

Embers of exhaustion – Exploring approaches to wellbeing in Direct Support Workers

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Previous research has suggested that between 25% and 33% of disability (direct) support workers (DSWs) may experience work stress, mainly in the form of job burnout. Job burnout occurs when work stress builds to the point that a worker feels exhausted and disengaged from their job.

This may result in: (1) DSWs taking more time off work and workers deciding to leave their job all together (two outcomes that can be costly for employers), and (2) DSWs engaging less and more negatively with the people with disability they support. Research also indicates that supporting people who display challenging behaviours, work-home conflict, ambiguity in one's work role and a lack of support in the workplace contributes to DSW stress/burnout.

Join us to take part in this interactive workshop to explore ways that disability support organisations can support DSWs to have more positive experiences in the workplace. Your engagement in this workshop will also contribute to an innovative research project that is focused on hearing about DSW work experiences directly from DSWs.

In this workshop, the presenters will discuss current research literature on DSW stress and burnout (including their own research contributions) and will engage workshop attendees using *Mentimeter*. Mentimeter will be used to explore sources of DSW stress/burnout and potential solutions to some of the most highly ranked causes of DSW stress/burnout.

- Mentimeter is an online survey tool that allows the real-time, anonymous collection of survey responses from people attending a presentation using one's own smart device. Real-time survey results can then be unpacked/discussed in session.

This workshop offers a rare opportunity to bring a large group of DSWs together to share their unique perspectives on DSW stress/burnout. The information gathered from this workshop will contribute to ongoing research on effective ways to support DSW wellbeing in the workplace.

Please note:

By taking part in the workshop activities, you are **consenting** to take part in the research project. A *participant information sheet* will be provided to you at the start of the session. The presenters will also go through this sheet with attendees in session.

Also, your attendance is **not dependent** on you taking part in the proposed workshop activities. Everyone is welcome!

For those who do not want to take part in the workshop activities (and the research project) but would still like to attend the session, this session will feel more like a presentation as opposed to a workshop, where you will learn about DSW stress/burnout and potential ways to overcome it from two experienced researchers and your fellow DSWs.