

# Canberra Health Services

## Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2026

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# CEO Message

To be completed

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# What is wellbeing at CHS

At CHS, wellbeing is first and foremost, about you. Your experience at work, how you feel and need to feel, how you can do your work and how you are supported in teams and by leaders, all matter. You are important to us.

*Our vision for wellbeing at CHS is for an optimal workplace environment and culture based on shared values and trust, creating a sense of belonging for all our staff; where skills are recognised and appreciated, on-going personal and professional development is enabled and encouraged, and staff wellbeing is fundamental to how we work every day.*

In a perfect world, this would already be our experience working at CHS. However, we know there are many factors that impact the ability of all people working in health care to experience work in this way. They include but are not limited to heavy workloads, working at a consistently high pace, real or perceived lack of physical or psychological safety, a widening gap between staff skills and patient need/illness complexity, and incivility or lack of social support. Work related stress created by these factors can and does have a negative impact on health care providers' overall quality of life. They also impact workers levels of professionalism, quality of care delivery and efficiency.<sup>1 2</sup>

By attending to organisational wellbeing at CHS we positively impact two key priorities, your wellbeing, and the correlated quality of care we provide to the people we serve, our community. We know from anecdotal staff feedback one of the biggest contributors to disillusionment and distress across our workforce is the inability to provide the quality of care or service that you, individually and collectively can be or are proud of.

## What we have done

We sought your input to create the CHS 2023-2026 Wellbeing Strategy (the Strategy), so it represents what is important to you right now. We have taken your feedback from the 2022 wellbeing survey, focus group sessions and working group forums to co-design this Strategy. For wellbeing to be embedded effectively, a partnership is required where everyone at every level engages and contributes to this approach. Our organisational values - Respectful, Progressive, Reliable and Kind are essential to wellbeing at CHS and how we all meaningfully contribute to our vision – creating exceptional health care together.

Wellbeing is not merely something that is done for you or to you, it is something you can also create for yourselves individually, as a team and organisation. For wellbeing to feel like a priority for our organisation, we need to support wellbeing in a way that recognises your voice and helps you to do your job well. We also need a new mindset, transitioning from

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<sup>1</sup> Sovold L., Naslund JA, Kousoulis AA, Saxena S, Qoronfleh MW, Grobler C and Munter L (2021). *Prioritizing the Mental Health and Well-Being of Healthcare Workers: An Urgent Global Public Health Priority*. *Frontiers of Public Health*, 07 May 2021. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2021.679397>

<sup>2</sup> Wallace JE, Lemaire LL, Ghali WA (2009). *Physician wellness: A missing quality indicator*. *Lancet* 374 (9702), 1714-1721.

wellbeing as something we engage in from time to time, to one where it becomes embedded in our everyday experience. This is CHS' aspiration.

Data obtained from the workforce culture survey in November 2021, the internal wellbeing survey conducted in June 2022, and the focus and working groups has identified the issues that are important to you and impact your wellbeing at work as:

1. psychosocial work environment
2. levels of stress and fatigue across staff cohorts
3. physical environment
4. lack of regular, frequent in-person recognition and acknowledgement by executive and leadership staff
5. work/life balance and lack of flexible working arrangements
6. symptoms of burnout, depression/anxiety at high levels among staff

To fulfil our vision, wellbeing must become a core organisational priority.<sup>3</sup> Using contemporary wellbeing research and feedback from you, we have created this Strategy, so we can focus our efforts, inform our decisions, and effectively direct resource allocation.<sup>4</sup> The objective of this Strategy is to serve as an essential guide for the future of wellbeing at CHS, providing a model to embed enduring foundational wellbeing approaches to meet the unique challenges, opportunities and goals of our organisation.

## How we foster wellbeing at CHS

Our enduring principles will support all staff to keep wellbeing front of mind and a part of CHS operations at every stage. They are:

1. **Integrated perspective** - Prevent, promote and support – making wellbeing part of our everyday. From the Blackdog Institute, and part of a whole of government integrated approach to improve mental health and wellbeing across the ACTPS<sup>5</sup>, this wellbeing perspective minimises the impact of known workplace risk factors and maximises the impact of protective factors to create a well workplace.<sup>6</sup>
2. **Partnership** – we all carry a responsibility to foster wellbeing at CHS. To enable you to engage meaningfully, you will also be supported by a specialised team, volunteer wellbeing leads and wellbeing champions. Together, these partnerships will create a shared sense of purpose and alignment of organisational and professional values for all members of Team CHS.<sup>3</sup>
3. **Embrace Organisational Values** – our values help to guide our behaviour. As part of how we operate every day, our intentions to be Respectful, Progressive, Reliable and Kind are part of ongoing conversations in support of our wellbeing aspirations.

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<sup>3</sup> Shanafelt, TD (2021) *Physician Well-being 2.0: Where Are We and Where Are We Going?*. Mayo Clinic Proceedings, 2021-10-01, Volume 96, Issue 10, Pages 2682-2693

<sup>4</sup> Shanafelt T, Stolz S, Springer J, Murphy D, Bohman B, Trockel M, 2020. *A Blueprint for Organizational Strategies To Promote the Well-being of Health Care Professionals*. Vol. 1 No. 6 | November — December 2020

<sup>5</sup> *Healthy Minds- Thriving Workplaces 2019-2022*; [https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/1428637/Healthy-Minds-Thriving-Workplaces-strategy.pdf](https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1428637/Healthy-Minds-Thriving-Workplaces-strategy.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Black-Dog-Institute-Our-Mental-Health-and-Wellbeing-Framework.pdf>

4. **Continual improvement** – Wellbeing is not a destination, it's a commitment to evolve and accommodate our changing needs, to grow and develop our people and CHS in accordance with the operational climate. As with efforts to improve quality, organizational efforts to cultivate well-being and engagement for all who work in Health are a journey.<sup>7</sup>

## What we will do

Building on our previous wellbeing strategies, in 2023-2026 we will use four fundamental components that comprise the essential requirements of organisational wellbeing in healthcare,<sup>4</sup> as our blueprint for the future of wellbeing at CHS.

