

Mental health program shows how We Care

Initiative launched with Beyond Blue highlights

Jirsch Sutherland's new *We Care* mental health program is now an integral part of our firm having kicked off in October during Mental Health Month. Our program is supported by Beyond Blue and their breakfast seminars on creating mentally healthy workplaces, along with our "netwalking" Walk and Talk Tours, have helped spread the word about how the program is also designed to benefit our clients and their referrers.



Jirsch Sutherland National Managing Partner Bradd Morelli

"These initiatives show our staff, clients and referrers that we are committed to maintaining a mentally healthy workplace at Jirsch Sutherland and are actively helping those facing mental health challenges," says [Bradd Morelli](#), Jirsch Sutherland's National Managing Partner.

The seminars provided easy, practical tips on how to maintain mental health and how to help others who may be suffering from issues in this area. The tours provided an opportunity for people to take a break from their computers and work commitments and to recharge with fresh air, conversation and light exercise. Jirsch Sutherland's team received some positive feedback including "It's great to be 'present', in the moment and look around and talk to other people."

"These events have had an additional positive impact," Morelli says. "We have received requests from people who wish to help others who are struggling and some business advisers and company owners have enquired about how they can implement a similar program for their business. This positive feedback has inspired us to hold them again in 2020 and beyond."

Why a new mental health program?

To do more to help ourselves and everyone we work with meant increasing our mental health literacy, which we couldn't have done without the support of Beyond Blue. With their assistance, we created a brochure, *Support is just a phone call away*, which provides vital information about free and accessible mental health support services to business owners and

directors and referrers. We can also tell referrers about Beyond Blue's free online guide [Supporting small business owners to improve their mental health and wellbeing at work](#), which provides practical tips on how to provide support without needing to be trained counsellors or clinicians.



Kate Carnell, Small Business Ombudsman

Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman, Kate Carnell, says many business owners do not seek help when they need it most. She attributes this to the broader culture that says people struggling with mental health issues should “just suck it up”. Carnell also says that stresses that can affect mental health are often more acute for business owners because their livelihoods and often the family home depend on the success of their business*.

To further increase our mental health literacy, all our Managers, Partners and Principals are attaining the Mental Health First Aid Certificate and we will regularly feature mental health and wellbeing content on our website and in our newsletters.

Jirsch Sutherland is very pleased to be working with Beyond Blue on this incredibly important issue. Making organisations mentally healthy benefits staff and the bottom line and Jirsch Sutherland is at the front line of many businesses that are struggling and are in a position where it can offer support.

Patrice O'Brien, Beyond Blue's General Manager Workplace, Partnerships and Engagement agrees Jirsch Sutherland is in a unique position. “The role of small-business advisers is more than just providing guidance on debt, accounts and assets – it's about people,” she says.

And we agree.

* <https://www.mybusiness.com.au/management/6302-i-should-have-sought-help-but-didn-t>



