# Health and wellness

As an organization committed to promoting safe and sustainable practices in the oil and gas industry, the SEG recognizes the importance of prioritizing the health and wellbeing of workers in the industry. This Health and Wellness page serves as a resource for information, guidance, and resources on all aspects of health and wellbeing for all.

The Health and Wellness page is divided into four main sub-pages:

* General health: This page provides information and resources on maintaining good physical health, including tips for staying healthy and preventing illness.
* Occupational health: This page provides guidance on workplace health and safety, including resources on how to prevent and manage occupational illnesses and injuries.
* Mental health: This page provides resources and guidance on maintaining good mental health and wellbeing.
* Work-life balance: This page provides tips and resources for balancing work and personal life, including strategies for managing stress and maintaining a healthy work-life balance.
* Alcohol and Substance Abuse: This page provides information and resources on addressing alcohol and substance abuse concerns, promoting a healthy approach to consumption, and seeking support for recovery.
* Fatigue Management: This page provides insights and resources to effectively manage fatigue, emphasizing its impact on safety and offering strategies for maintaining alertness and mental clarity.
* Ergonomics: This page focuses on creating ergonomic work environments to prevent musculoskeletal issues and promote physical comfort, featuring guidelines for optimizing workspace design and equipment usage.

**General health**

This page provides information and resources designed to help you maintain good health and prevent illness. Explore tips for a balanced diet, exercise routines, sleep management, and addressing common healthy issues. Whether you're a field worker or an office employee, taking care of your physical health is essential for safe and effective job performance.

### **Adopting a Healthy Lifestyle:** Prioritizing a healthy lifestyle, which includes practices like maintaining a balanced diet and regular exercise, is crucial for overall well-being (*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC),* <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/index.html>).

### **Sleep Duration for Health:** To ensure optimal health and well-being, it's recommended that adults aim for more than 7 hours of sleep each night, as suggested by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) (*Source: AASM article, 'Adult Sleep Duration Consensus' at* <https://aasm.org/resources/pdf/pressroom/adult-sleep-duration-consensus.pdf>).

### **Physical Inactivity and Chronic Diseases:** Addressing physical inactivity is crucial, considering that 1 in 4 adults globally do not get enough physical activity, leading to an increased risk of chronic diseases (*Source: World Health Organization, 'Physical Activity' at* <https://www.who.int/health-topics/physical-activity#tab=tab_1>).

### **Regular Medical Check-ups:** The American Heart Association provides valuable information about the significance of regular medical check-ups and screenings for early detection of health issues (*Source: American Heart Association,* <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/consumer-healthcare/doctor-appointments-questions-to-ask-your-doctor>).

### **Teleworking and Well-being:** Discover the impact of teleworking on physical, mental, and social well-being. Explore guidance on establishing telework setups that prioritize workers' health and wellness (*Source: Telework Health and Safety Technical Briefing,* <https://www.osha.gov/telework-health-and-safety-technical-briefing>).

### **Common Health Issues:** Valuable insights into addressing common health issues, including allergies and the flu, are available from Mayo Clinic. Additionally, you can find practical tips for prevention and care (*Source: Mayo Clinic, 'Diseases and Conditions' at* <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions>).

## **Occupational health**

This page provides guidance on managing well-being at work, including resources on how to prevent and manage occupational illnesses and injuries. Topics covered include workplace hazards, personal protective equipment, ergonomics, and Occupational safety and health management systems. By prioritizing occupational health and safety, workers can help ensure a safe and healthy workplace for themselves and their colleagues.

### **Recognizing Workplace Hazards:** Understanding and identifying workplace hazards is crucial for maintaining a safe work environment. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) provides valuable insights into hazard identification, offering guidance on how to proactively recognize potential risks that could compromise safety (Source: <https://www.osha.gov/safety-management/hazard-Identification>).

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** PPE serves as a crucial line of defense in safeguarding workers against occupational hazards. These physical barriers, such as helmets, gloves, and respiratory protection, play a vital role in minimizing risks to health and safety. Employers hold responsibilities for providing suitable PPE as per Article 16 of the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155). PPE is an indispensable element in ensuring workers' safety, even when other safety measures are in place (Source: <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-administration-inspection/resources-library/publications/guide-for-labour-inspectors/personal-protective-equipment/lang--en/index.htm>)

### **Ergonomics:** Establishing proper ergonomics ensures a safer, more comfortable, and productive work environment for all. The IEA Technical Committees offer helpful tools, methods, and guidelines for assessing and implementing Human Factors and Ergonomics (HFE) at work. You can find practical tools, like the IEA-WHO Toolkit, that offer insights and strategies to manage the risk of work-related musculoskeletal disorders. Explore these resources for a healthier and more comfortable work experience (<https://iea.cc/about/ergonomics-in-practice/tools-for-assessing-and-implementing-hfe-in-the-workplace/>).

### **Occupational Safety and Health Management Systems:** In the realm of occupational safety and health management, the International Labour Organization (ILO) offers comprehensive guidelines known as ILO-OSH 2001. These guidelines outline effective approaches to establishing robust safety and health management systems within workplaces, promoting a culture of safety (Source: <https://www.ilo.org/safework/info/standards-and-instruments/WCMS_107727/lang--en/index.htm>).

