

RSL WODEN VALLEY SUB-BRANCH ENEWS



Special edition weekly Lockdown eNews 15 October 21

Dear Members,

With Lockdown in the ACT having ended at midnight last night, I firstly want to congratulate all of you for surviving this difficult time. As Mr Grace would say, "You've all done very well."

However, I know that some members have struggled with normal health and ageing issues that have been worsened by the restrictions. To them, I say a special well done and hope that things will improve as the restrictions ease, and we return a new state of 'normal'.

Secondly, I thank all of our staff and volunteers who have supported our members and other clients through this difficult time. That said, I note we're only 10 weeks from Christmas and 11 until the end of our financial year and the start of 2022!

Between now and Christmas we have several important activities to prepare for and hold (or postpone or cancel!) under whatever restrictions apply at the time they are due. These include two OGMs, the Remembrance Day Appeal, a Christmas party, the distribution of Christmas gifts and cards, the annual reminder about membership renewals, and the finalising and distribution of the Christmas Edition of *The Serviceman*.

Given other issues that are occurring in the Veteran Community, we will continue to receive media releases and the like as issues arise and information needs to be passed to a broad audience as effectively and efficiently as possible. While you will have seen examples of these in previous editions of this newsletter, they include briefings from DVA, the National President and the Federal Minister for Veterans. They have included topics such the Royal Commission into Defence and Veterans Suicide, advice from the ATO about veteran specific tax matters, debate about the DFRDB issues that affect so many of our members, advice about and invitations to a range of commemorative activities, and a wide range of other matters that we would normally distribute to our members as soon as possible. Some of these matters have short timeframes for either a response or some other action, such as watching or attending an event, or responding to a request for comment.

There will also be a need to distribute changes to the ACT Government policies relating to COVID and explain how they apply to and/or impact on or Sub-Branch, such as accessing the office both generally and for specific purposes such as the OGM on 26 Oct, or even when we will start the Friday Coffee Catchups.

Therefore, rather than issue ad hoc mass emails and the like, I intend to continue to use a weekly newsletter to pass on this information to our members. While noting we will probably change the title of the newsletter to reflect our recent release from Lockdown, I acknowledge this will place an impost on our staff and some others. Thus, we will plan when and what we will do, and then let you know ASAP. However, I expect to release a new version of this newsletter next week.

In closing, I again thank you all for whatever contribution you have made to our ongoing support to each other, to our clients and to our Sub-Branch as a whole. With a special thanks to our Editorial team of Alex, Joyce and Greg, and to the random contributors.

With kind regards to all,

Jim Gilchrist

Dear members,

The ACT lockdown has prevented the Sub-Branch to have sufficient time to plan the scheduled dinner on Tuesday 26 October 2021, so it is cancelled.

In accordance with the ACT Government's Pathway, the Grant Cameron Centre will reopen on 15 October 2021, so the Board has decided to hold an OGM on Tuesday 26 October 2021 at 1400 hours in the Sub-Branch office at Holder. Following the OGM, refreshments will be provided. Details will be confirmed closer to the date.

Regards,

Greg



Woden Valley Sub-Branch

Greg Kennett

Secretary

Woden Valley Sub-Branch

Australian Capital Territory

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W: www.rslwoden.org.au

Dear members,

The Sub-Branch office and VSC will reopen from today 15 October. However, in accordance with ACT Government requirements staff, volunteers and visitors must abide by mask-wearing requirements and density limits must be strictly followed. Please note that the fines are substantial if the limitations are not followed.

Joyce O'Brien

- **The lockdown commenced at 5:00pm Thursday 12 August 2021 and will continue until 11.59pm 14 October 2021.**
- **These restrictions are to help stop the spread of the virus and allow contact tracers to do their work.**
- **Please only leave home for essential reasons.**
- **We encourage all Canberrans to restrict their movement where possible, maintain social distancing, use the Check In CBR app and be considerate.**

Anyone aged 12 years and over must wear a mask at all times upon leaving home. For some people this is not possible. Full details on the [face masks requirements page](#).

