

~~‘An inconvenient truth’~~

Mental health in working Australia

A collaborative presentation by -

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‘An ~~inconvenient~~ truth’

Mental health in working Australia

Mental illness - the facts

- × Mental illness is rare
- ✓ FACT - Mental illness affects one in five adults at some time in their lives

- × Mental illness only affects the disadvantaged
- ✓ FACT - Mental illness does not discriminate

- × Mental illness is a lifelong problem
- ✓ FACT - Many people suffer from only one episode of mental illness in their lifetime
- ✓ FACT - Recovery is EXPECTED for the vast majority

Mental illness - the facts

- × **People with Mental Illness cannot maintain productive employment roles**
- ✓ **FACT - People with mental illness can be effective employees**
- × **There is nothing we can do to prevent mental illness, promote good mental health**
- ✓ **FACT - There is plenty we can do - both individually and in the workplace**

Mental health bank balance

- Individuals

**+’ve Positive Bank Balance
(Mental Health)**

0’ve Neutral Bank Balance

**-’ve Negative Bank Balance
(Mental Illness)**

Mental health bank balance - the organisation

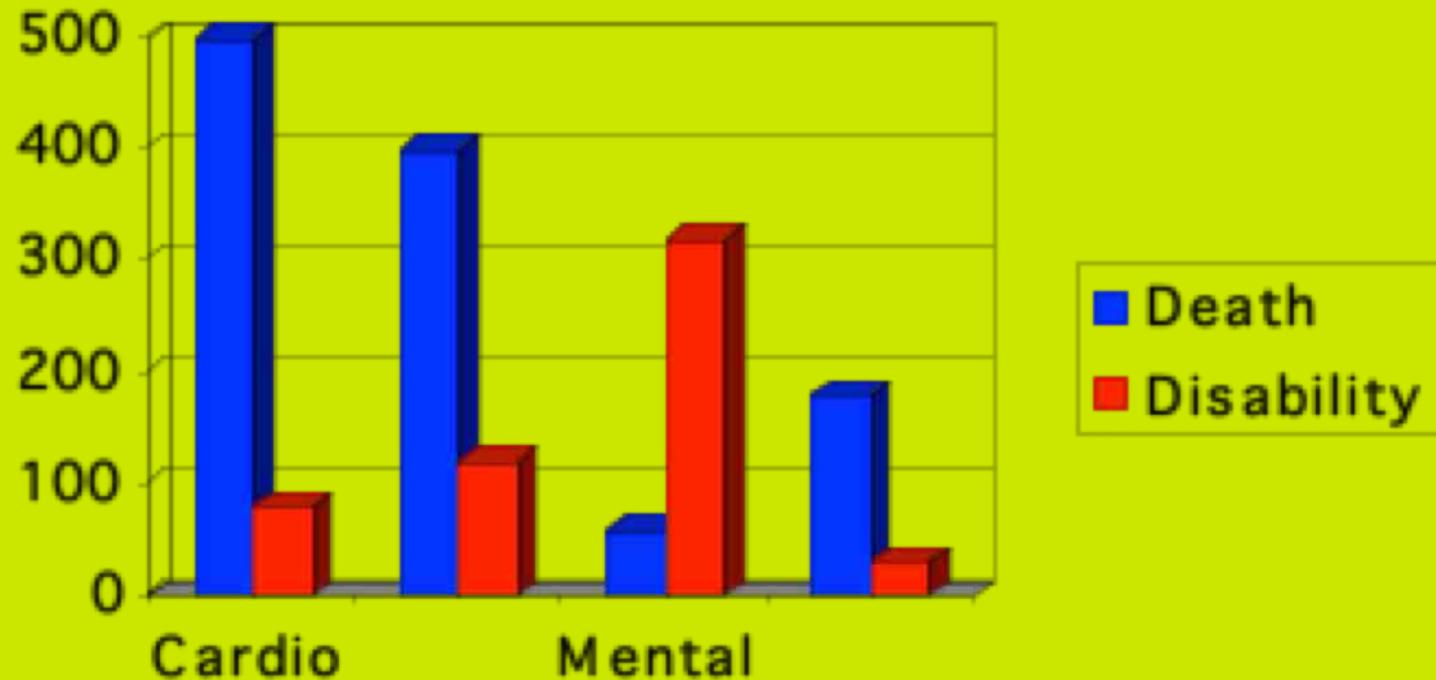


Treatment

- ✓ There are a range of effective treatments available for mental disorders
 - ✓ Psychiatric medication
 - ✓ Psychosocial interventions
 - ✓ Psychotherapeutic intervention
- ✓ Early identification and referral leads to early treatment - (importance of mental health awareness)
- ✓ Early treatment and being proactive leads to better outcomes

The burden of not identifying the problem

Burden of disease, Australia 1996 - Adjusted life years, 1,000's



We already know ...

