

## Outcomes of help

Our aim is to assist practitioners to maintain their health and well-being. When practitioners have health problems, we assist them to access the most appropriate care.

## Helping our colleagues

Doctors, dentists and veterinarians often find it difficult to acknowledge the need for help. DHAS provides advice for troubled colleagues. As fellow professionals, we appreciate the stresses of our work and recommend the best medical care. "Corridor consultations" are not only unwise, but dangerous.

Peers will often be aware that a colleague is in need of help, but will not know what to do. The DHAS takes calls from concerned colleagues and offers advice on how to assist.

## Confidentiality is a prime concern

Practitioners are more likely to seek advice if they know that their problems will be treated with respect and confidentiality. Unless there is a serious and immediate concern that a practitioner is likely to harm themselves or others, confidentiality will be maintained. The DHAS does not collect identifiable data.

***"Every doctor, dentist and veterinarian should have their own GP"***

### Acknowledgements

The DHAS acknowledges support from:

- The Medical Board of Australia
- The Veterinary Practitioners Board of NSW
- The Australian Dental Association (NSW Branch)
- The Medical Benevolent Association of NSW
- The Australian Medical Association (NSW)
- The Dental Council of NSW
- The Australian Medical Association (ACT)

**Helpline: (02) 9437 6552**

**doctors'**  
**health**  
advisory service (NSW & ACT)

### Administration:

Telephone (02) 9437 6552

Level 6, 69 Christie St, St Leonards, NSW 2065

[www.dhas.org.au](http://www.dhas.org.au)

**doctors'**  
**health**

advisory service (NSW & ACT)

**An independent and confidential service offering advice to doctors, dentists and veterinarians and to medical, dental and veterinary students.**

**(02) 9437 6552**

## Background

The medical profession has long understood the need to help colleagues with personal and health problems.

With the support of the Medical Benevolent Association of New South Wales and the and the NSW Branch of the Australian Medical Association, the Doctors' Health Advisory Service was founded was founded in 1982. We now assist dentists, veterinarians and students in all three professions.

Although we receive financial support from the Medical Board of Australia, the AMA (NSW), the Australian Dental Association (NSW), the Veterinary Practitioners Board of NSW and the Dental Council of NSW **the DHAS operates independently of all professional and registration bodies.**

Our website:

<http://www.dhas.org.au>

contains further background and resources.

## Handling of Calls

A dedicated telephone service is available seven days a week:

**(02) 9437 6552.**

Callers, whether practitioners themselves, their families, staff or professional colleagues, are put in contact with our Medical Director or a senior social worker, who are experienced in handling the health problems of medical practitioners. The caller might receive advice directly from the Medical Director or social worker, or if necessary, be recommended to consult a GP, a specialist, other professional, or the Medical Benevolent Social Worker.

Extreme care is taken to maintain confidentiality. Once the practitioner enters a formal doctor/patient relationship, then the advisory role of the DHAS is completed *we are not a treatment service.*

The social worker is supported by a panel of GP's and specialists who are experienced in helping colleagues.

## Important Points

- **The DHAS exists to help practitioners, students and their families.**
- **The DHAS operates independently of all professional organisations and registration authorities.**
- **The DHAS *advises* – we do not treat.**
- **Confidentiality is of paramount importance.**

## Nature of Calls

Each caller's problems are unique, but calls often relate to

- **Work related stress and burnout**
- **Alcohol misuse or other substance abuse and addiction**
- **Clinical competence**
- **Financial difficulties**
- **Legal or ethical issues**
- **Relationship problems**
- **Physical impairment**
- **Psychological disorders**