- **For all current restrictions please see link below.**

<https://www.covid19.act.gov.au/restrictions/current-restrictions#Lockdown-Restrictions>

ACT lockdown ending 11:59pm Thursday 14 October 2021

- **Social gatherings, leaving home and visitors**

- No more than five people permitted to visit another household at any one time (this limit does not apply to children under 12 years of age);
- Outdoor gatherings can take place with no more than 25 people

- **Business, retail and workplace**

- A gradual return to work is permitted in accordance with the Public Health Direction
- Employers continue to allow staff to work from home if practical
- Licensed venues permitted to have 25 people across the venue, or one person per four square metres, whichever is lesser (exc staff). If businesses wish to have more than 25 people, they can have up to 50 people in outdoor spaces only, or one person per four square metres, whichever is lesser (exc staff)
- Majority of businesses permitted to have up to 25 people across the venue, or one person per four square metres, whichever is lesser (exc staff);
- Hairdressing and other personal care services can open with five clients at any one time
- Essential retail can continue to operate, with density of one person per four square metres
- Hardware and building supplies, agricultural and rural supplies, pet stores, businesses that sell essential office supplies continue to operate through click and collect services or click and deliver services only.
 - These essential retail businesses can also permit up to two people from the same household (this limit does not apply to children under 12 years of age) into a store at any one time, by booked appointments.
- Non-essential retail (and some essential retail outlets) can continue to operate a click and collect or click and deliver service, with no more than 10 staff permitted to be in the business at any one time, or one person per four square metres whichever is lesser
 - These non-essential retail businesses can also permit up to two people from the same household (this limit does not apply to children under 12 years of age) into a store at any one time, by booked appointments.
 - Payments for goods can be made at the time of collection and not restricted to online payments only.

- **Fitness, Sport and Outdoor physical recreation and campgrounds**

- Outdoor Sporting activities (training) can resume with up to 25 people in each outdoor space (exc staff or volunteers)
- Swimming pools are permitted to operate with no more than 25 swimmers across the venue. Only 2 swimmers per lane allowed, with formal swimming lessons and training permitted.
- Change rooms to remain closed.

- **Residential aged care**

- Up to two people will be permitted to visit a resident of a residential aged care facility for any reason. Visitors will be required to be vaccinated

- **Weddings and funerals**

- 50 people permitted to attend a funeral and up to 25 people can attend a wedding (exc staff)

- **Places of worship**

- 25 people across the venue or one person per four square metres, whichever is lesser (exc. staff).

Masks will continue to be required at all times upon leaving home, including in workplaces, if you are aged 12 years and over.

Please refer to the [frequently asked questions](#) for further information about the current lockdown restrictions.



THE ACT'S COVID-19 PATHWAY FORWARD – FROM 1 OCTOBER 2021

Our guiding principles

- We will always put the health and wellbeing of the community at the forefront of our decision making, especially the impact on mental health.
- We will get as many people back to work as soon as we can.
- We will continue to listen to the community and businesses about the impact of the public health measures.
- In recognition of strong community compliance and a stable public health situation, we will make some minor amendments to restrictions on 1 October.

- Lockdown will be lifted on 15 October when we expect our community will have reached 80 per cent full vaccination and the nation is expected to have reached 70 per cent.
- By 29 October our surrounding region will likely have achieved the 80 per cent vaccination threshold and the nation will likely reach 80 per cent soon after. This may enable further easing, if the public health situation allows.
- Before we take any further steps beyond 29 October we will need to closely consider the epidemiological situation, cases in our surrounding region and our public health and hospital system capacity.