## **Mental health – work in progress**

Maintaining good mental health is essential for workers in the exploration geophysics industry. This page provides resources and guidance on how to maintain good mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. Topics covered include stress management, work-life balance, coping with work-related challenges, and strategies for improving mental health and resilience. By prioritizing mental health and wellbeing, workers can help promote a healthy workplace culture that supports both personal and professional growth.

### Resources for managing stress and mental health, including tips for coping with work-related stress and resources for seeking professional help. (Source: National Institute of Mental Health, <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/find-help/index.shtml>)

### Mental health first aid

Just as learning a few basic medical principles enables one to provide lifesaving physical first aid, so too does learning basic psychological principles enable effective assistance to a person undergoing a mental-health crisis. Mental-health first aid is the immediate and temporary help offered to a person experiencing a mental-health challenge, mental disorder, or a mental-health crisis (Kitchener and Jorm, 2002). The aims of mental-health first aid are directly analogous to those of physical first aid:

* Preserve life when a person may be danger to self or others.
* Prevent the problem from worsening.
* Promote recovery.
* Provide comfort and support.
* Help guide the person to appropriate treatments and other supportive resources.

Also analogous to the standard approach of physical first aid—Emergency Action Principles (Check, Call, Care) and ABCs (Airway, Breathing, Circulation)—mental-health first aid provides a general action plan to assist a person in a mental-health crisis. The mental-health action plan mnemonic is ALGEE (e.g., Kelly et al., 2017):

A—Assess for risk of suicide or further harm.

L—Listen in a non-judgmental manner.

G—Give reassurance and information.

E—Engage appropriate professional assistance.

E—Encourage self-help and other support strategies.

Beyond this basic action plan, detailed guidelines for a range of mental-health challenges and crises are available for download from Mental Health First Aid Australia (<https://mhfa.com.au/>). These guidelines are what first aid actions were rated as essential or important by international expert panels of mental-health professionals, caregivers, and consumers. The guidelines most pertinent to field camp operations include:

* Suicidal thoughts and behaviors
* Non-suicidal self-injury
* Aggressive behaviors
* Panic attacks
* Medical emergency due to substance abuse
* Exposure to traumatic events (see also *CISD/Psychological First Aid* section in Chapter 5)

Training in mental-health first aid is widely available through multiple sources, many of which are listed on the Mental Health First Aid Australia website.

Young people are likely to seek assistance from their peers and those close to their age, who can be quite effective as first aiders. Consider orienting teaching assistants or, perhaps, the entire class to the principles of mental-health first aid and share access to the guidelines listed above as part of field-methods training or during initial or later briefings. Recognize, however, that providing mental-health first aid is personally demanding, and youths (< 18 years old) and some young adults might not have the requisite cognitive or emotional maturity—and that the guidelines listed above were developed explicitly for use by adults assisting young people. Research is currently underway in Australia to evaluate mental-health first aid training for teenagers (see <https://mhfa.com.au/> for more information).

For all mental-health first aiders, it is important also to care for themselves after an incident. Providing such assistance can leave the first aider frustrated, wiped out, or angry. It can be helpful to talk with a peer or professional about the feelings and reactions set aside during the incident. Such talks must respect the privacy of the person in crisis and not share her/his name or identifying personal details.

As emphasized in the definition of mental-health first aid and the ALGEE action plan, it is essential to help connect the person in crisis with professional and other support. Contact your organization’s mental-health, counseling, or employee-assistance groups for more information. Such groups can provide guidance on available resources, effective interventions, procedures for engaging professional assistance for both the patient and first aider whether at home, on campus, or in the field.

References:

Kelly, C., B.A. Kitchener, A.F. Jorm, Mental Health First Aid Australia, 2017, Youth mental health first aid : a manual for adults assisting young people, 4th edition. Parkville, Victoria, Mental Health First Aid Australia, 187 p.

Kitchener, B. A., A.F. Jorm, 2002, Mental health first aid training for the public: evaluation of effects on knowledge, attitudes and helping behavior. BMC Psychiatry, v. 2, 10. (doi:10.1186/1471-244x-2-10)

### CISD/Psychological first aid

Critical incident stress involves feelings of shock, horror, and [helplessness](https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/biochemistry-genetics-and-molecular-biology/helplessness) following the experience of such critical incidents as accidents, assaults, disasters, and resulting fatalities. Critical incidents have shown to have lasting effects on emergency personnel that can culminate in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Civilian responders are exposed to many of the same stressors, but typically lack experience and support systems to help put critical-incident experiences into context. As a consequence, they may experience quite natural but distressing reactions—guilt, second-guessing, frustration, depression—and suffer their negative effects.

