

Looking after Doctor Wellbeing in the RDH ED

The **RDH ED Wellness Group** was created in May of 2017 and is comprised of consultants, registrars and residents. We meet regularly to discuss strategies that can be introduced to try to alleviate the stress of working in the ED environment and improve morale and general wellbeing.

We have a biannual **Wellness Survey Monkey** which is entirely anonymous and invites comments and suggestions from the ED doctors of all levels regarding any issues or problems and possible solutions to these. We find this is a great way to monitor the “Wellness barometer” of the department. All of the suggestions are carefully considered by the Wellness Group and the majority of these are put into play.

The ED holds regular **“thank you” BBQs** for our hard-working staff. These are usually held every few months and are sponsored by the ED consultants and social club. St John Ambulance crew are also invited to attend. This is a great morale booster and excellent for team building.

Our Emergency Department has 23 Majors Cubicles. A group of our ED doctors and nurses have created a **social group called “Major 24”** which is open to all those who work in the ED and SJA staff. They organize regular social activities outside of the hospital such as paintball, barefoot bowls, Xmas in July and ten pin bowling. These events are very well attended and are a great opportunity to bond and debrief especially in times where the department has been excessively busy.

We have our own RDH ED Orientation Manual which includes a section regarding doctors’ health and wellbeing. The ED can be a particularly stressful and confronting environment to work in and we emphasise the importance of our doctors having their own medical practitioners that they can consult outside of the hospital setting. There is a contact list of general practitioners in and around Darwin who are interested in assisting medical practitioners look after their own health.

We are also in the process of establishing a “near-peer” mentor program. Currently all of the doctors working in our department are assigned a supervisor who is an ED Consultant. It is recognized that junior doctors may find it challenging to discuss certain issues with a senior member of staff which has led to the development of this program. Our residents and interns will also be assigned to an ED registrar who has completed a basic mentoring program so that they have another avenue if they require assistance or support.

Contact Dr Adrienne Deans for more information