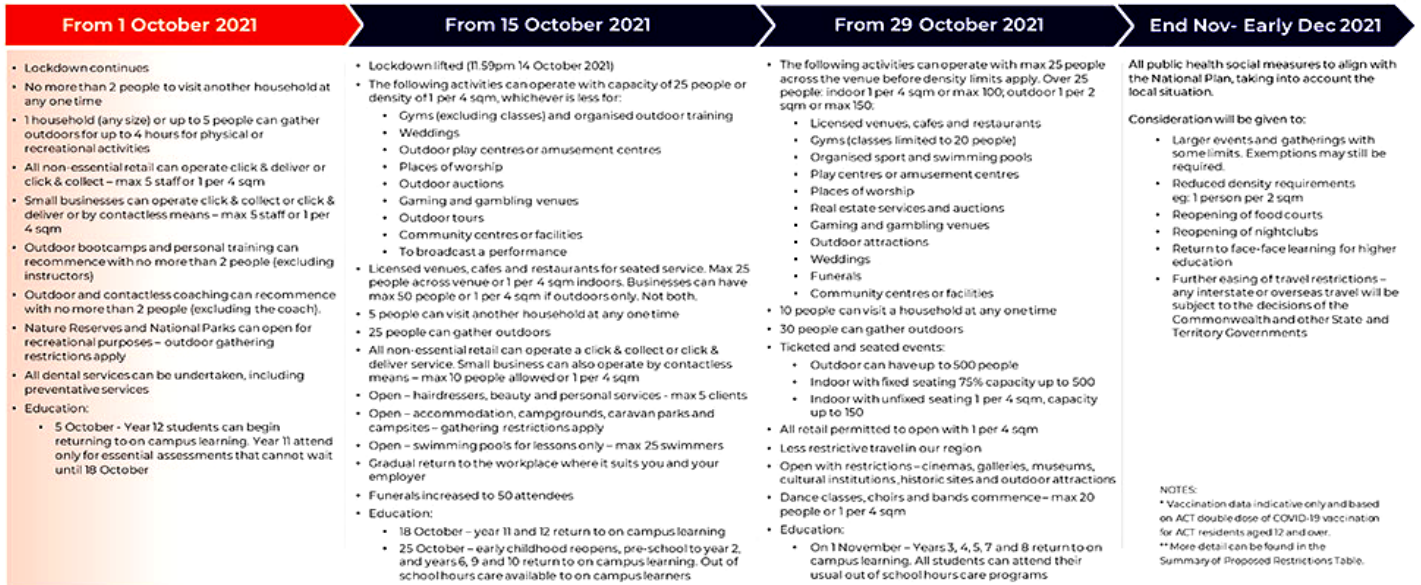
Our steps forward

Before we take each step we will consider:

- our vaccination rates, including in our vulnerable communities;
- our health system capacity, including the impact of COVID-19 in regional NSW;
- case numbers and current trends;
- testing rates and turnaround times;

- the levels of community transmission, especially the proportion of cases infectious in the community;
- our ability to quickly test, trace, isolate and quarantine (TTIQ);
- how well the community and businesses are complying with the restrictions; and

The measures below are indicative. It is difficult to predict the future with so many competing factors to consider. If the situation worsens we may need to delay further easing of restrictions or tighten restrictions again.



Ongoing



For more information: covid19.act.gov.au



THE ACT'S COVID-19 PATHWAY FORWARD

Our guiding principles

We will support the work being undertaken nationally and locally to achieving a COVID normal life as soon as it is safe.

We will put the health and wellbeing of our community at the forefront of our decision making. While COVID-19 continues to circulate in the community and we are working to increase our vaccination coverage, restrictions will remain in place.

We will look to get as many people back to work as soon as we can.

We are aware of the impacts on mental health of ongoing restrictions and we will support mental health measures and prioritise outdoor activity.

Given our expected high levels of vaccination, we do not anticipate needing proof of vaccination to access public and private sector services.

We will balance the risks posed by COVID-19 to ensure we do not overwhelm our health system.

We will move through the phases of the National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 response. Movement through each phase is triggered when the average vaccination rates across the nation, as well as in the ACT, have reached the required thresholds. In the ACT we acknowledge that effective vaccination occurs two weeks after the threshold is reached.

