



AmbulanceVictoria

Mental Health & Wellbeing

“If we don’t look after ourselves, we can’t look after others”

Associate Professor Tony Walker ASM

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Ambulance Victoria



Victoria, Australia



AmbulanceVictoria

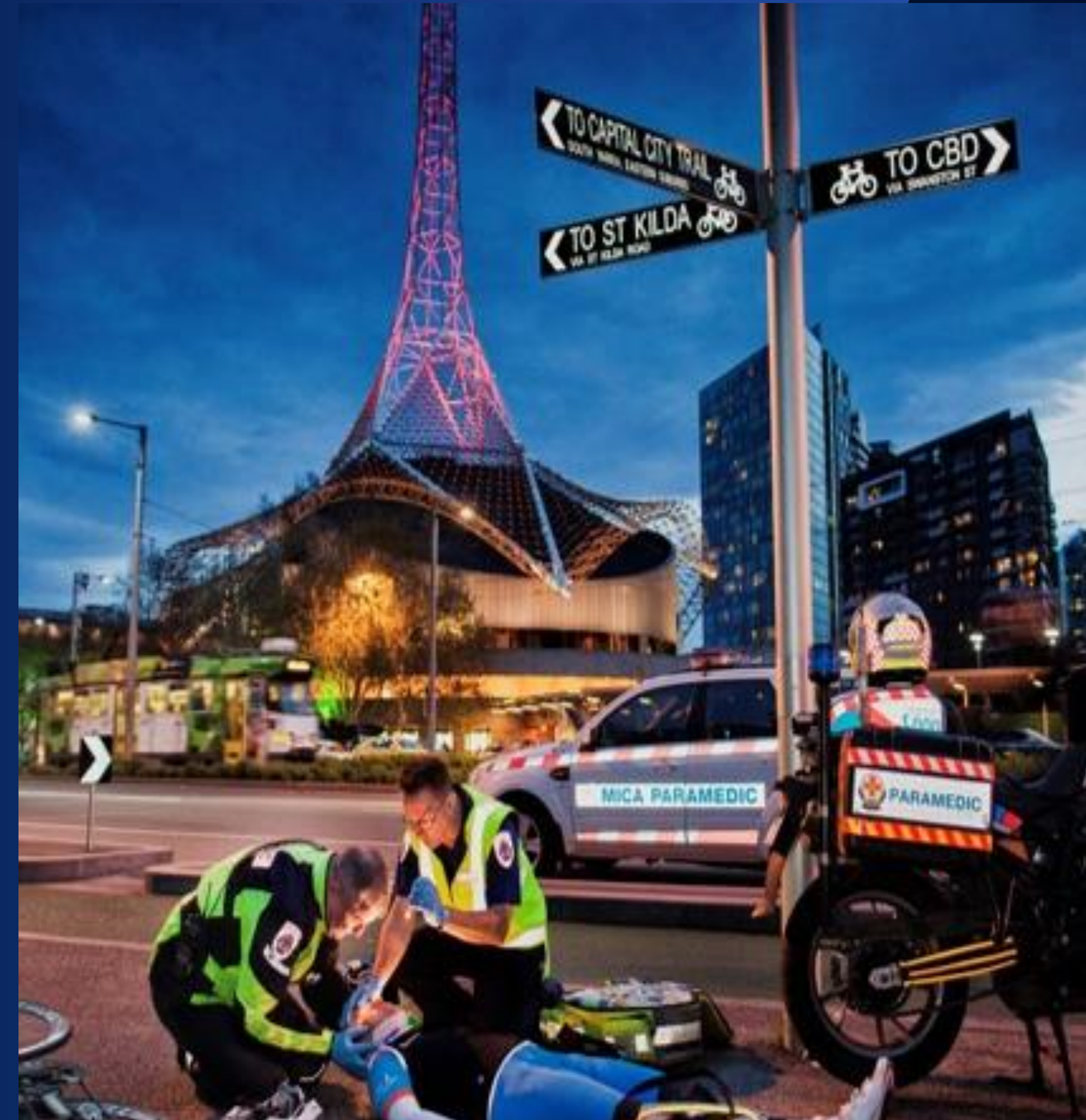
- Population 5.9M
- 227,000 Square Kilometres
- 4.4M in and around capital city of Melbourne





