



Support Hub
16 Anzed Court,
Mulgrave, VIC 3170
Ph (03) 9552 4100
frondithacare.org.au
info@fronditha.org
ABN 71 424 124 816
ACN 138 152 682

At FronDitha Care, the COVID19 pandemic has taught us resilience

17 June 2020

COVID19 has left us all with mental whiplash.

The speed with which the pandemic hit caused many to feel confusion and panic.

Over the pandemic period, FronDitha Care's consultant psychologist Phillip Lambou has witnessed organisations flounder and others rise to the occasion.

For FronDitha Care, the not-for-profit aged care provider, the pandemic saw over 50 corporate office staff almost immediately start working from home.

Its nursing homes had to shut their doors to visitors and the organisation had to adjust their service provision in the community to limit the risk of the spread of the virus.

The mental whiplash was evident, Mr Lambou said.

"We had to act fairly quickly because of the situation," he said.

"You're learning as you go."

The organisation set up a People and Culture Mental Health Committee early on to discuss a plan of action and help with all staff needs.

FronDitha Care employs more than 690 staff across Victoria and NSW and also manages casual staff and contractors.

The organisation offered a support line to its managers to enable them to help their staff better and consulted Lifeworks to make sure the services available to staff were suitable for the changed conditions.

Even the CEO of the organisation, Michael Malakonas, personally called all staff who had begun working from home to see how they were coping and if the organisation could do anything to help.

Clayton
94 Springs Road, Clayton South, VIC 3169
Ph (03) 9239 2100

St. Albans
181 Furlong Road, St Albans, VIC 3021
Ph (03) 9365 4300

Patron: Honourable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria

Templestowe
11 Omar Street, Lower Templestowe, VIC 3107
Ph (03) 8850 5111

Thornbury
335 Station Street, Thornbury, VIC 3071
Ph (03) 9495 2300

Newcastle
30 Crebert Street, Mayfield East, NSW 2304
Ph (02) 4016 4160

Community Services
16 Anzed Court, Mulgrave, VIC 3170
Ph (03) 9552 4100



Support Hub
16 Anzed Court,
Mulgrave, VIC 3170
Ph (03) 9552 4100
frondithacare.org.au
info@fronditha.org
ABN 71 424 124 816
ACN 138 152 682

One of the most popular actions FronDitha Care offered its staff were tailored Mental Health In a Pandemic zoom sessions for all those interested.

“I think it was very topical and very pertinent, so people had a lot of questions and were interested,” Mr Lambou said.

“I think people really wanted to look after themselves.”

It was a chance to check in and to breathe a little, Mr Lambou says.

As restrictions ease, organisations must look at the mental health of their employees and offer a settled approach.

“I think if we’re following an R U OK? Model of giving each other time and being more patient and letting people settle in with the way that they want to...that’s maybe the best way forward,” Mr Lambou says.

It is also a chance for organisations to offer a lesson in resilience.

“What shows us at our best is sitting down and discussing how we feel, what we learned from it and how we would do it better,” he says.

“It builds resilience, because we know we’ve gotten through it, we know we can tackle it again and there’s a high chance we can tackle it better without as much stress.”

Investing in mental health in the workplace is hugely beneficial. A PricewaterhouseCoopers Return on Investment analysis showed that in Australia, over a period of 4-5 years, every dollar an organisation spends on mental health has a return of \$2.30.

That figure is based on the costs an organisation would usually incur on extra personal/stress leave, WorkCover claims, lost productivity and absenteeism.

“The better people feel, the harder they work,” Mr Lambou says.

For more information in FronDitha Care’s workforce and what it offers staff, please visit <https://frondithacare.org.au/hr-careers/>

Clayton
94 Springs Road, Clayton South, VIC 3169
Ph (03) 9239 2100

St. Albans
181 Furlong Road, St Albans, VIC 3021
Ph (03) 9365 4300

Patron: Honourable Linda Dessau AC, Governor of Victoria

Templestowe
11 Omar Street, Lower Templestowe, VIC 3107
Ph (03) 8850 5111

Thornbury
335 Station Street, Thornbury, VIC 3071
Ph (03) 9495 2300

Newcastle
30 Crebert Street, Mayfield East, NSW 2304
Ph (02) 4016 4160

Community Services
16 Anzed Court, Mulgrave, VIC 3170
Ph (03) 9552 4100