

2019

Event Organiser Kit

Helping you run a successful Queensland Mental Health Week event



Take time — for mental health

5 to 13 October 2019

www.qldmentalhealthweek.org.au

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@MentalHealthWeek

#QMHW



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#TakeTime



@MHWeek

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www.qldmentalhealthweek.org.au

What is Queensland Mental Health Week?

Queensland Mental Health Week (QMHW) is an annual event that aims to improve community awareness and interest in mental health and wellbeing across the state. The event is linked to National Mental Health Week and World Mental Health Day, which is held annually on 10 October.

TAKE TIME — FOR MENTAL HEALTH

This year's theme is Take time — for mental health

Take time is about taking a moment to do some of the simple things anyone can do to boost their mental wellbeing.

Take time is also about breaking down the stigma associated with mental illness and reaching out to people in our communities who need support.

Let's take time for mental health together — at home, at school, at work, and at play.

Why get involved?

Mental health is important to every single one of us, yet it is a part of life we often overlook. Busy lives get in the way of us caring for our mental health, as does a fear of feeling vulnerable if we share our mental health challenges.

Queensland Mental Health Week is an opportunity to bring communities together, reach out to those who need support, and shine a spotlight on the things we can all do to support mental health.

How to get involved

Host an event

A Queensland Mental Health Week event is a great way to encourage awareness of positive mental health and wellbeing in your community. An event can also build better understanding of mental health, decrease stigma, and empower people to seek help. If you're planning on hosting, or helping to host an event, this kit is for you!

Support an event

Last year, 290 events were held as part of Queensland Mental Health Week all over the state. The majority of these were organised and run by volunteers. If you're looking to make a difference but can't host an event, you could find an event near you and offer your help. Otherwise, just going to an event makes a difference. Show your support and engage with the community by making time to attend an event.

Can't make it to an event?

You can still make a big difference. Reaching out to friends, family, workmates, or people in the community can make all the difference. It doesn't take much to start a dialogue, but it can make a big impact. Whether it's sharing your own mental health challenges, or just being there to listen and support others—conversations about mental health matter.



Event ideas

Whether your goal is to bring your community together, raise awareness, or break down stigma, there's lots of different events you could run. Think big or think small, whatever is achievable for you. The point is do something meaningful.

Here's a few ideas:

Get physical

The link between physical activity and mental wellness is well known. Organise a walk, run, cycle, swim, yoga, or meditation session.

Get arty

Get creative and centre your event around the arts. Hold an art show, concert, pottery class, or movie screening with a mental health theme.

Support our future

Children and young people are our future. Their mental health is critical. Hold an educational event at school or a youth organisation and make sure they feel supported.

Connect at work

Most of us spend a lot of our time at work, so it's very valuable to have a mentally healthy workplace. Hold a morning tea at work and connect with your co-workers.

Educate

Increase public knowledge and awareness with an educational event. You could organise a workshop, seminar, or expo to help people learn more about mental health.

Sizzle a sausage

Who doesn't love a barbeque? This national pastime is a guaranteed winner to bring people together. You could raise money for a mental health organisation or charity and bring your community together.

Appreciate nature

Take time to get outdoors and enjoy your surroundings. A guided walk, nature photography session, picnic in the park, or community gardening day would make for a natural and mentally healthy event.

Belong

If you're part of a group with unique mental health challenges, consider having an event within that community. A sense of belonging is great for our mental health. Celebrate togetherness by connecting in your community.

Help the environment

Get people together and feel good as you care for our planet by enjoying an activity that nurtures our environment. Hold a tree planting event, community clean up, or any activity that reuses, recycles, or repairs.



Prepare for a great event

There are countless ways to be a part of Queensland Mental Health Week and there is no limit to the size or type of event you can hold. Simply participate in a way that is meaningful to you, your workplace, your school, or your community.

Define your ‘why?’

Ask, does my event:

- promote activities that enhance mental, physical, social, and spiritual wellbeing
- provide information on mental health and wellbeing
- reduce the stigma associated with mental illness
- promote this year’s theme and why it is important to #TakeTime for mental health
- make or improve connections in the community
- encourage help-seeking and self-care

Your event should address at least one of the above

Identify your audience

Your event can be open to everyone in the community or you may choose to involve a specific group, such as your workplace, your school, a youth or sporting group, or any other community group. Your event could also involve a particular demographic, gender, or locality.

Clarify your message

What is the main goal of your event? It may be:

- promoting positive mental health and wellbeing in a particular community
- getting together to build stronger social connections
- providing a place for people to feel and be supported

Decide what your primary goal is and promote your event as such.