AmbulanceVictoria

- State government authority
- 5600 paramedics and volunteers and integrated adult medical retrieval service
- 230 road response locations, 5 helicopters and 4 fixed wing aircraft
- 854,000 cases per annum
- Single Triple Zero (000) emergency number
- Medical Priority Dispatch System & Secondary Triage
- Two tier response (ALS & Intensive Care Paramedic)
- Fire-fighter and community co-responder programs
- Strong focus on integrated systems of care



MEET PAUL CROLE

54

YEARS OLD



SECONDARY TRIAGE
PARAMEDIC, MELBOURNE



HAS BEEN A PARAMEDIC
FOR 14 YEARS



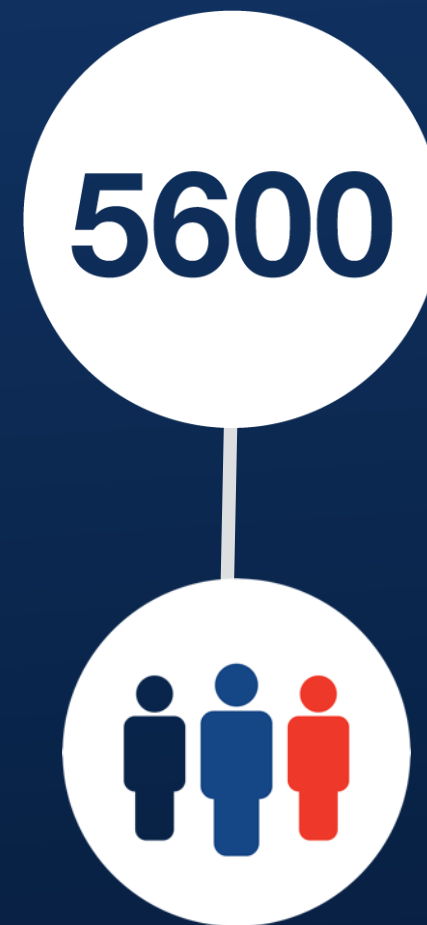
ENJOYS HIS JOB AND FINDS
HELPING PATIENTS REWARDING



HAS A FAMILY WHO SUPPORT
HIM IN HIS ROLE



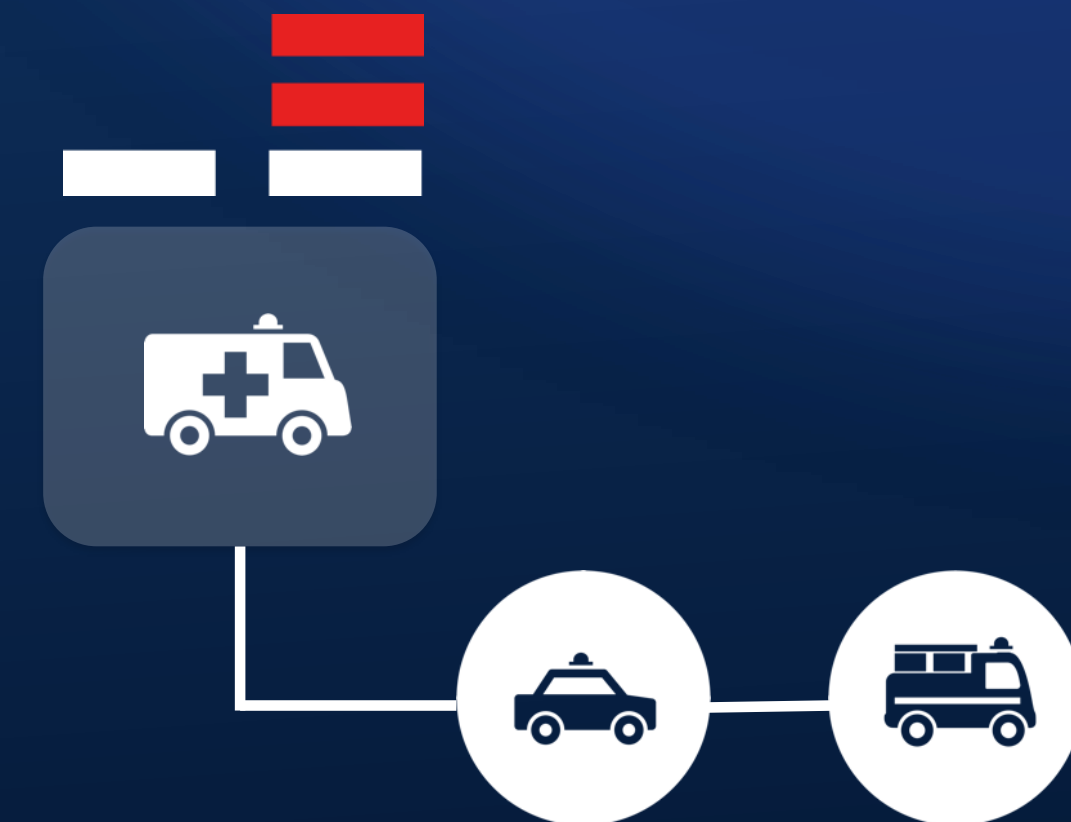
**TWO YEARS AGO WE DIDN'T HAVE A TRUE PICTURE OF OUR PEOPLE'S
MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING, BUT WE DID KNOW:**