Mental illness

- × One in five adults suffer in any one year
- × One in four of our youth suffer in any one year

Each year in the workplace;

- × Depression accounts for 6 million work days lost,
- × 12 million days of presenteeism / reduced productivity
- × Half of all employees with clinical depression never seek treatment. (National Mental Health Council)

\$\$\$

According to The WORC Project and ABS wages stats
the lost wages bill, just for depression amounts to

\$3.5 Billion or over \$500 per employee

***These figures don't take into account
the costs of other forms of mental illness,
or replacement and other knock on costs.**

Costs to Organisations

	Head count	Potential	\$\$\$
Coles Myer	165 000	33 000	82 500 000
Commonwealth	37 000	7 400	18 500 000
ANZ	20 000	3200	10 000 000
Holden	8000	1600	4 000 000
UNSW	5000	1000	2 500 000
Ernst and Young	4000	800	2 000 000
Sussan	3000	600	1 500 000
ACP	1700	340	850 000
Microsoft Australia	700	140	350 000
Tech Pacific	450	90	225 000

1. Key philosophical principles

Mental illness isn't simply a workplace issue, mental illness is a community health issue.

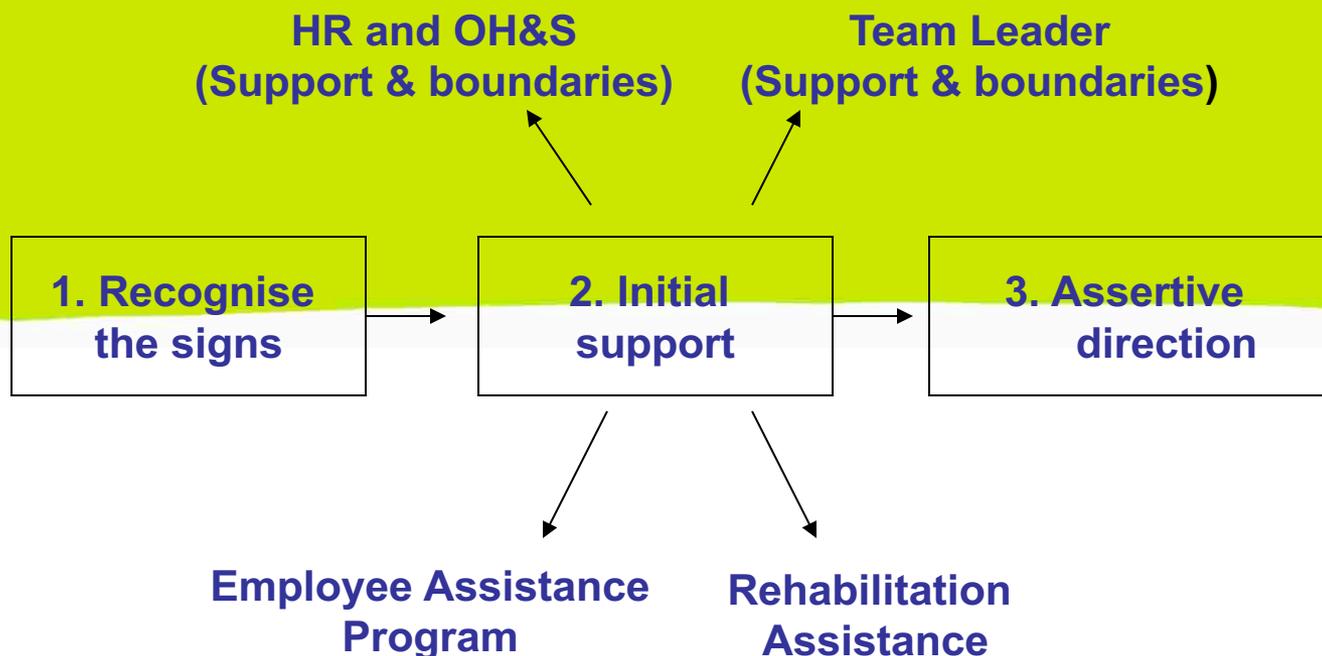
Mental illness is largely treatable,

and, and to a certain extent, *preventable*.