Critical incident stress debriefing (CISD) is a psychological therapy offered to responders in a group setting within 48 hours following a traumatic event. Its intent is to lessen the acute symptoms of the trauma and to reduce the risk of developing PTSD. The effectiveness of CISD depends crucially upon the leaders of the group, their management of morale, and active respect for the dignity of the individual and their importance to the group. CISD is conducted by trained facilitators, typically involves several hours, and comprises seven phases:

1. Introduction—purpose of debriefing, participants.
2. Facts—exactly what happened with the associated emotions and reactions.
3. Thoughts—at the time of the critical incident.
4. Reactions—detailed focus on emotions associated with the event.
5. Symptoms—cognitive discussion of trauma-related symptoms and reactions.
6. Teaching—link coping strategies to symptoms of stress.
7. Re-entry phase—consolidate and clarify issues, summarize techniques and benefits of debriefing, and bring closure. (see such references as Fink, 2016 for more information.)

Emergency personnel typically have access to support and assistance through CISD programs organized in many communities. In case of a critical incident on a field activity such resources may be available to your group. Contact the local police, fire, or emergency-medical services to explore the possibilities, commonly available through their chaplains, mental-health providers, or employee-assistance groups.

Psychological First Aid (PFA) is a related approach that can be provided by trained mental-health first aiders one-on-one or in small group settings. It is described as a humane, supportive response to a fellow human being who is suffering and who may need support (WHO, 2011, Kelly et al., 2017). PFA involves protecting the person from further harm, assessing immediate needs and concerns, listening non-judgmentally, comforting people and helping them to feel calm, helping people connect to information, professional services, and social supports, encouraging self-help, and providing practical care and support in a non-intrusive manner—very analogous to the ALGEE action plan discussed in Chapter 9. Two key resources for PFA are the World Health Organization’s *Psychological first aid: Guide for field workers* (<https://www.who.int/mental_health/publications/guide_field_workers/en/>) and the *MHFA Trauma Event Guidelines* (<https://mhfa.com.au/>).

Many mental-health first aid courses include discussions of helping people deal with exposure to traumatic incidents—see, for example, <https://mhfa.com.au/> for more information. Contact your organization’s mental-health, counseling, or employee-assistance groups for more information. Such groups can provide guidance on available resources, effective interventions, procedures for engaging professional assistance whether at home, on campus, or in the field.

References

Fink, G., 2016, Stress: concepts, cognition, emotion, and behavior. Academic Press, 502 p. (ISBN 9780128009512)

Kelly, C., B.A. Kitchener, A.F. Jorm, Mental Health First Aid Australia, 2017, Youth mental health first aid : a manual for adults assisting young people, 4th edition. Parkville, Victoria, Mental Health First Aid Australia, 187 p.

WHO, 2011, Psychological first aid: Guide for field workers. World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland, 64 p. (available in many languages at: <https://www.who.int/mental_health/publications/guide_field_workers/en/>)

## **Work-life balance**

This page provides practical guidance for achieving a balanced approach between work and personal life. Topics covered include effective stress management, flexible work arrangements, fostering a healthy workplace culture, and mastering time management. By prioritizing work-life balance, workers can improve their overall wellbeing and performance.

### **Managing Stress:** Promoting a healthy work environment involves effective stress management. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) offers Management Standards that guide organizations in addressing work-related stress. These standards encompass six key work design areas: Demands, Control, Support, Relationships, Role, and Change. By implementing these standards, organizations can identify and mitigate stressors, fostering well-being, productivity, and reduced accidents and sick leave. (Source: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/index.htm>)

* **Flexible Work Arrangements:** Flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting, flextime, and compressed workweeks, allow employees to balance their professional and personal lives more effectively. A report by the International Labour Organization (ILO) highlights the positive impact of flexible work on employee satisfaction, retention, and overall well-being. (Source Working Time and Work-Life Balance Around the World: <https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---travail/documents/publication/wcms_864222.pdf>)
* **Healthy & Sustainable Workplace Culture:** A thriving workplace culture prioritizes the well-being of employees and the environment. The International Labour Organization (ILO) now recognizes "a safe and healthy working environment" as a fundamental right at work. (Source: <https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_dialogue/---lab_admin/documents/publication/wcms_850673.pdf>)
* **Effective Time Management:** Smart time management is crucial for a healthy work-life balance. Prioritizing tasks, setting clear goals, and avoiding unnecessary distractions empowers individuals to maximize their working hours, enabling more time for themselves and their loved ones. Good time management not only helps them work more efficiently but also reduces stress and prevents burnout. Finding the right balance between work and personal life is key for long-term success and happiness. (Source: Covey, S. R. (1989). The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change. Free Press.)

Alcohol and Substance Abuse:

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA): Offers research, resources, and guidance to help individuals make informed decisions about alcohol consumption and its potential effects on health.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): Provides a wide range of resources for individuals seeking help for substance abuse and mental health concerns.

Alcoholics Anonymous: Offers support and a 12-step program for individuals recovering from alcohol addiction, helping them build a sober and fulfilling life.

Narcotics Anonymous: Provides a similar 12-step program for individuals seeking recovery from drug addiction.

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs): Many workplaces offer EAPs that provide confidential assessments, referrals, and short-term counseling services for employees dealing with personal and workplace challenges.