**PAUL IS ONE OF 5600
STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**



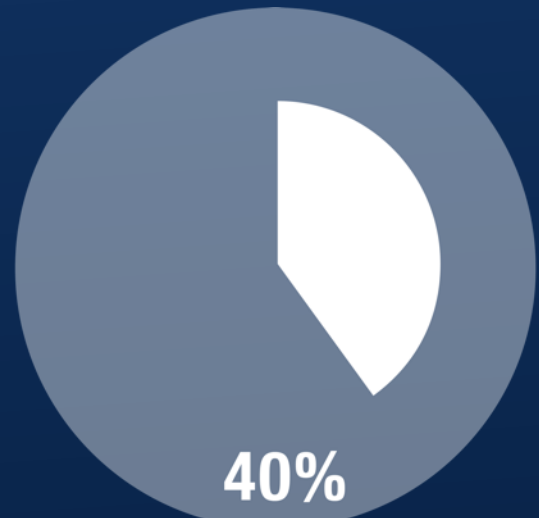
**PARAMEDIC SUICIDE 4
TIMES HIGHER THAN
VICTORIAN AVERAGE**



**PARAMEDIC SUICIDE
3 TIMES HIGHER THAN OTHER
EMERGENCY SERVICES
PERSONNEL SUCH AS POLICE
AND FIRE SERVICES**



OUR RESEARCH REVEALED MORE OF OUR PEOPLE’S STORY



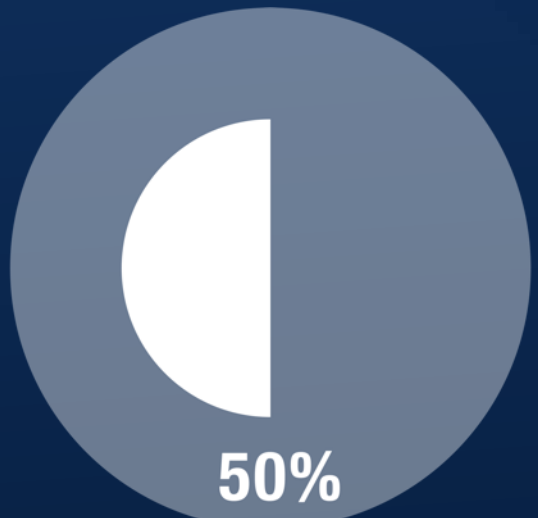
HELP SEEKING

ONLY 40% WOULD
SEEK SUPPORT FOR
MENTAL HEALTH



WARNING SIGNS

LESS THAN HALF
COULD IDENTIFY
MENTAL HEALTH
WARNING SIGNS



SELF CARE

ONLY HALF
FAMILIAR WITH
SELF-CARE STRATEGIES



TREATMENTS

MOST NOT
FAMILIAR WITH
TREATMENTS
AND SUPPORTS

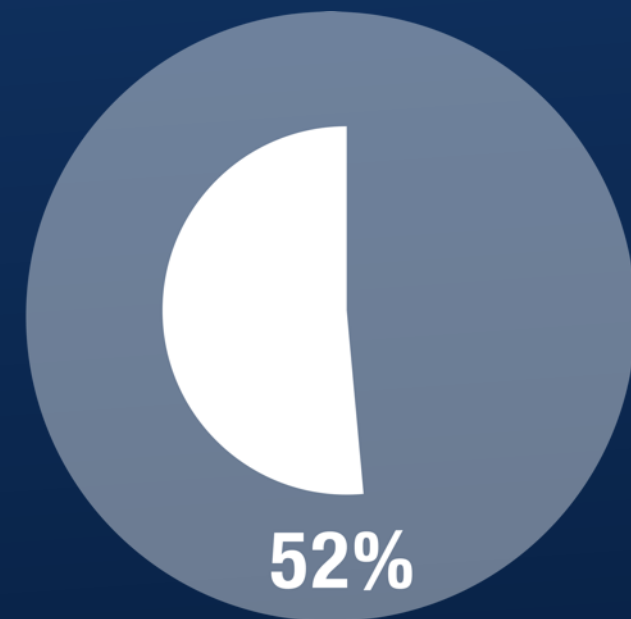
“

WE ACCEPTED THAT IT WAS JUST ‘PART OF THE JOB’ – THIS HAD TO CHANGE

”



**MOST CONFRONTING FOR ME WAS THAT STIGMA WAS HOLDING OUR PEOPLE
BACK FROM GETTING THE SUPPORT THEY NEED**



COLLEAGUES

PEOPLE WON'T TALK TO A COLLEAGUE



MANAGER

PEOPLE WON'T TALK TO THEIR MANAGER



**OUR PEOPLE WERE
CONCERNED AND
THEY TOLD US:**

“ IN THE PAST WE WERE EXPECTED TO BE TOUGH, SUCK IT UP AND COPE. ”

**“ FROM A WELLBEING PERSPECTIVE IT'S DONE VERY WELL IN OPERATIONS,
BUT NOT IN CORPORATE. ALL ABOUT SUPPORTING PARAMEDICS.
THERE ARE OTHER PEOPLE BEYOND THE OPS PEOPLE. AND THAT ISSUE
STARTS FROM THE TOP. ”**

**“ WE WERE NOT GOOD AT HAVING CONVERSATIONS AND
THERE WAS A HUGE STIGMA IN THE ORGANISATION,
DESPITE THE FACT THAT WE TREAT PEOPLE WITH MENTAL
HEALTH CONDITIONS EVERY DAY... ”**



