

Family and friends supporting the mental health of paramedics: An ongoing pilot study

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Minds Together offers evidence-based programs to build capabilities for family and friends to support individuals with mental health concerns or suicidal distress.

This online Minds Together program for family and friends supporting the mental health of paramedics was developed in collaboration with people with lived experience of supporting paramedics.

Paramedics are nearly twice as likely as the general population to experience mental health concerns. We know that family and friends provide most of the practical and emotional support, and this support is key to improving the mental health and wellbeing of paramedics.



Demographics (n=45)

Family and friends providing support			Paramedics		
Gender identity	Woman/female	80%	Gender identity	Man/male	69.5%
Age	< 30	20%	Formal mental health diagnosis	Yes	60%
	30 - 54	60%		No	40%
	> 54	20%			
Person they support	Partner/spouse	61.4%	Diagnosis	Anxiety	70.4%
	Parent	13.6%		PTSD	63%
	Friend	13.6%		Depression	59.3%
# years support	Mean	11.14	Receiving formal treatment?	Yes	70.5%
	SD	11.85		No	25%
				Unsure	4.5%
Experience working as a first responder themselves?	Yes	42.2%	Experiencing suicidal distress?	Yes	50%
	No	57.8%		No	34.1%
				Unsure	15.9%

Acceptability (n=9, completed post-program survey)

- 58% accessed the program
- 22% completed at least half of the program
- 100% reported some level of satisfaction with the program
- 100% reported the content was mostly very easy to understand
- 100% reported online was a good method for program delivery
- 88.8% reported they would return to the program

Qualitative comments



Helpful parts of the program

- "...being able to log on and use at any time from any device."
- "Highlighting the mental health challenges that my daughter might be experiencing. Providing insight into her lived experience and developing my skills to support her in theoretical and practical ways."
- "The relationships module was probably the most helpful to me. I found the advice/tips on how to manage conversations with the paramedic helpful, i.e. to listen without offering advice."

Least helpful parts of the program

- "I really needed processing time and felt restricted with the timeframe required to complete the modules set out. It would be great to have longer timeframes to reach completion in my own time."

