

## Who can I call for help?

### ICAS

- All health workers, and their dependants, have access to the ICAS employee wellness service
  - Counselling in all official languages
  - By telephone: 24 hours a day
  - Referral to face-to-face short-term counselling
- Toll-free: 0800 068 6858

### SADAG

- (South African Depression & Anxiety Group)
- Referral to psychologists, psychiatrists or support groups by trained counsellors

011 262 6396 or 0800 20 50 26

7 days a week from 8am – 8pm

### Cape Mental Health

- Counselling and support services
- 021 447 9040

### Lifeline

- Support for personal crisis, trauma, abuse or rape
- Toll-free: 0861 322 322

### FAMSA

- (Family & Marriage Society of SA)
- Counselling for couples and families

Observatory: 021 447 7951

Khayelitsha: 021 361 9098

Mitchell's Plain: 021 372 0022

### Mosaic

- Healing centre/shelter for women and children
- Legal support (domestic violence cases, protection orders, maintenance orders)

Wynberg: 021 761 7585

Toll-free: 0866 518 662

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(www.pmhp.za.org)

### Saartjie Baartman

- Shelter for abused women and their children
- Manenberg: 021 633 5287

*The nurse is the single most important frontline health worker in South Africa. Without nurses the clinics, community health centres and hospitals cannot function.*

Health Systems Trust, 2007



*Nurses deliver 90% of all healthcare services.*

Partners in Health, 2013



*Where do I leave my problems to be able to care for others?*

Enrolled Nursing Assistant, Cape Town

# TAKE CARE

Self-care strategies for  
— health workers —

The maternity setting can be a stressful environment. As a health worker, you may be faced with limited resources, staff shortages, long working hours and task overload. Perhaps you also have difficulties in your personal life.

For these reasons, it can be very difficult to stay motivated. Sometimes, you may feel like there is no-one to support you or listen to your concerns. But it is very important to be able to manage work-related and personal stress in order to 'be there' for your patients. If you do not feel cared for, it can be very difficult to care for others.

This leaflet gives you a few easy examples of how to care for yourself and get the support you need.

[www.pmhp.za.org](http://www.pmhp.za.org)



BETTER TOGETHER.

## Ask for help

Speak to someone you trust when you feel anxious, sad or stressed. Talking about your feelings can help you feel better. Ask your supervisor or manager for help in identifying support services, such as counselling. This leaflet includes contact numbers to counselling and support services.

## Identify your support networks

- Do you have a close friend, colleague or family member you can talk to?



- Can you visit your church?
- Can you join a group activity or support group in your neighbourhood?
- Do you make time to socialise outside of work with friends who are supportive, positive and have healthy habits?
- Avoid people who are critical, judgmental or negative.

## Take time out

We all need time to relax. It helps to take time to be alone, to reflect, to sit quietly, breathe deeply or to listen to music as a relaxation technique.

## Pay attention to your nutrition

Try not to skip meals. Pack a lunch to take to work. Healthy meal choices can give you energy.

Too much caffeine, sugar, nicotine, salt or starchy foods can make you feel tired and worsen your mood or stress symptoms.

Remember to drink enough water.

## Take a walk

Time outside in the fresh air can be relaxing. Step outside for your tea break, or take a walk after work with a friend, colleague or relative.



## Get enough sleep

Lack of sleep can impact on your functioning, your mood and how well you are able to cope with stress.

## Pay attention to your physical well-being

Identify what happens to your body when you feel sad, stressed or angry.

Do you get headaches?  
Do you experience gastro-intestinal problems?  
Does your back ache?  
Do you become forgetful?  
Do you feel less able to make decisions or concentrate?  
Are you tearful or irritable?

**Knowing how you react to stress can help you be prepared and take better care of yourself during stressful times.**