“

**AS THE CEO OF AMBULANCE VICTORIA,
MY PEOPLE ARE MY RESPONSIBILITY**

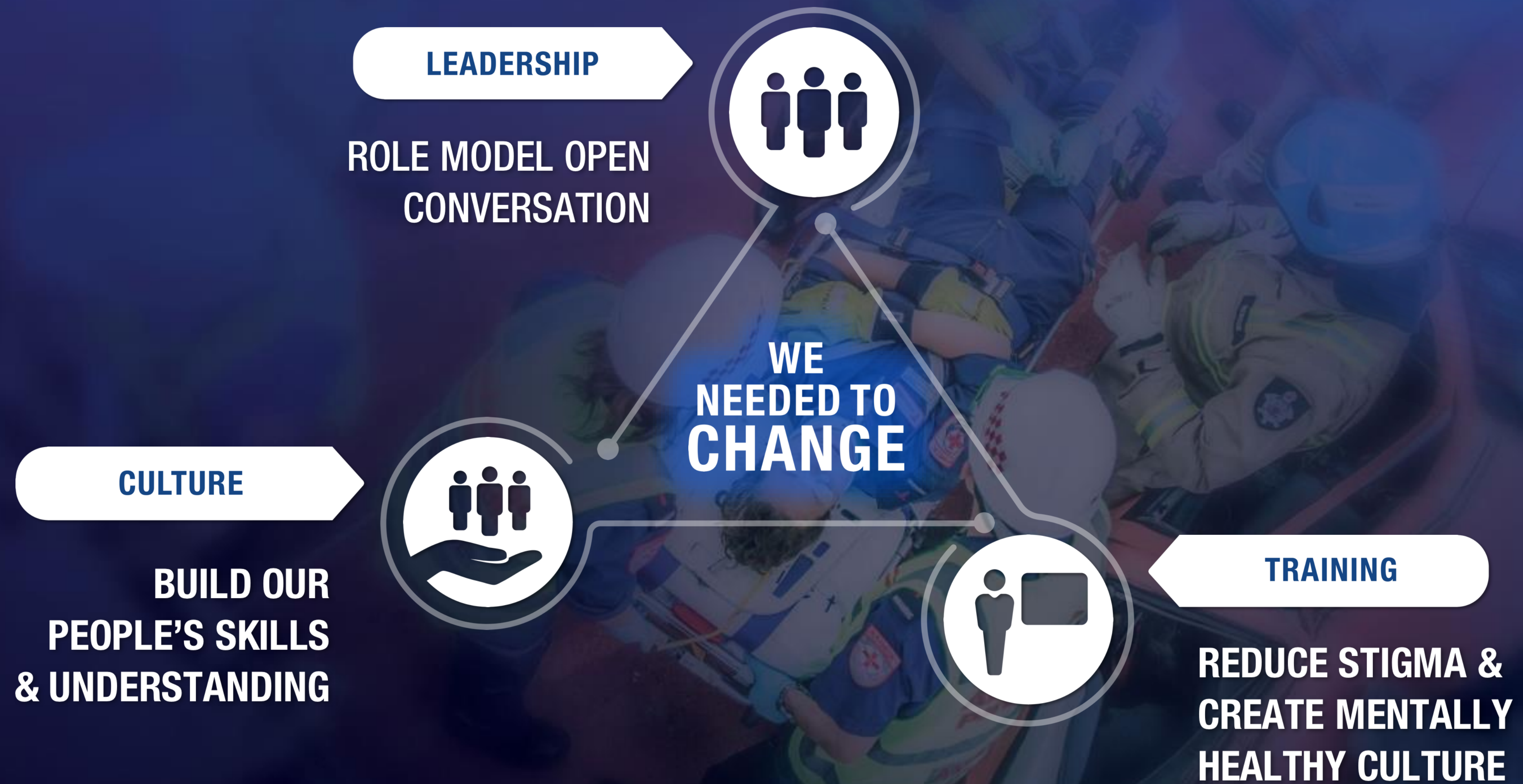
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STOP







**THE CULTURAL CHANGE THAT WE NEEDED
WAS BEST CAPTURED BY SOMETHING THAT ONE OF OUR PARAMEDICS SAID:**

“

**IF WE DON'T LOOK AFTER OURSELVES,
WE CAN'T LOOK AFTER OTHERS.**

PAUL FELICETTI, PARAMEDIC

”



WHAT REFORM WAS REQUIRED?



UNDERSTANDING



REDUCED STIGMA



SUPPORT, TREATMENT
& TRAINING



PARTNERSHIPS

UNDERSTAND THE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING NEEDS OF OUR PEOPLE

- ▶ A full psychosocial survey of our workforce
- ▶ How mental health is impacted through different stages of the employee life cycle
- ▶ The unique workplace factors that lead to higher suicide
- ▶ Why our corporate staff appear to experience higher levels of depression, anxiety and stress than our operational people
- ▶ The impact of our people's mental health issues on their families

PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH AT ALL LEVELS OF AMBULANCE VICTORIA

- ▶ Whole of organisation commitment and everyone's accountability
- ▶ Educating the workforce on the importance of mental health and wellbeing
- ▶ Encouraging conversation about mental health to help break down stigma
- ▶ Develop new ways to engage with the families of our people