Value lived experience

For those of us living with mental illness, there remain many myths and misconceptions out there. For events during Mental Health Week, it is important we don’t unintentionally reinforce these. Get guidance on how to navigate this terrain from mindframe.org.au.

Make a plan

Once you have made the decision to host an event, start to plan. Consider budget, venue, local government requirements, marketing and promotion, risk management, and a run sheet. See our Event Planning Checklist on page 10.

Consider grants, sponsorship, or volunteers

Check out your local council for grants to help fund your event. You could seek sponsorship from organisations that align with the values of mental health and wellness, or from other groups or businesses. Either way, it’s an opportunity to spread costs and increase your impact. You could also put a call-out to your networks for volunteers to help support your event.

The official QMHW events grant applications open on the 22nd of May. There are grants of up to \$2,500 available to help fund an event for QMHW, more info on our [website](#).

Register your event

By registering, your event will be acknowledged as a Queensland Mental Health Week event, with the choice of whether it’s listed as a public event (open to everyone) or private (which won’t display its location). Registration is also a prerequisite for a QMHW grant. To register, visit our [website](#).



Promoting your event

Once you have registered your event, it's time to start promoting it.

Promotion is about making sure the right people show up to your event. Use the right tools at the right time to ensure you increase the number of people who can attend.

Above all, don't be shy! Promote your event wherever and whenever you can.

Resources and merchandise

To get you started, a number of [resources](#) are available for download on the website to support mental health, including Queensland Mental Health Week posters and digital media.

A range of merchandise is will also be available for purchase closer to the date.

Send personal invitations

There may be specific people you wish to invite from government or business. Securing 'special guests' can also be a great way to give weight and credibility to your event.

Use your networks

Consider asking local schools, councils, community organisations, and businesses to help promote your event through their channels. Local Councillors and Members of Parliament will sometimes also make mention of local activities in their communications to their constituents.

Write a media release

Newspapers and magazines often use media releases as a source for stories. You should also publish or share any media releases through your own channels.

Local media

Contact your local newspaper, radio, or television station to advertise your event. For more help with promoting your event through the media, see page 8.

Social media

By registering your event with Queensland Mental Health Week, you gain the increasing reach of our social media channels. But that shouldn't stop you using your own social media channels too. Make sure to promote your event on all your social media too.

Go viral

Viral marketing is about spreading information from person to person, that's all. Forward emails or social media posts to friends and ask them to share. Just remember privacy laws and good manners prevail. Look up social media channels to post to, such as your local council, local library, or community groups.

Advertise in newsletters, event calendars, and community notices

Your place of employment, the local library, cafés, shops, and community noticeboard are great places to advertise your event. Local councils, universities, and schools are also great places to advertise. Among these organisations you should be able to tap into a range of eNews and events channels as well as physical noticeboards.



Getting the most out of the media

Media is your friend when promoting your event. Remember, media outlets are always looking for stories. Make it easy for them and you'll increase your chances of spreading the word.

Have an angle

Give some prior thought to what's newsworthy about your event. You could follow both a human interest and a local angle, relating the event to social issues or to how 'awareness raising' can help the community. Also consider the call to action. Are you trying to get people to attend an event? Or are you trying to get people to donate? A clear message will come across better.

Be prepared

Before you contact journalists, have your media release written and ready to go. Make sure you include the event date and time, location, and names of special guests. Don't forget to add your name and contact details so the media can talk to you.

Add weight to your release by tying it to the state-wide Queensland Mental Health Week. Have someone with an eagle-eye proof read your release to pick out any typos. Depending on the media outlet, you might also like to invite them on the date to take picture or run a follow-up story.

Pictures count

Newspapers and websites love pictures. Include a picture and you greatly increase your chances of coverage. Supply pictures along with your media release, prior to the event. For example, images of last year's event, special guests, or even of the location may be suitable.

Identify your target

How you go about finding journalists will depend on which media outlets you are targeting. Research the names of journalists that appear in your local newspaper, or who present on your local radio station. Don't be afraid to ring up and ask for contact details. Once you've sent the release, follow it up with a call.

The top three ways you can find a journalist are:

1. Websites of many media outlets publish names and contact details or a general news email
2. If you have a journalist's name, try Googling them
3. Your local library may have a copy of *Margaret Gee's Australian Media Guide*, a published list of Australian media contacts.