Our workplace can help by identifying the issue and referring to assistance and ensuring that the workplace environment is supportive

but ultimately it remains the responsibility of our employees to manage the improvement of their health.

2. The systems already exist within your organisation to manage it



- ✓ Agency Support
- ✓ Employee Assistance Programs
- ✓ Community based services
 - Mensline
 - Lifeline
- ✓ Staff / Job design expectations
- ✓ Policies
 - Changing jobs
 - Long term illness
- ✓ Info Sessions for Staff & Team Leaders
- ✓ Education, resources and tools for affected staff member

3. Education

About

- ✓ the signs and symptoms of mental illness
- ✓ mental health and wellbeing and the ways to maintain good mental health
- ✓ where to go for help, the systems and services that are out there

For

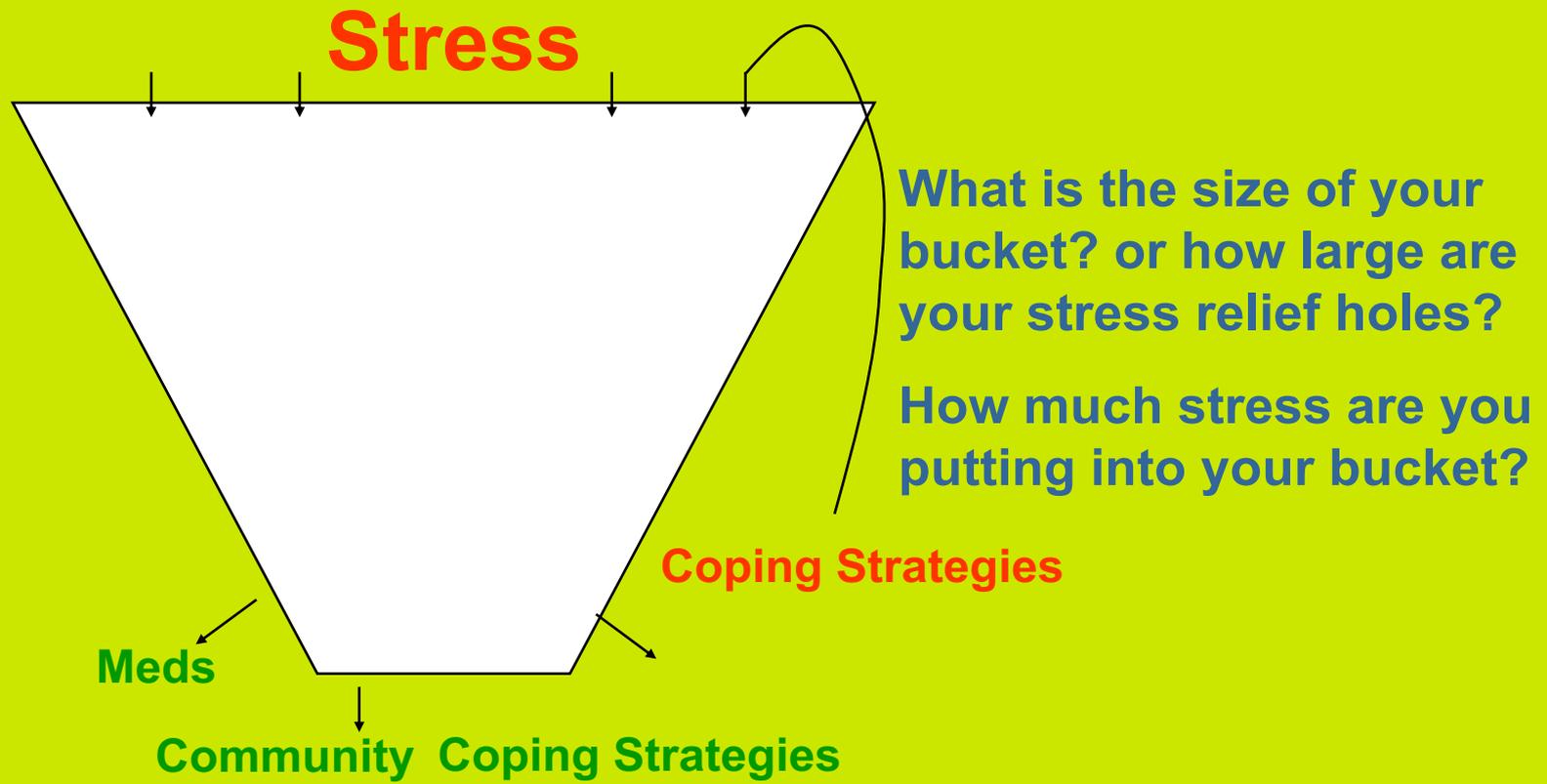
- ✓ Team members
- ✓ Managers
- ✓ Human Resources Staff