We will count all people aged 12 years and over when determining whether we've reached the National Plan thresholds. We will also consider the vaccination rates for vulnerable groups, as well as the overall rates.

We will continue to contribute to work of National Cabinet including planning for our:

- Health System
- Public Health Responses – Test, Trace, Isolate and Quarantine (TTIQ)
- Public Health Social Measures (public health restrictions) including how these relate to the National Plan.

Our current situation

The ACT is currently experiencing concerning levels of community transmission. This means that we need to keep high level public health restrictions in place to minimise the spread of the virus.

Our priority is vaccinating as many people as possible, as quickly as possible, including our vulnerable communities.

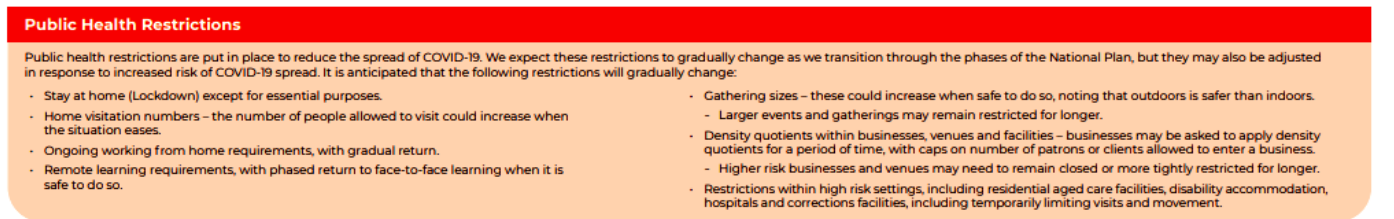
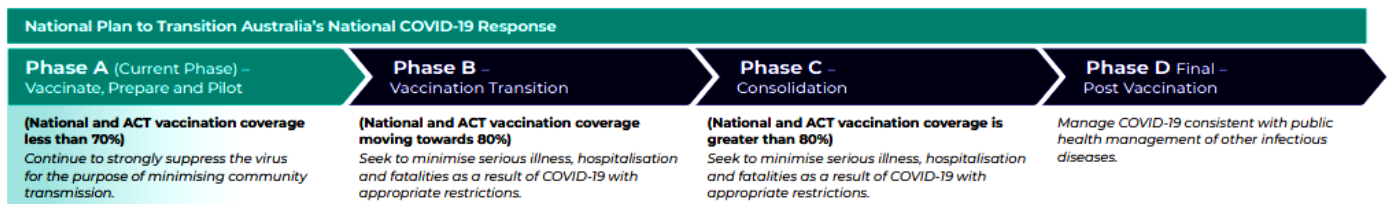
TTIQ must be effective and efficient – we need to continue testing, rapid contact tracing and effective isolation and quarantine measures. This will include continuing to support people to isolate and quarantine in alternative accommodation where their home is not appropriate.

Australia currently looks set to reach 70 per cent full vaccination by mid to late October and 80 per cent by early to mid November. The ACT anticipates crossing these thresholds earlier.

Our steps forward

When looking to change restrictions we will consider:

- national and local vaccination rates
- our health system capacity, including the impact of COVID-19 in regional NSW
- the levels of community transmission, especially the proportion of cases who were not in quarantine while infectious
- testing rates and turnaround time
- our ability to quickly test, trace, isolate and quarantine
- how well the community and business are complying with restrictions
- data on the effective reproduction ratio and transmission potential



Ongoing



For more information: covid19.act.gov.au



Read more: [The ACT's Pathway Forward - Framework - COVID-19](#)



RSL Woden Valley Sub-Branch and Veterans Support Centre

Invite our members to

A **Strength For Life Session in**

A one hour program followed by refreshments

Participants will receive guided training, personal equipment, general information on exercise and safety instructions.

An assessment questionnaire will be sent out to all interested participants to be completed prior to attendance.

