion a year on mental health services but the money isn't reaching men at risk of suicide.

The solution, says the report, is for the Government to develop a National Plan to Prevent Male Suicide that directs funding at male-friendly services and gets more men involved in preventing suicide. Glen Poole, CEO of the Australian Men's Health Forum, said: "Suicide is killing 8 people a day in Australia, 6 men and 2 women. Closing the gap between male suicide and female suicide would save 1,500 lives a year. Yet most work to prevent suicide ignores the differences between men and women and most suicide prevention funding supports services that are better at preventing female suicide.

"We know that men's and women's experiences of suicide are different. Male suicides are more often associated with relationship problems, money issues, job loss and alcohol abuse, whereas female suicides are more likely to be linked to mental illness and previous suicide attempts. "We need a national plan to ensure that funding is specifically targeted at services designed with men in mind. We also need more men to be part of the solution. "For too long, women have shouldered the burden of working to prevent male suicide. The time has come to give more men a hand to step up and get involved in male suicide prevention."

The Morrison government has set itself an ambitious target of working towards a zero suicide goal. According to AMHF's new report, sector experts say that preventing male suicide would go further than any other approach to achieving this goal. The report also highlights advice given to the Prime Minister by the National Suicide Prevention Adviser, Christine Morgan, which argued that men are one of the groups "known to be more vulnerable to suicide and providing effective approaches to suicide prevention for them is a priority".

A call to tackle male suicide has also been made by Suicide Prevention Australia (SPA), the national peak body for the suicide prevention sector. In March this year, SPA asked the Government to adopt "a male suicide prevention strategy as a core stream within the national suicide prevention strategy, with funding and accountability attached to measures".

Poole said: "In recent years we've made good progress in tackling some of the biggest killers of men, such as heart disease, cancers and road accidents, but the national drive to reduce the number of suicides in Australia isn't working. This is why we need a National Plan that targets funding directly at male suicide and gives men and men's services a hand to get more involved in preventing suicide."

[DOWNLOAD THE REPORT: GIVING MEN A HAND: THE CASE FOR A MALE SUICIDE PREVENTION STRATEGY](#)

Source: Kim Trengove AMHF.



## Blokes United in Melbourne hits 18K on facebook



On the 15<sup>th</sup> of August, two AFL Legends joined forces with a prominent life coach to launch an online forum aimed at helping men in Melbourne through the city's second lockdown. Quality Mind Global CEO Richard Maloney says "Blokes United" was designed as a response to stage four lockdowns affecting the mental health of Melburnian men, who are generally reluctant to speak up about their problems. Partnering with Barry Hall and Sean Higgins, Mr Maloney said the forum has seen "roughly 4,000" men sign up in just six days. "We saw a major issue happening around stage four and decided to act," he said. "I've been in the coaching game for 15 years and having worked at five AFL clubs and blokes, I had a passion for understanding the mind because of struggles I went through in my early 20s. "I went through a mystical tour for about 10 years to discover what the hell life was all about and I started to put the mosaic together." Mr Maloney said he slowly discovered the systems and processes that allow people to live "the good life" and is now sharing that with others. "Everything is neutral until you give it meaning," Mr Maloney said. **Four hours ago they hit 18,000 men online.**

The clever men at Mr Perfect created a Men's Health Directory on their website - for men to use and share on social media channels and to their connections - they think it could be quite a powerful resource for men and fill the gaps where they do not operate. Read about groups, services and movements similar or complementary to Mr. Perfect or something different.

Directory link here too: <https://mrperfect.org.au/pages/mens-health-directory>

MR.  
**PERFECT**  
MENTAL HEALTH'S MATE

[ABOUT](#) ▾   
 [BLOG](#)   
 [FORUMS](#) ▾   
 [MEN'S HEALTH DIRECTORY](#)   
 [CONTACT](#)   
 🔍

### Men's Health Directory

All   
Crisis / Clinical   
Dads / Fathers   
Education / Programs   
Events / Campaigns  
Informal / Non-Crisis   
Men's Groups / Circles

## U.S. Survey shows the Toll Pandemic is Taking on Men

In an online survey among approximately 1,000 U.S. males 18 years or older, Cleveland Clinic found that 77 percent of men report their stress level has increased as a result of COVID-19, 59 percent of men have felt isolated during the pandemic and nearly half (45 percent) of men say their emotional/mental health has worsened during the pandemic. The survey was issued as part of Cleveland Clinic's fifth annual educational campaign, "MENTion It®," which aims to address the fact that men often do not "MENTion" health issues or take steps to prevent them.

### Key survey findings:

#### ⇒ **Men May Not MENTION It, but COVID-19 is Taking a Toll on Their Mental Health**

Three-in-five men (59%) feel COVID-19 has had a greater negative impact on their mental health than the 2008 recession.

66% of men say they rarely talk about the impact COVID-19 has had on their mental health.