3. Education continued

Example of what training could include:

- ✓ The prevalence and costs of mental illness
- ✓ Identifying the signs of the most common forms of mental illness (depression, anxiety and substance misuse)
- ✓ Treatments available
- ✓ Managing your own health
 - ✓ Mental Health Diet
 - ✓ Cognitive Behaviour Therapy
 - ✓ Stress management techniques

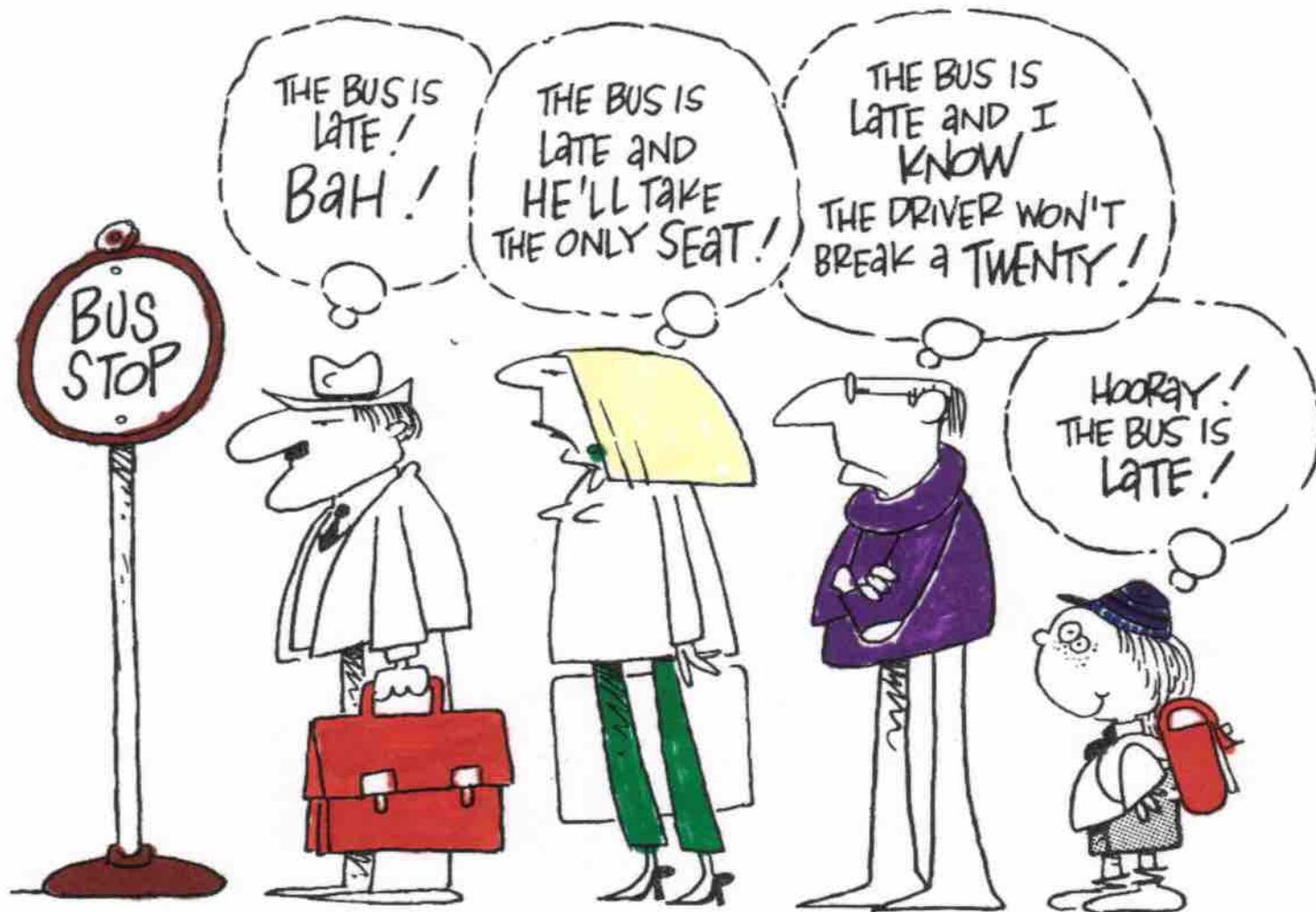
3. Education continued



3. Education cont. – the benefits

- ✓ Improved knowledge about mental illness AND mental health
- ✓ Improvements in health behaviour (looking after yourself)
- ✓ Improvements in confidence to deal with mental health issues in others
- ✓ Improvement in attitudes to people with mental health problems
- ✓ IMPROVED MENTAL HEALTH IN THOSE WHO DID THE TRAINING !!

The way we think can influence how we feel



So what's next?



Taking Action

- ✓ EAP service provision
- ✓ Workplace policies & procedures
- ✓ Working Well - How safe is our workplace?
- ✓ Management and staff skill development
- ✓ Opportunities to encourage discussion,
- ✓ What gets measured gets done
- ✓ The value of community
- ✓ From good to great
- ✓ Value of training & valuable training

✓ EAP service provision

We have reviewed our EAP service.

- We know the level of expertise of the counsellors.
- We know our provider uses standards that regulate the referral advice given, particularly for those who may need medical or other attention.
- We have quality feedback systems to ensure our employees are provided with appropriate help.
- We don't rely on our EAP service as the sole solution to stress, mental illness and other related issues. Other initiatives include: _____

✓ Policies & procedures

- Executives understand the issues, are committed to their responsibilities & lead by example.
- Policies recognise mental illness as well as physical illness/ injuries.
- Off work & return to work procedures recognise staying in touch & ensuring appropriate professional support is vital.
- Disciplinary action is overseen by someone trained / experienced in mental health.