Presenter: Diane Percy

Active Ageing Coordinator ACT

To be held in the conference room

Grant Cameron Community Centre

27 Mulley St HOLDER

On Thursday 21 October 2021

11 AM to 12:30 PM

Limited places available

Please RSVP by Friday 15 October 2021

to rania.kalimeris@rslwoden.org.au

02 6288 7470

Mobile: 0478 630 038

Military superannuation streamlined amendment process



A copy of the live stream has been made available for viewing. [Treatment of military invalidity benefits following Full Federal Court decision | Australian Taxation Office \(ato.gov.au\)](#)

Key update messages – 6 October 2021

A number of veterans and stakeholder groups have engaged the ATO in recent weeks to enquire about the progress of the military superannuation streamlined amendment process.

We encourage those who are interested in receiving updates on the streamlined amendment process to regularly check-in with the military superannuation webpage on [ato.gov.au](#). To complement the website information, we have also prepared an update with some key messages that you may wish to share with your members. We have prepared this in a format where you will be able to cut and paste the ATO messages into your relevant publications/newsletters so that you can share with your members. Additionally, if there are any other concerns that are raised, please let us know and we can consider them for the next round of key messages if appropriate.

Military superannuation streamlined amendment process update

In December 2020, the Full Federal Court found that invalidity pensions payable under the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits (DFRDB) Scheme and the Military Superannuation and Benefits (MSB) Scheme that started on or after 20 September 2007 should be taxed as superannuation lump sum payments. Following the change in tax treatment, the ATO has been processing amendments for past tax returns of impacted individuals who have opted-in as part of its remediation program.

As at the end of September, the ATO has amended over 4,000 income tax assessments for individuals that either opted-in to the first phase of its amendment process or had an existing objection with them. This equates to around 60% of the individuals who opted-in to having their assessment(s) amended. If you initially opted-in to but your amendments have yet to be processed, it is likely because your circumstances

- receive disability superannuation benefits or a lump sum payment in arrears
- have multiple super schemes
- have declared bankruptcy.

If you opted-in but have not yet had your amendments finalised, you do not need to call the ATO for an update. The ATO is working through the remaining amendments and expects to have all amendments completed shortly. In the meantime, you should make sure details such as your phone number, email address and your bank account information are correct. These can be updated on ATO online via myGov. Updating your details now will make it easier for ATO officers to contact you if they require additional information. Importantly, If you are affected by the Court decision and did not opt-in under the ATO's initial amendment process, it's not too late to have your assessments for prior years amended.

Next round of amendments

The ATO will begin the next round of its amendment program from late October by contacting affected individuals who did not initially opt-in. There are several things you should do now if you would like to have your assessments amended. These include:

- ensuring your contact details are up to date, so you do not miss the correspondence from the ATO. This will also allow the ATO to contact you if they require additional information.
-
- applying to Commonwealth Superannuation Corporate (CSC) for a determination if you believe you qualify for a disability concession. By doing this before you take part in the streamlined amendment process you will ensure that the disability concession is taken into account as part of your amendments upfront.
-
- lodging any outstanding income tax returns as the ATO cannot amend what has not been lodged.
-
- Consider seeking financial advice in relation to your personal circumstances as it is your choice as to whether you want to participate in the ATO's amendment process.
-

The ATO updates its website regularly at ato.gov.au/militarysuper

For Urgent Attention & Dissemination – Change in in tax treatment of military superannuation - streamlined amendment process

Good afternoon Board Directors, State Branch Directors, NVAC Members and RSL ATO representatives (copied to State Branch EAs)

Please see the Key Messages from the ATO below for urgent dissemination to members.

The State nominated representatives who attended the stakeholder session with the ATO (listed below) have been included in this email and will be able to prepare a message based on this information, for distribution to members, to support and advise re the commencement of further action by the ATO.

Margaret	Jenyns	Head of Veteran Services Support
Mickey	Michaelis	Support Manager
Alex	Dick	Advocate & Entitlements Support Officer
Isaac	Ohlin	Policy and Advocacy Officer
Jeff	Jackson	Manager – Pensions, Advocacy & Welfare Support
David	Grenvold	Chief Executive Officer
Josh	Bryan	
Wayne	Gib	State Board Director

The ATO have advised that they will commence contacting members by the end of October. Your support in ensuring that this important information is promptly dispersed would be appreciated.