#### ⇒ **Many Men Struggle to Stay Healthy During the Pandemic**

Half of men (48%) have put off seeing a doctor for non-COVID-19 related health issues over the last few months – this is even higher among men 18-34 (56%).

40% of men say they are struggling to stay healthy during COVID-19.

A quarter (24%) of men report weight gain during the pandemic.

#### ⇒ **While Some Are Struggling, COVID-19 Has Inspired Healthier Habits in Others**

Nearly half of men (45%) feel healthier now than before the COVID-19 outbreak.

Roughly one-quarter of men have started sleeping more (28%), while a fifth have been exercising more (22%) and eating healthier (19%) since the COVID-19 outbreak.

A quarter (23%) have been spending more time with family/friends virtually, likely as a way of coping with social distancing.

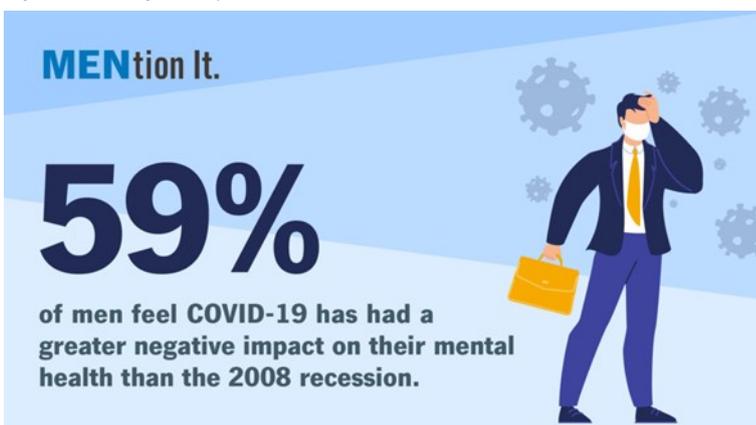
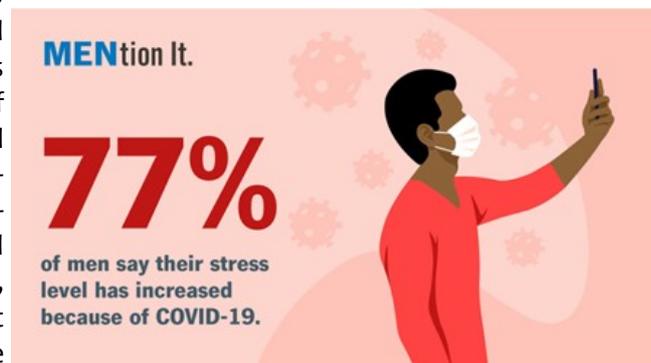
#### ⇒ **Men Could do More to Protect Themselves Against COVID-19**

While the majority (70%) have been wearing face masks in public as a means of protection against COVID-19, nearly a third (30%) of men have not been.

Younger men 18 to 34 are less likely to avoid gathering in large groups to protect themselves against COVID-19 (51%), especially compared to older men 55 and up (67%).

#### ⇒ **Most Men Are Optimistic About the Future Despite COVID-19**

While 64% don't see an end to the COVID-19 outbreak in sight, the majority (71%) still remain optimistic about the future as the world continues to battle COVID-19, suggesting the pandemic hasn't dampened spirits completely.



## ENGAGING MEN ONLINE



## ENGAGING MEN ONLINE

Training that's made with men in mind

October 6 & 7 from 10.00 am - 1.00 pm

The **ENGAGING MEN** Male Health Promotion Training Course equips anyone who wants to work with men with knowledge and skills to work more effectively with males, with the aim of improving their health, wellbeing, and lives. No previous experience or knowledge is required - only a willingness to learn, explore and grow.

The program combines evidence-based theory and practice with a focus on developing individual awareness and interpersonal and group skills. **ENGAGING MEN** is based in a social determinants of health model and is inclusive of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander brothers' health and wellbeing needs.

The program identifies barriers in health care and offers solutions to overcome these in a range of health care settings. You will learn how to make your services and programs more men friendly.

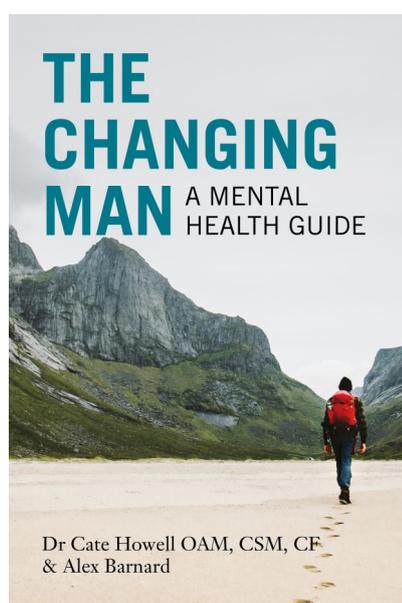
Facilitated by Greg Millan one of Australia's leading experts on men's health promotion.