The mental health continuum



Examples		Green	Yellow	Orange	Red
	Feeling changes	Normal mood fluctuations Sense of purpose Enjoyment of life	Impatient Stressed Some loss of pleasure in usual interests Intermittently worried or sad Irritable	Overwhelmed Persistent self-doubt Loss of pleasure in usual interests More persistently anxious or sad Angry	Depressed mood Panic attacks Guilt Hopelessness Excessively anxious Aggressive
	Thinking changes	Seeing things in perspective Positive attitude Good concentration	Forgetful Some lapses in concentration Some negative automatic thoughts	Bad decisions Recurrent images Negative attitude Poor concentration Intrusive thoughts Occasional suicidal thoughts	Inability to concentrate Frequent suicidal thoughts
	Behavioural changes	Consistent work performance Socially active Taking things in stride	Subtle changes in work performance Decreased social activity Procrastination Misplaced sarcasm Some increase in alcohol and/or drug use	Noticeable changes in work performance Social avoidance or withdrawal Decreased motivation Overall restlessness Risk taking Increase in alcohol and/or drug use	Substantial changes in work performance Isolation, avoiding social events Agitation or reduced activity Angry outbursts Poor control of behaviour
	Physical changes	Physically well Normal sleep patterns Good energy level	Muscle tension Headaches Intermittent trouble sleeping Low energy	Increased tension, aches and pains Frequent restless or disturbed sleep; nightmares Increased fatigue	Physical illness Unable to fall or stay asleep; nightmares Constant fatigue; exhaustion
		Recommended action			
		Practice good sleep habits Stay physically active Eat healthily Limit use of alcohol and other drugs Manage stress through relaxation strategies Maintain contact with friends and family Do things you enjoy			Seek support – refer to your list of contacts.

SUPPORT TREATMENT & TRAINING

DELIVER COMPREHENSIVE MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTIONS AND TRAINING THROUGHOUT THE EMPLOYEE LIFE CYCLE

- ▶ Mental Health Matters @ AV training developed and delivered in conjunction with beyondblue
- ▶ External review of our psychology support services by Phoenix Australia
- ▶ Action plan to drive improved mental health outcomes for all our people



STRENGTHEN OUR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING PARTNERSHIPS

- ▶ Key partnership with beyondblue
- ▶ Working closely with other expert agencies – Phoenix Australia, the Blackdog Institute
- ▶ Psychological Health and Wellbeing Consultative Group
- ▶ Opportunities to collaborate and learn from other health and emergency services agencies



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE ORGANISATION?



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE ORGANISATION?