Kind regards

Fiona



Fiona Engeler

Secretariat Executive Officer (Mon-Thurs,
0830 - 1630)

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E: fiona.engeler@rsl.org.au

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CAMPBELL ACT 2612

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Military superannuation streamlined amendment process

Key update messages – 6 October 2021

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If you initially opted-in to but your amendments have yet to be processed, it is likely because your circumstances are more complex, such as if you:

- receive disability superannuation benefits or a lump sum payment in arrears
- have multiple super schemes
- have declared bankruptcy.

If you opted-in but have not yet had your amendments finalised, you do not need to call the ATO for an update. The ATO is working through the remaining amendments and expects to have all amendments completed shortly.

In the meantime, you should make sure details such as your phone number, email address and your bank account information are correct.

These can be updated on ATO online via myGov. Updating your details now will make it easier for ATO officers to contact you if they require additional information.

Importantly, if you are affected by the Court decision and did not opt-in under the ATO's initial amendment process, it's not too late to have your assessments for prior years amended.

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Consider seeking financial advice in relation to your personal circumstances as it is your choice as to whether you want to participate in the ATO's amendment process.

The ATO updates its website regularly at ato.gov.au/militarysuper

Victoria McCormick

Communications Manager

Public Relations

Marketing and Communication

Australian Taxation Office

The Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee recently held an Inquiry into the Totally and Permanently Incapacitated (TPI) Payment (Special Rate of Disability Pension). The committee's report was published on 1 July 2021, available from the Australian Parliament House website (click [here](#) to go to the site). The sole recommendation of the report was that "*The committee recommends that the Australian Government consider an increase in the TPI payment*".

The Government has provided its response. To see the full Government response, please follow this [link](#).

For Information: Royal Commissions Amendment (Defence and Veteran Suicide Private Sessions) Regulations 2021

On 30 September 2021, the *Royal Commissions Amendment (Defence and Veteran Suicide Private Sessions) Regulations 2021* came into effect. This instrument amends the *Royal Commissions Regulations 2019* to prescribe the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide as a Royal Commission that is authorised to use private sessions. The instrument is available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2021L01395>

For Information & dissemination: Launch of DVA TV channel on YouTube

I am thrilled to advise that DVA has launched its newest communication channel to provide updated information, support and recognition to the Defence and veteran community.

[DVA TV](#) will publish a wide variety of video content to a YouTube Channel dedicated to veterans and their families, about DVA's services and the support that is available to them.

Content on DVA TV will range from guides to accessing support, such as how to use MyService, to capturing and sharing commemorative services, showcasing individual stories of service and posting important announcements from the department.

DVA TV will provide overviews and insights into the services available to the veteran community, including support for families, mental health programs, financial assistance and claims support, transition stories and messages of hope such as the positive impact programs such as the Psychiatric Assistance Dogs Program is having on veterans' lives.

We are keen to ensure that DVA TV provides informative videos on what you want to know more about in the ex-service community and I welcome your suggestions for future content. Please either contact the ESORT Secretariat with your ideas or feel free to email suggestions to the Communications Branch at communications@dva.gov.au.

We hope DVA TV will have a positive impact and help to empower veterans and their families to be the best they can be.

Don't forget to [subscribe to the channel](#) to be notified of new content!

Regards, Liz



Liz Cosson AM CSC

Secretary

Department of Veterans' Affairs

T: 02 6289 6735 Ext: 616735

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The Hon Andrew Gee MP

Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel
Federal Member for Calare

MEDIA RELEASE

15 October 2021

JOIN IN AND 'GET MOVING' DURING VETERANS' HEALTH WEEK

More than 720 events that focus on veteran wellbeing will kick off across Australia on 16 October as part of our country's largest Veterans' Health Week to date.