**EARLY BIRD RATE \$100 FOR ALL EMAIL READERS**

Registration \$150 for the 2 days of online training, all training materials plus comprehensive bank of men's health kits and resources including a copy of my book "*Men's health and wellbeing: an a - z guide*".

[Visit the website for Course Content and Registration Form](#)

Ring Greg 0417 772 390 or e [greg@menshealthservices.com.au](mailto:greg@menshealthservices.com.au)



Men are affected by everyday stresses, high workloads, anxiety and depression, loss of confidence or identity, relationship breakdowns, family disruption, addictions, and trauma.

In this COVID impacted culture many men are now facing for the first time the prospect of job losses, financial hardship and isolation. For many men a combination of our "she'll be right mate" culture and concerns about appearing to be vulnerable have made it hard to reach out to get help.

But men are changing. They are re-defining what it is to be 'strong' and are more open to understanding their emotions and reaching out for help. **The Changing Man: A Mental Health Guide** explores a range of issues affecting men's emotional health and wellbeing and provides a collection of tried and tested tools to ensure no man suffers in silence again.

I was thrilled to write this book with my son, Alex Barnard. He is a musician, composer and educator in Melbourne, and has a long-held interest in mental health and wellbeing. He hopes to study Music Therapy to help people via music. He brought a young man's perspective to the book.

The Changing Man will be available from all good bookstores and online. Please consider pre-ordering, as this helps to get copies into the stores. Available to preorder from my [website](#).

Dr. Cate is a GP specialising in therapy and mental health, and has been working in this field for the past 20 years.

## FREE MENTAL WELLBEING SUPPORT DURING COVID-19

When we're not coping, it's not always possible to see a psychologist or a social worker for help. Sometimes there are barriers to professional support services – cost, distance, availability and, more recently, coronavirus lockdowns.

If you're struggling during COVID-19, there are a number of free and accessible tools available.

**BEYOND BLUE** The mental health organisation Beyond Blue has created a Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service to help people struggling during the pandemic. There's a phone helpline and online chat staffed by trained counsellors, as well as a forum to engage with other Australians, On top of that, Beyond Blue has developed a stack of helpful resources on everything from financial stress to maintaining a work-life balance and setting goals.

Best of all, it's entirely free and highly accessible.

### **THE BANKSIA PROJECT**

Mental health not-for-profit The Banksia Project has launched a free program called Growth Rooms, where you can connect with others, learn practical lifestyle tips and share your experiences. The two-hour weekly or monthly group sessions are led by trained facilitators and guide participants through coping mechanisms designed by mental health professionals. It's a judgment-free space of no more than 10 people to connect and discuss how to navigate the ups-and-downs of coronavirus. A recent survey found that after just three Growth Room sessions, participants felt 40 per cent more connected, 30 per cent more resilient and 25 per cent happier.

### **HEADGEAR**

Offered by the Black Dog Institute, HeadGear is a free smartphone app guiding you through a 30-day mental fitness course. Designed by mental health experts, it helps to build resilience and wellbeing, reducing the effects of depression and anxiety. The simple and engaging daily tasks are designed to help with stress, dealing with difficult situations, trouble sleeping and relationships.

### **REACHOUT**

Youth-focused mental health service ReachOut has developed a coronavirus resource for young people and their parents. As well as self-help tools on managing anxiety and study stress, support service referral information, it has a peer support program available for people to connect and share their experiences. There are also tips for parents on how to help their kids cope with coronavirus and lockdown restrictions.

### **SMILING MIND**

Smiling Mind is a free meditation app for young people, developed by a team of psychologists, teaching mindfulness techniques to promote calmness, contentment and clarity. While it's geared at younger people, there's no reason the young-at-heart can't also use it and take advantage of the tools on offer. There are programs for adults in the app, as well as guided meditations focusing on sleep, stress and wellbeing. There are a stack of good meditation, mindfulness and sleep assistance apps that are free or very cheap.

### **MINDSPOT**

For older Australians struggling with coronavirus, MindSpot runs a free Wellbeing Plus Course for adults aged 60 and over. It provides tips on learning to manage mild, moderate or severe symptoms of anxiety and depression, teaching core skills to improve confidence and quality of life.

### **OPEN ARMS**

Some people are especially vulnerable during these difficult times. For veterans and their families, Open Arms offers counselling services telephone or video, as well as peer support. Face-to-face support is also available - except in Melbourne at present. Call the 24-hour support line on 1800 011 046 to find out more.

Lifeline: 13 11 14 or [lifeline.org.au](http://lifeline.org.au)

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636 or [beyondblue.org.au](http://beyondblue.org.au)

Beyond Blue's coronavirus support service: 1800 512 348 or [coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au](http://coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au)

Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800 or [kidshelpline.com.au](http://kidshelpline.com.au)

Headspace: 1800 650 890 or [headspace.org.au](http://headspace.org.au)