HELP SEEKING

MAJORITY WOULD
SEEK SUPPORT FOR
MENTAL HEALTH



WARNING SIGNS

MOST CAN IDENTIFY
WARNING SIGNS



SELF CARE

MOST FAMILIAR WITH
SELF-CARE STRATEGIES



TREATMENTS

MOST FAMILIAR
WITH MENTAL HEALTH
TREATMENT AND
SUPPORTS

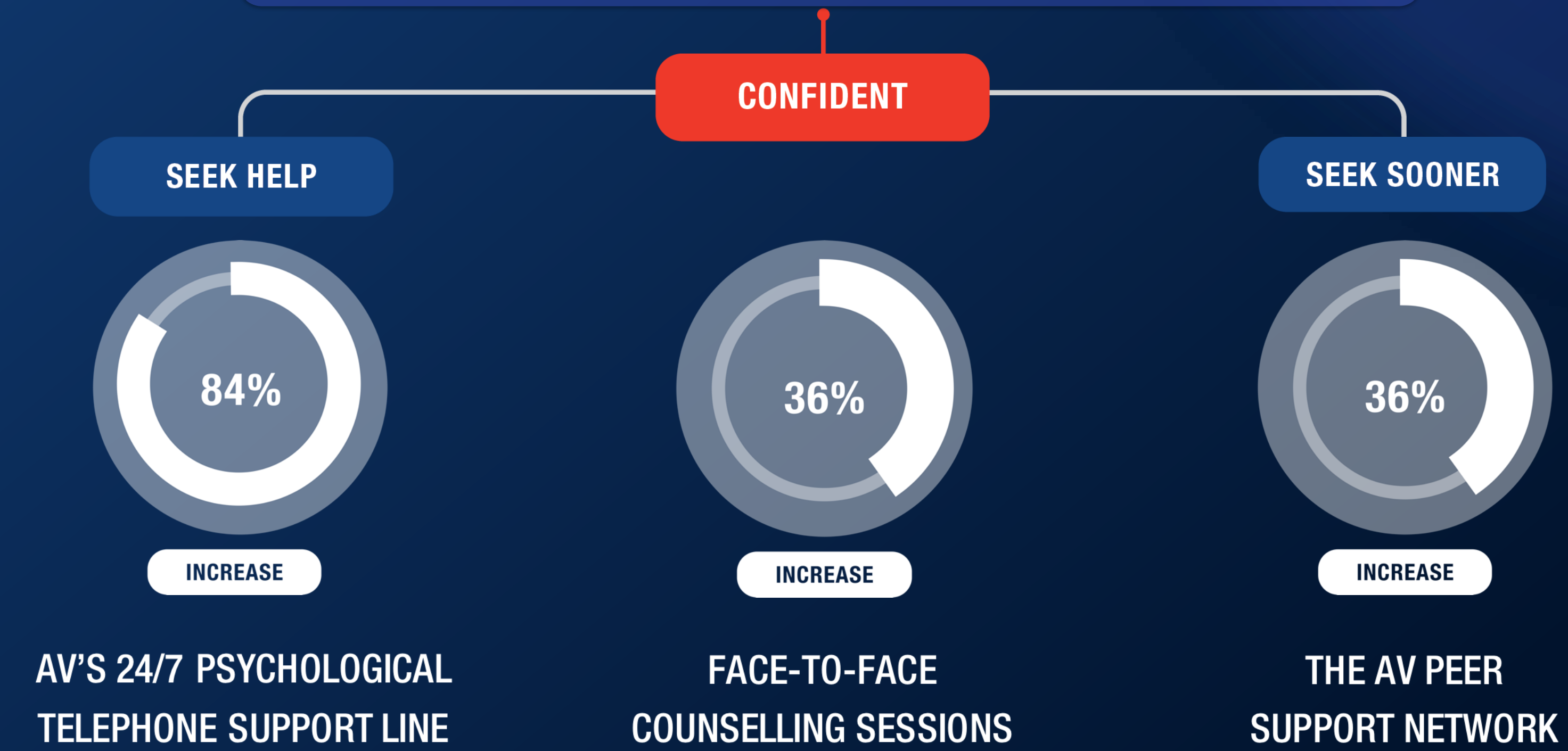


WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE ORGANISATION?





WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE ORGANISATION?



EARLY INTERVENTION LEADS TO BETTER MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES, KEEPING OUR PEOPLE FIT & WELL FOR WORK & LIFE





“

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?

”



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?



I LEAD AN ORGANISATION
THAT VALUES ITS PEOPLE FIRST
AND FOREMOST



MY PEOPLE COME TO WORK
KNOWING HOW TO KEEP THEMSELVES
AND THEIR COLLEAGUES MENTALLY
HEALTHY AND WELL



IF THEY EXPERIENCE AN ISSUE,
THEY KNOW WHERE TO GO FOR
SUPPORT AND TREATMENT AND
THEY ARE CONFIDENT TO GET
THE HELP THEY NEED

**CHANGE DIDN'T
COME WITHOUT
ITS CHALLENGES**

FIRST WE HAD TO ADMIT WE HADN'T GOT IT RIGHT:
THAT'S NOT EASY FOR ORGANISATIONS, BUT ESSENTIAL!

STIGMA IS A POWERFUL ISSUE RIGHT ACROSS OUR COMMUNITY:
WE HAD TO MAKE IT SAFE FOR PEOPLE TO HAVE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

SOME STAFF CYNICISM TO OVERCOME:
NOT JUST LIP SERVICE, WE ARE COMMITTED AND INVESTING TO BUILD A MENTALLY HEALTHY WORKPLACE.

CULTURES AND STIGMA DON'T CHANGE OVERNIGHT:
WE HAVE TO STAY COMMITTED, MEASURE, LEARN AND IMPROVE



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR PAUL?







AmbulanceVictoria

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