Help journalists help you

Assist journalists to provide help seeking information where relevant. Include at least one source of counselling, treatment, or support service relevant to your audience or event.

For help with how to talk about mental illness in the media, a great resource is mindframe.org.au.



Event day preparation

You've registered your event on the Queensland Mental Health Week website, you've got your media release locked and loaded, your social media accounts are buzzing, now for the big day.

The day before

- ✓ Gather staff/volunteers for full briefing
- ✓ Distribute a final run sheet outlining event sequence, timings, and responsibilities
- ✓ Organise volunteer registration area or entertainer's area
- ✓ Circulate contact list with mobile numbers to all staff/volunteers
- ✓ Review chain of command in case of emergency
- ✓ Contact media, if attending
- ✓ Get your gear packed and ready to go

After the event

- ✓ Remove all equipment and rubbish
- ✓ Send thank you letters to staff, volunteers, performers, and special guests
- ✓ Engage and ask for feedback on social media
- ✓ Close off budget
- ✓ Hold a debrief session to look at ways of improving the event next year

Queensland Mental Health Week is designed to get people talking about positive mental health and wellbeing, so come event day, be prepared.

Support resources

Valuable things to pack for the day include leaflets and information packs from local mental health and wellness providers and services.

Respectful communication

Given the reason for the event, people are likely to want to talk about their own mental health and wellbeing. Try to listen without judgement. While it can be helpful to share your own experiences, try to avoid making comparisons. Sometimes people just want to be heard. If someone is talking with you about a mental health challenge, they trust you to be understanding and non-judgemental. Respect that everyone is entitled to determine their own course of action.

Help seeking information

Be prepared. Keep help-seeking information at your fingertips. For many people, reaching out to seek help can be a huge barrier to overcome. They may only reach out once. Be ready to act: get the person talking, ask directly if they need to talk to someone, encourage the person to seek help, and give them information about where they can find help.

Know your boundaries

Before the event talk to all staff and volunteers asking them to think about their boundaries. Consider the following. What do you feel confident talking about; what are your competencies? What might you need more information or support with, and how can you direct people to support resources or services, when might you need to refer someone to another source of assistance? Be honest about limitations and remember, it's okay not to have all the answers.



Event planning checklist

The following list is big, but if your event is small, don't let this list intimidate you: use it as a starting point to help you think through your 'to-do' list.

Local government requirements

- Inform local government of event and gain approval if required

Budget

- Prepare an event budget if necessary and monitor your spending

Participant registration and invitations

- Consider using a free online event registration form
- Link to it from your website if you have one
- Email past participants an invitation

Event agenda/run sheet

- Develop event timeline
- Include timings, responsibilities, and key contacts

Contractors

- Order equipment such as stage, lighting, PA, etc
- Book portable toilets, fireworks, marquee, generators, etc
- Book entertainment and MC if needed
- Book and confirm all contractors in writing
- Insurance: public liability, staff, volunteers

Risk management

- Book first aid officer/s
- Conduct risk assessment
- Create risk management plan
- Contingency plans—wet weather, low attendance

Essential services

- Notify police, ambulance, and fire brigade

Food vendors

- Book food vendors
- Ensure compliance with food laws
- Request details of electrical requirements
- Apply for temporary food premises permit

Toilets, cleaning and maintenance plan

- If not on-site, book toilets, cleaners, etc
- Clean up venue/mow lawn/clear area of debris

Sponsorship

- Create a sponsorship proposal
- Identify potential sponsors
- Deliver sponsorship packages and follow up
- Use sponsor testimonials
- Acknowledge sponsors, before, during, and afterwards

Marketing and promotion

- Develop marketing/communication plan
- Design promotional material
- Create a website or use your page on the Queensland Mental Health Week website
- Distribute flyers/posters/email/brochures
- Submit event information to local events calendars and websites
- Prepare and distribute a media release

Location

- Design plan of venue/event site
- Consider transportation and parking

Permits and licences

- Apply for any food permits required
- If using music, apply for a noise permit
- Road closures—send applications early

Security plan

- Book security, two-way radios, etc
- Consider crowd control and cash security

Waste management

- Develop waste management plan
- Promote reducing waste in marketing material

Traffic management

- Design traffic plan
- Consider signage, disabled parking, pedestrian access, marshals, entry/exits, lighting, road closures
- Promote alternative transport

Other

- Adequately brief staff and volunteers
- Organise awards/trophies/certificates and decorations

Contact information

For further information, please visit our [website](#).

Email: info@qldmentalhealthweek.org.au

Phone: 1300 640 709



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