Men's Health Information Resources
Background and methodology

As part of responding to the challenges around increasing engagement with males, beyondblue has produced a range of information resources on depression and anxiety targeted specifically at men.

The objectives of the resources are to:

- Provide information suited to men (as well as family and friends) to increase understanding of anxiety and depression; and
- Encourage men to take action.

With the Men’s Mental Health information resources, beyondblue aims to ensure that men in all different lifestages and situations are catered for. This involves the inclusion of several different resources, available in different formats. The resources can also be accessed or ordered online, or ordered over the phone.

beyondblue commissioned H&PIOM to evaluate the current suite of Men’s Mental Health Information Resources in order to measure program performance and inform future development.

This study involved a methodology of two stages:

1. A qualitative phase: 12 depth interviews with organisational representatives that have distributed these resources to both internal and external clients; and
2. A quantitative phase: an online survey of n=1000 people from the general community, including:
   - Individuals who have accessed or directly received the information resources for them selves or someone else (n=519)
   - Individuals who have not accessed the information resources, providing a collection of key demographics (also n=527)
Conclusions

Against the original research questions the study suggests that the resource materials have achieved their aim:

1. Audience and reach
   - The materials are reaching a broad audience (14% of all adults) and are considered relevant and useful by those who have read them
   - There are opportunities to refine the reach to better target older men

2. Effectiveness
   - Overall the materials are rated as highly useful and relevant: the highest rated was Dad’s Handbook closely followed by Wellbeing, Depression in Men and Prostate Cancer.
   - The resources overall are rated as effectively conveying useful information: there are opportunities to improve Men and Separation in particular, which had a low reach, but was considered highly relevant

3. Impact
   - The resources have had a positive impact: people who read them consider that their understanding of the topics has improved. In fact 66% say it had a high impact on them
   - Moreover, they have been prompted to seek more information (20%) and to seek professional help (20%)
Conclusion

Broad Reach achieved
Overall, the MHIR has achieved a broad reach across the community. However, it has been less successful in reaching those aged 55 and over and reach could be higher amongst those with a personal connection to depression/anxiety.

Preference for hard copy may be hard to change
It is mostly younger readers who currently prefer the electronic format, and that audience is already actively engaged with the resource. Older audiences clearly prefer hard copy, yet have been more reluctant to access even these. Hard copy will continue to play an important role.

Shared with or used by ‘others’
One in five accessing the resources do so as a shared experience with another person (mostly their partner, or a friend or workmate), and one in four pass the resource onto someone else when they have read it. Little more than half obtain the resources purely for themselves.

Shorter format resources are well received by end users
With one exception, the highest reach is for shorter format (factsheets, info cards), which may reflect preferred access points (medical and community centres, workplaces). These also appear to meet end user information needs with few drawbacks.
Conclusion

Mental Health Specialists are using the resources quite differently from other health professionals

They appear to be using these resources strategically, targeting them to those who will benefit, often in conjunction with a broader treatment approach, and during sessions. They were quite clear that these are benefiting their clients/patients.

More general health groups (HR/OH&S, community organizations etc.) were less targeted seeing these as just another free item to put in with other information – as giveaways, in show bags, on workplace display tables. So they had little idea if these were being picked up by people who needed them, or if they were effective.

Stakeholders were somewhat more critical than end users

While end users recall most of the materials as relevant, clear, and in most cases as offering the right amount of information, stakeholders see them as information heavy and feel there is a need to signpost the materials for users, to help them get the best out of them.
Conclusions

Most of the resources act as a trigger to next steps

End users view materials in compact format (factsheets, info cards, posters) as **triggers**, prompting them to seek out more information elsewhere (often from **beyondblue**) with the larger format book/booklet resources kept **as a ready reference**.
How was each information source rated?

The resources rated consistently well for their format, language and clarity, but some issues around personal relevance and the level of information. The Dad’s Handbook and Maintain Your Well-being booklets rated strongest, while Men and Separation and Hey Dad rated less well.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How much statement applies to resource (mean, 0–10 scale)</th>
<th>Relevance</th>
<th>Helpfulness</th>
<th>Use of language</th>
<th>Clarity</th>
<th>Graphic design</th>
<th>Information overload</th>
<th>Call to action</th>
<th>Appropriateness of format</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men and Separation</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dad’s handbook</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>7.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hey dad</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>7.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintaining Your Well-Being</td>
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<td>8.0</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.1</td>
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<td>5.9</td>
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<td>Taking Care of Yourself and Your Family</td>
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<td>7.9</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>8.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Taking care of yourself</td>
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<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression in men</td>
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<td>8.0</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>7.4</td>
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<td>Prostate Cancer and Depression/Anxiety</td>
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<td>8.1</td>
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<td>7.7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>7.8</td>
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<td>3.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Shed Online (postcard)</td>
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<td>7.4</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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<td>The Shed Online (poster)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.9</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Colours for presentation purposes only – does not signify any meaning.*
Conclusions

End users believe in the value of these resources
Those who have accessed the MHIR feel they have improved their understanding of the issues, and see little they would change about the materials, beyond increasing distribution so more people get to see them. A high proportion have been prompted to further action, and in particular to seek out further information – particularly from beyondblue

All MHIR do well but most highly rated overall is Dad’s Handbook and Maintaining Wellbeing
While the latter has had limited reach, those who read it rated Dad’s Handbook higher than any other of the materials. The language, clarity and use of graphics were highly rated and while the information could seem a bit too much, it was seen as relevant and kept as a resource. Maintaining Wellbeing also scored highly though there could be an opportunity to offer a more concise form of the information.

The least effective resource was Hey Dad (not relevant and too much information) while there appear to be opportunities to improve the Men and Separation resource:
The latter is considered the most relevant (presumably because the topic is one men are interested in), but there was disappointment in its graphic design, ability to help and its call to action.
**Recommendations: A communications framework**

Materials need to continue to achieve the right tone – a trusted, knowledgeable friend, authoritative but empathetic. Language is simple, clear and matter of fact: normalising depression and anxiety. The voice is Everyday Bloke being careful not to veer into Scientist or Bureaucrat.

### Role

**Lonely Planet for Mental health**
I am used as part of consultation, so I don’t need to stand out but I do need to invite readers to want to come back regularly

### Look + Layout

- Welcoming, positive and practical
- For poor readers: images, graphics, dot points, colour highlights, break out boxes... visually break up text
- Sections colour coded to facilitate dipping in and out? Set of shorter brochures less daunting than a book?

### Content

- Detail simply expressed: short sentences, easy words, familiar expressions
- Clear punchy headlines to facilitate drop in reading
- Quotes to bring the information home

### Reference to Use

**Quick Guide to life**
I am best used as part of consultation but often left out for self selection in a crowd of competing materials
I need to catch attention without stigmatising

### Keep it for later

- Distinctive, inviting, clearly relevant (targets ‘me’)... Conveys masculine can do attitude... not passive help seeking
- Cater to poor readers as above

### A Quick Read

**A signpost**
I have to stand out in a crowd and be clear, distinctive and compelling

- Sharp and strong
- Visual standout - not text heavy (invite men to pick up)
- As condensed as possible: one page fact sheets ideal (?)
- Men’s Shed best example

- Punchy, to the point
- Practical Tips and advice
- Put the reader in control
- Case studies and examples

- Tipping balance from ‘informing’ to ‘doing’... next actions
- Check lists
- Avoid reference to ‘Seeking Help’