

RESOURCEFUL MIND PILOT PROGRAM

Final research report summary



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About the research:

Mental health is a key component of overall health and well-being and Lifeline WA is committed to supporting the resources sector to ensure a supportive work culture. Employees may seek assistance from a peer, as opposed to a professional or manager, due to peer availability and relatability, fear of stigmatisation, and the principles of respect, shared responsibility, and mutual agreement of what is helpful. The Resourceful Mind is a peer support program for the resources sector, which trains peer supporters (Minders) to help colleagues navigate mental health challenges and therefore helps foster a supportive environment by connecting people with shared experiences and providing support in a naturally occurring social group.

The study's aim was to conduct and evaluate a pilot study of the Resourceful Mind program to assess the impact this program has on the health and safety of the Minders. A one-group pre-test post-test mixed-methods design was used to evaluate the effects of volunteering as a Minder on the Minders' own psychological well-being. All Minders were assessed at baseline (Time 1), immediately following training (Time 2), and 3-months follow-up (Time 3) via a self-report questionnaire. This measure is to ensure the safe implementation of the Resourceful Mind program in the future.

132 employees (60% male 39% female) from four different WA resources companies (Roy Hill, Mineral Resources Limited, Woodside Energy, and Simcoa) completed the training to become a Minder. The retention rate for post-training (T2) and follow-up (T3) were 98% and 80% respectively.

Key findings from the quantitative data:

The research definitively shows that the program does not negatively impact the psychological health of Minders.

Despite what we know about the risks of compassion fatigue and burnout, the research definitively shows that the program does not negatively impact the psychological health of Minders. The Minder's general health, self-esteem and level of burnout remained stable through the project.

- **Compassion Fatigue:** Compassion fatigue defined as a negative response (behavioural, physical, or emotional) to providing compassionate care to people who have experienced a stressful life event. It is a unique form of burnout experienced by people working in the helping profession. Researchers found that there was a significant decrease in compassion fatigue between pre and post training and the final three month follow up. Compassion fatigue posed a low risk of harm to Minders participating in the program.
- **Compassion Satisfaction:** Compassion satisfaction is a positive outcome experienced by those who help others in need and provides them with motivation to continue helping others. Compassion satisfaction was not a concern for the program despite a small decrease towards the three month follow up, it remained well within moderate range.
- **Program Reception:** It was a well-received program, considered an important and useful resource relevant to the resources sector context. Minders perceived the program to be more than 80% effective.

Key findings from the qualitative data:

The qualitative analysis was based on Minders individual experiences, utilising open-ended questionnaires. Conceptual and interpretive in nature, the exploration of perceived effectiveness within the Resourceful Mind program was possible.

The key themes mentioned by Minders within the analysis included:

The program will provide useful support	"I believe this program it will be a very useful support network for those who need it"
The program will promote mental health	"It will boost the discussion around mental health on site as well as provide defined resources and guidance for those who are seeking help"
The peer support approach is a good initiative	"I think the program is a great initiative, if there's someone struggling and there's people they know and trust who have the right training maybe it'll make them more comfortable speaking up"
The program provides a good framework, tools and skills for providing support	"It's good to have a framework to work with, to make sure that you are helping the person get to a better place, rather than just lending an ear to vent and then send them on their way while still in a negative headspace" "Rigorous program that makes dissecting complex issues more simple, and therefore more effective in enabling people to support others in an effective and efficient manner"
The program is a good initiative for the FIFO context	"People who have done and are living the FIFO life can have an understanding of the impacts this can have on people and their families, being relatable"
The training builds confidence and capability in Minders	"I really did get a lot from this course, and I feel that I really did gain some useful tools/skills to be able to approach someone with confidence, knowing I will be able to hold a meaningful conversation, to offer support and be able to actually direct them to a solid source of professional support"

Company implementation considerations:

Internal awareness of the program is a key factor in embedding the program's success, as is recruitment of people whose core job allows for an interaction in the work environment. To continue as a useful and relevant resource within the sector, companies should also consider:

The effectiveness of the program will be dependent on the company	"Great program. I feel that its effectiveness will depend largely on how each company embraces it and rolls it out to the greater organisation"
The effectiveness of the program will be dependent on the help seeker and the Minders	"...Over such a large group of Minders with broad characteristics there will be varied reports from employees and their interactions with a Minder. Overall, I believe that this program will still provide effectiveness..."

Conclusion:

This study provides important information to understanding the psychological safety of the Resourceful Mind program, a peer support program for workers in the resources sector. The program does not negatively harm the psychological well-being of peer supporters (Minders). It was a well-received program, considered an important and useful resource relevant to the resources sector.