

# Coping with change during COVID-19

## Fact sheet

For many of us, a lot has changed as a result of COVID-19.

We might not be able to do the things we usually do like playing sport, going out for dinner, visiting friends, going shopping or travelling. We might experience the illness or loss of a loved one or the loss of a patient. A family member may experience the loss of a job or the loss of some of their income. We might be more worried or frustrated than usual or might not cope as well when things do change.

All these changes are forms of loss and this affects everyone differently. What you might not know is you could be experiencing grief as a result of these losses.

Grief is a natural response to loss. It can leave you feeling sad, angry, anxious, regretful, isolated, irritable or numb. The more significant the loss, the more intense the grief is likely to be.

We know that everyone will be experiencing some sort of loss as a result of COVID-19. But everyone experiences grief differently, and it has no set pattern and no set timeframe.

By working through this process, you can begin to create new experiences and habits that work around the changes.

## Getting through the changes

Grief takes time to work through. While everyone finds their own way to grieve, it's important to have the support of friends and family or someone else, and to talk to when you need to.

## What you can do to help yourself

- Allow yourself time to grieve your loss.
- Ask for help if you need it. Don't be afraid to speak up and admit you are struggling.
- Talk to friends and family about how you are feeling or consider joining a support group.
- Take care of your physical health. Grieving can be exhausting, so it's important to follow a healthy diet, exercise and sleep.
- Manage stress—lighten your load by asking friends, family members or work colleagues to help you with some chores or commitments. Relaxation exercises can also be helpful.
- Do things you enjoy, even if you don't really feel like doing them.

## How to help a colleague

Many people don't know what to say or do when trying to comfort someone who is grieving. However, often it is the simple offer of love and support that is the most important.

- Ask how they're feeling. Each day can be different; take the time to listen and understand what they are going through.
- Talk about everyday life too. Your colleague's loss and grief doesn't have to be the focus of all your conversations.
- Ask them how you can help. A few home cooked meals, doing their shopping, or perhaps offering to go walking with them can all help.
- Encourage them to seek professional support if they don't seem to be coping.

## Available support

If you are in a mental health crisis or having suicidal thoughts, you can call 000.

Otherwise you can:

- contact your local [employee assistance service provider](#)—all Queensland Health employees and their immediate family members can access 24/7 counselling services
- speak with a medical professional—telehealth options are now available
- discuss any work-related issues you may have with your manager.

Counselling support is also available through the following mental health support services:

- Beyond Blue (Phone: 1300 22 4636, [www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support))
  - This service offers 24/7 short term counselling and referrals by phone and webchat
  - Download Beyond Blue's [grief and loss fact sheet](#)
- Lifeline (Phone: 13 11 14, [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au))
- Suicide Call Back Line (Phone: 1300 659 467, [www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au](http://www.suicidecallbackservice.org.au))
- Sane Australia (Phone: 1800 187 263, [www.sane.org](http://www.sane.org))
- Kids Helpline (Phone: 1800 551 800, [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au))
- Mind Spot (Phone: 1800 61 44 34, [www.mindspot.org.au](http://www.mindspot.org.au))
- Headspace (Phone: 1800 650 890, [www.headspace.org.au/eheadspace](http://www.headspace.org.au/eheadspace))
- MensLine Australia (Phone: 1300 78 99 78, [www.mensline.org.au](http://www.mensline.org.au))
- DV Connect Womensline (Phone: 1800 811 811, [www.dvconnect.org/womensline](http://www.dvconnect.org/womensline))
- DV Connect Mensline (Phone: 1800 600 636, [www.dvconnect.org/mensline](http://www.dvconnect.org/mensline))
- 1800 Respect (Phone: 1800 727 732, [www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au))
- QLife (LGBTIQ) (Phone: 1800 184 527, [www.qlife.org.au](http://www.qlife.org.au))