The Australian Government has provided a record \$540,000 funding for Veterans' Health Week activities that focus on enhancing the overall health of our veterans and their families.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Andrew Gee said this year's theme, *Get Moving*, will promote physical health and encourage veterans and their families to stay active.

"I'm delighted this year's Veterans' Health Week is the biggest yet, with ex-service organisations and community groups coming together to host more than 720 events around the country between Saturday and the end of November," Minister Gee said.

"We know that staying active can have many flow-on benefits to our physical and mental health, and so I encourage veterans and their families to get out and get involved in Veterans' Health Week.

"This year's Veterans' Health Week offers plenty of activities including group walks and runs, water sports, seminars and workshops, dance classes, and even a scavenger hunt!

"With so many options for anyone eager to join in and support our veteran community, I encourage all Australians to check out what's on, make connections and get moving.

"As part of the event calendar, veteran charity Swiss 8 has also been supported to host barbeques across the nation during Veterans' Health Week and in the lead up to Remembrance Day, to help raise awareness of the importance of mental health.

"Improving mental health starts with connection and meaningful conversations, and where better to have a chat and check-in with your mates than with a snag by the barbie."

With some states and territories still following public health guidelines and encouraging residents to stay at home, many of this year's Veterans' Health Week events have been created with COVID-19-related restrictions in mind, offering virtual or at-home activities.

"I'd like to thank all our ex-service organisations and community groups for showing their support and putting on a raft of fantastic COVID-safe events and activities for veterans and their families to participate in," Minister Gee said.

"Among the planned virtual events is the Bravery Trek Challenge 2021 run by the Bravery Trust, which challenges veterans and their families to walk, run or cycle 100km to celebrate 100 years of the Royal Australian Air Force.

"I encourage you all to check out the events on offer near you, and perhaps broaden your network by participating in virtual activities outside your local area."

A full list of Australian Veterans' Health Week events and information about how to register is available on the DVA website dva.gov.au/vhw, or calling DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372) or email vhw@dva.gov.au.

Please note that local state or territory COVID-19 restrictions may be in place, so please keep informed on the latest guidelines in your area.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Minister Gee office: 0459 966 944
DVA Media: 02 6289 6466

AVCAT Scholarships - Closing Soon

Hello,

Applications for 2022 AVCAT Scholarships close 31 October 2021.

Apply online at avcat.org.au.

AVCAT Scholarships are for the children and grandchildren of Australian ex-serving veterans.

To be eligible students must be:

- The child, stepchild, foster child, or grandchild of an Australian ex-serving veteran
- An Australian citizen or permanent resident
- Enrolled, or planning to enrol in a full-time course at an Australian university, TAFE or registered training organisation in 2022

In receipt of, or eligible to receive, Centrelink payments including Youth Allowance, ABSTUDY, Austudy or an accepted means-tested Commonwealth government payment in 2022

Contact info@avcat.org.au for further information.

Kind Regards,
Len Russell
CEO AVCAT



AUSTRALIAN VETERANS'
CHILDREN ASSISTANCE TRUST

[Website](#) . [Insta](#) . [Facebook](#) . [LinkedIn](#)
AVCAT Ground Level 280 Elizabeth St Surry Hills NSW
2010
PO Box K978 Haymarket NSW 1240
02 9213 7999
info@avcat.org.au

Opening of 42 for 42 Memorial and Remembrance

Garden Brisbane 16 October

42 for 42 Memorial

A new memorial and remembrance garden is being constructed in Brisbane to honour those who died in the Afghanistan conflict and those veterans who returned home and lost their lives to depression, post-traumatic stress and other mental health issues. The memorial has been brought to life by the organisation 42 for 42, and is being officially opened on Saturday 16 October 2021.

42 for 42 is a non-profit organisation founded by Afghanistan veterans. The organisation is dedicated to supporting the families of fallen Afghanistan veterans, as well as those who have returned from active duty in Afghanistan and their families.

