

28 October 2020

Melbourne's biggest mental health charity walk goes virtual

Melbourne Virtual Coastrek participants have been training in their backyards, inside their homes and on local streets as they prepare to walk 60km or 30km to raise funds for Beyond Blue.

On Friday 30 October, more than 900 people will participate in the first virtual Melbourne Coastrek, within Victoria's current restriction levels.

Past Coastrek events have been held along picturesque coastlines on the Mornington Peninsula, however the pandemic has meant participants will instead be required to trek closer to home.

Trekkers have come up with a range of creative ways to train for the activity, walking laps of their backyards, up and down indoor staircases and on local suburban streets as they observe Victorian restrictions.

Beyond Blue CEO Georgie Harman thanked participants for their commitment through challenging circumstances.

"It's incredible to see such strong community spirit, determination and support from Victorians and we are truly grateful for their extraordinary efforts," Ms Harman said.

"As always, proceeds will go towards our Support Service, which has seen a record number of contacts from people from right around Australia since the summer bushfires and throughout this pandemic."

Di Westaway OAM, Wild Women On Top Coastrek Founder also praised Melbourne Coastrekkers.

"We've been absolutely blown away by the courage, resilience and commitment shown by our extraordinary Melbourne Coastrekkers. They have found ingenious ways to keep walking for mental and physical health through lockdown to prepare for their 30-60km challenge. They all deserve a medal." Di Westaway OAM, Coastrek Founder.

Trekkers must abide by public health directions, including physical distancing and wearing masks as required. They will maintain contact with teammates via digital devices while tracking their progress through their Coastrek online dashboard.

Trekkers are sponsored by friends and family and all donations go towards the Beyond Blue Support Service, which provides free advice, referrals, and counselling with skilled mental health professionals.

Virtual Melbourne Coastrek participants will check in to Virtual Luv Stops, listen to a dedicated Coastrek Playlist, win prizes and be cheered on through the Virtual Coastrek Facebook group by Coastrekkers all over Australia along with the Beyond Blue and Wild Women On Top teams.

The [Coastrek website](#) includes information for participants on how they can trek safely under current coronavirus restrictions in their area.

[Virtual Coastrek](#) events in Sydney and Brisbane have already raised over \$1 million. To support an individual or team, visit coastrek.com.au/trekkers

Contact: media@beyondblue.org.au

Beyond Blue
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The Beyond Blue Support Service is available via phone 24/7 on 1300 22 4636 or via beyondblue.org.au/get-support for online chat (3PM – 12AM AEST or email responses within 24 hours).

The new Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Service is available 24/7 at coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au. Its dedicated phone line, staffed by mental health professionals briefed on the pandemic response, is now open on 1800 512 348.