

## 4/17 Workload Related Burnout

(A report from Ministry Training & Development.)

### Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to respond to the request of Synod resolution 4/17, regarding workload related burnout.

### Recommendations

2. Synod receive this report.

### Background

3. At the 2017 Synod, MT&D was asked to investigate online self-assessment tools for church workers to measure their workloads to alleviate or prevent burnout. Motion 4/17 reads:

#### 4/17 Workload related burnout

This Synod –

- (a) notes the impact workload related burnout has on ministries within our parishes,
- (b) commends our theological and training organisations in their continued education in recognising burnout in all its forms,
- (c) congratulates Ministry, Training and Development in its creation of the Lifelong Ministry Development Guidelines,
- (d) requests Ministry, Training and Development to investigate online self-assessment tools that permit Ordained and Stipendiary Lay Workers to measure their workloads to alleviate or prevent burnout, and
- (e) continues to pray fervently for those in all pastoral ministry.

### Discussion

4. This is a complex area.
5. There are many variables that impact a person's capacity to work in ministry without burning out. These include the following:
  - The number of hours worked
  - When the hours are worked
  - A person's capacity
  - The nature of the work and the gifts of the worker
  - The stage of life and health of the worker
  - The health and harmony in the worker's family
  - The health and harmony of the relationships in the ministry team of the worker
6. So, there is no simple measure.
7. There are however some online tools that can be used to help a person assess their current functioning in life and ministry to help determine their state of 'well-being' or 'burnout'.
8. These include:
  - Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-HSS) – [www.mindgarden.com](http://www.mindgarden.com)
  - Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale – [www.mindtools.com](http://www.mindtools.com)
  - DASS21 – <https://headspace.org.au/assets/Uploads/Resource-library/Health-professionals/Clinical-Toolkit/DASS-21-with-Scoring-Sheet.pdf>
  - Australian Unity/Deacon University well-being assessment tool – <https://www.australianunity.com.au/media-centre/wellbeing>

9. In addition to doing an online assessment we recommend the following:
- (a) If a person believes they are nearing burnout, they should seek professional help with a doctor, counsellor or psychologist to devise a plan to address the issue. Anglicare provides the Clergy Assistance Scheme, which provides free, confidential counselling for clergy and clergy spouses in the Diocese of Sydney –  
<https://www.anglicare.org.au/clergy-assistance-program> (02 4228 0283)
  - (b) Focusing on proactive strategies and practices that promote well-being in ministry. These include:
    - (i) Having a mentor, coach or pastoral supervisor.
    - (ii) Joining the Lifelong Ministry Development (LMD) process –  
<https://lmd.org.au>.
    - (iii) Looking at the LMD Development Package on “Resilience”.
    - (iv) Contacting the Centre for Ministry Development (CMD) and asking to do the workshop on “Resilience” and asking to do the “Well-being questionnaire” (part of the 360 Review package).
    - (v) Doing some reading on resilience and ‘well-being’ in addition to reading on ‘burnout’.
    - (vi) Reading a summary of Grant Bickerton’s Australian research on well-being –  
<https://www.buv.com.au/documents/item/182>

For and on behalf of Ministry Training and Development

THE REV GARY O'BRIEN  
*Director*

24 April 2018