

Thursday, 14 October, 2021

## Small business owners benefit from Beyond Blue mental health coaching program

Small business owners across Australia have reported significant benefits after using an innovative mental health coaching program designed by Beyond Blue.

The [NewAccess for Small Business Owners](#) program provides small business owners with practical skills to manage stress and get them back to feeling like themselves as they support their business and their employees.

Eighty-two per cent of people surveyed after using the program said they felt more productive and able to address future business challenges, 91 per cent reported receiving the help that mattered to them and 93 per cent would recommend the program to other small business owners.

**Beyond Blue Deputy Chair Kate Carnell AO** said small businesses were likely to experience challenges in the months after Australia has opened up.

“NewAccess for Small Business Owners has provided support to hundreds of people who have been managing the stress of running a small business during the pandemic,” Ms Carnell said.

“The challenges for small business owners are likely to be significant as they attempt to get their businesses back on track.

“We expect demand for a program like NewAccess for Small Business Owners to still be strong next year”.

Ms Carnell said many participants accessed the program because they didn’t feel right, but weren’t sure why.

“The coaches help them identify the pressure points in their life and work with the person on resolving those issues one at a time,” she said.

“People who have completed the program say they feel better and their business has improved because they are more productive.”

More than 800 small business owners have used NewAccess for Small Business Owners since it launched in March 2021.

The six-week program is delivered by clinically-supervised mental health coaches who have a background in small business. Coaches are trained in low-intensity Cognitive Behavioural Therapy to provide advice and strategies that support business owners to manage stress and anxiety.

The confidential sessions are available at no cost to participants and available from anywhere in Australia via telehealth. Almost three quarters of new enquiries are coming from NSW, QLD and Victoria. Almost half of the clients are sole traders, and 61 per cent identify as female.

**Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman Bruce Billson** encouraged small business owners to prioritise their wellbeing.

“People who have participated in NewAccess for Small Business Owners say the program has helped them improve and maintain their mental health and has been beneficial for their business,” Mr Billson said.

“The program can help small business owners prioritise their wellbeing so they can continue making enormous contributions to the economy, employment and vitality of communities across Australia.”

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The program is delivered in partnership with the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman and Richmond Fellowship Queensland thanks to funding from the Department of Treasury.

**ENDS**

**Beyond Blue Support Service** - 1300 22 4636 or [beyondblue.org.au/get-support](https://beyondblue.org.au/get-support)

**Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Service** - 1800 512 348 or [coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au](https://coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au)