The '42' stands for the 41 Veterans lost in Afghanistan, with the 42nd representing all defence personnel that have died in training, who returned with injuries and mental health issues, and those we have tragically lost to suicide.

DVA has been able to assist by providing funding through the Saluting Their Service (STS) grants program.

If you have a family member or friend who you think should be represented by the 42 for 42 memorial, please contact the 42 for 42 group via email president@42for42.org.au or visit www.42for42.org.au

If you are in Brisbane the official opening of the memorial and remembrance gardens is on 16 October. Tickets to attend the event are available at the following link: Memorial Garden Official Opening Tickets, Sat, Oct 16, 2021 at 1:30 PM | Eventbrite.

With just a couple of days to go, if you have a family member or friend who you think should be represented by the 42 for 42 memorial, please contact the 42 for 42 group via email president@42for42.org.au or visit www.42for42.org.au

Photo from <https://www.facebook.com/42fallen/>





Veteran Sport Australia

8 October at 17:48 · 🌐



Veterans' Health Week is **running** this year from 16- 24 October and the theme is **Get Moving**. Join **Team Veteran** and do a parkrun Australia or (not)parkrun! Joining the parkrun community is a great way to stay active and connected.

All you need to do is:

1. Register with parkrun and join the 'Team Veteran' Running Club: <https://www.parkrun.com.au/register/?section=form>
2. Do a walk, jog or run during the week
3. Post a photo with [#teamveteran](#)
4. Log your (not)parkrun time online

Thanks to Open Arms for providing the amazing shirts! Join up and get your shirt here <https://openarmsteamveteran.position.com.au/>
[#VHW](#) [#VeteransHealthWeek](#) [#parkrun](#) [#PowerofSport](#) [#GetMoving](#)

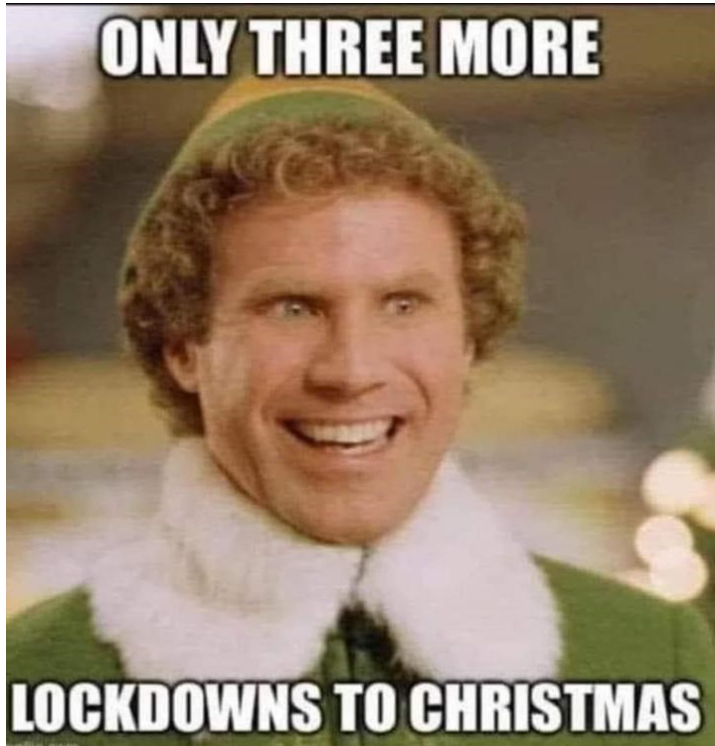


Join Team Veteran and do a (not)parkrun this Veterans Health Week!

All you need to do is:

- Register with parkrun
<http://www.parkrun.com.au/register>
- Then, join the Team Veteran run club by following this link
<https://www.parkrun.com.au/groups/29137/>
- Do a 5k run/jog/walk anywhere anytime
- Post a photo with [#TeamVeteran](#)
- Record your time online with parkrun





When the lockdown is over



Mona Lisa after lockdown.