- Change / redundancy procedures are adequately sensitive and don't lose sight of the individual.

✓ Working well - How safe is our workplace?

- Our policies & procedures work to eliminate bullying, discrimination and harassment.
- Job design principles ensure work is meaningful, connected with others, & not unreasonably stressful.
- Regular feedback and appraisal mechanisms are in place and followed throughout the organisation.
- Opportunities are made to foster community and team spirit.
- Opportunities are made to celebrate our achievements and enjoy our work.

✓ Employee development (mgmt & staff)

- Both top down & mutual peer support approaches are used in promoting good mental health.
- Managers are trained to identify potential mental health problems and how to manage and support affected employees.
- Employees throughout the organisation are trained in Mental Health First Aid (particularly HR and OH&S staff).
- Staff are supported in external training.

✓ Access to information

- Mental health information is readily available in the workplace.
- Opportunities are taken to discuss mental health issues in a way that informs and reduces stigma.
- We support the sharing of information through consumer experience.

✓ Managing absenteeism

- ❑ What gets measured gets done - Our reporting effectively captures absenteeism.
- ❑ We work with our insurer to understand psychological injury improve work & treatment outcomes.
- ❑ Our rehabilitation provider is experienced in mental health issues. They follow quality standards for referral advice, particularly for those who may need medical or other attention.

✓ The value of community

- We recognise the value of community within our organisation,
- and in the relationships we develop with our broader community.

✓ From good to great

- ❑ We recognise that mental health is not simply responding to illness.
- ❑ Through ongoing mental health development, our people can develop and thrive even further.

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