1. **Foundation programs** – are defined as effective, evidence-based interventions for which best practices exist<sup>4</sup>. We currently offer many resources, workshops and programs that are foundational and well supported by you. Into the future, we will strengthen our evaluate of existing programs, and introduce new tested initiatives from internal and external sources to address challenges raised by you.
2. **Cultural transformation** – describes a deliberate approach to assess and strengthen key aspects of organisational culture<sup>4</sup>. CHS currently uses data from several sources to support the pursuit of a desirable organisational culture at CHS. Broadening wellbeing to encompass culture transformation enables both to be more effectively embedded within the experiences of our team every day. Into the future we intend to align culture initiatives with wellbeing and introduce new initiatives from internal and external sources to address challenges raised by you.
3. **Rapid iterative experimentation** – Embedding wellbeing at CHS is enabled not only by organisational wide initiatives, but also a commitment to support local level initiatives. From your feedback, we know that many areas across CHS know what will improve their team's wellbeing but don't feel able to initiate change. In your local/team work areas, you will be enabled to initiate and support work area design projects, to contribute to improved wellbeing for you and your peers. These activities contribute to our shared responsibility for wellbeing innovation across CHS.
4. **Sustainability** – is our organisational commitment to ongoing, effective wellbeing. To achieve this, we will regularly evaluate our available resources (people, funds, influence and time) and thoughtfully prioritise their optimal use in accordance with our current and future wellbeing aspirations. With an eye to sustainability, we will continually assess how we are aligning our existing and future actions with the wellbeing needs of our staff.

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<sup>7</sup> West CP, Dyrbye LN, Shanafelt TD, (2018) *Physician Burnout: Contributors, consequences and solutions*. Journal of Internal Medicine 283(6):516-529.

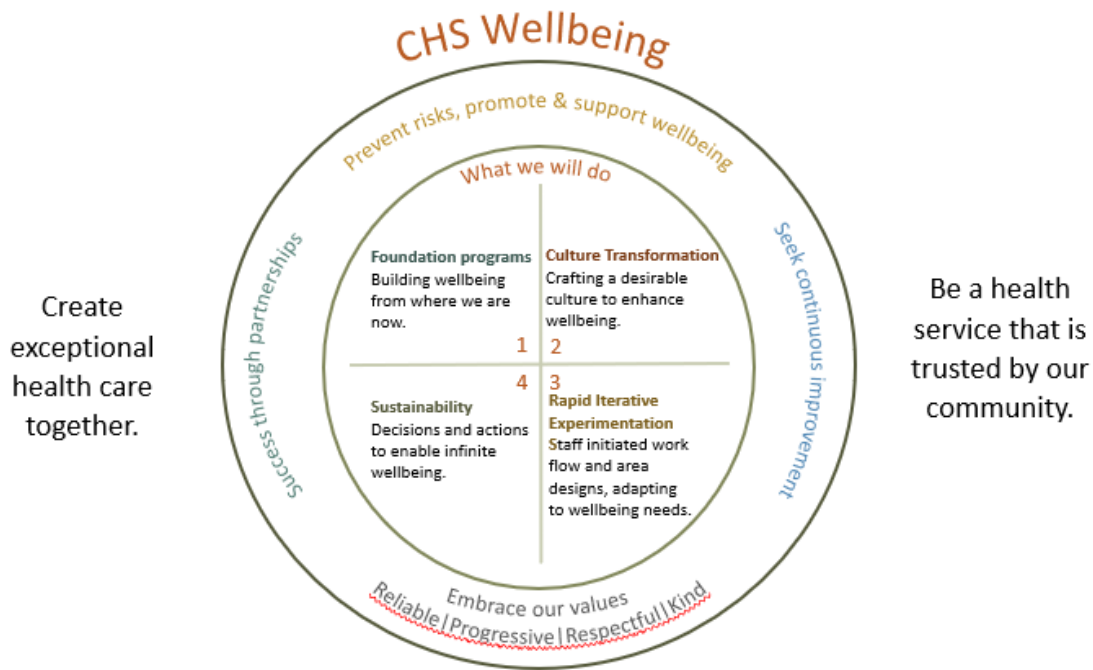


Figure 1. Wellbeing at CHS, Strategy 2023-2026

## How we will assess our progress

The value of our wellbeing activities is measured by how they address the needs of our people. Evaluation of our wellbeing activities will include how well each was put in place, whether they are well received and utilised and, most importantly, how they impacted our wellbeing. (Fig. 2 Evaluation flow process).

Program and impact evaluation will be guided by a logic model that links resources and activities to short, medium and long term outcomes. Through regular feedback, we will be able to assess wellbeing improvements over time and be able to adapt to any changing support needs.



Figure 2. Evaluation flow process