



## Information bulletin

# ***Review of DVA online professional development for health professionals***

---

### **BACKGROUND**

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) has engaged Healthcare Management Advisors (HMA) to conduct a *review of online professional development programs for health professionals treating veterans*.

The Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade inquiry into suicide by veterans and ex-service personnel has published its report *The Constant Battle: Suicide by Veterans* in August 2017. The report made several recommendations which were all accepted by the Australian Government. In response to Recommendation 4 from the report, the Government has agreed to review the online professional development for health professionals treating veterans. In particular, the review will examine:

- requirements for providers to undertake online professional development and
- incentives for providers to undertake online professional development.

### **PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

The project will examine the online professional development programs for health professionals treating veterans. The review will focus on programs targeting mental health professionals, but will also include other health professionals providing services to veterans (*e.g.* exercise physiologists and occupational therapists providing services in the rehabilitation area).

The project will seek to identify professional development requirements and incentives that can be used to improve health professionals' understanding of veteran-specific needs and treatment options. To support this aim, the project will examine online incentives and requirements for the following six existing DVA online professional development programs:

- VetAWARE
- Understanding the Military Experience
- Case Formulation
- Working with Veterans with Mental Health Problems (GP specific)
- PTSD - Psychological Interventions Program, and
- the VVCS Practitioners Guide

### **PROJECT APPROACH AND TIMING**

The project is being conducted in five stages from May 2018 to November 2018.

- **Stage 1 - Project set-up:** a detailed project plan has been agreed with DVA.
- **Stage 2 - Environmental scan:** an environmental scan will be conducted across three stages, as follows:
  - (a) **Desktop review:** HMA will undertake a desktop review to identify:
    - (i) the range of professional development compliance requirements set by DVA, Defence and other organisations
    - (ii) incentives offered to mental health professionals undertaking DVA online professional development and

- (iii) incentives and compliance requirements of online professional development targeting non-health professionals (the project will look at the experience in other industries)
- (b) Stakeholder consultation:** HMA will undertake consultations to identify incentives and compliance requirements of other similar professional development programs and barriers and enablers for health professionals to undertake these programs.
- (c) Survey of health professionals:** HMA will develop and disseminate two brief online surveys to health professionals. One survey will target health professionals who have undertaken DVA online professional development, while the other will target individuals who may or may not have undertaken online professional development.
- **Stage 3 - Gap analysis and options development:** drawing upon the information obtained in Stage 2, HMA will undertake a gap analysis. Using this information, HMA will facilitate a workshop with xxx to identify pros and cons of proposed requirements and incentive models, which will be used to develop options for consideration in the final report.
- **Stage 4 -Prepare final report:** HMA will prepare a report that synthesises work from the previous tasks to inform the Department's decision-making into the future.

## **PROJECT TEAM**

### **HMA team**

The HMA team conducting the project are:

#### **Wayne Kinrade, Managing Director**

Wayne will lead the consulting team and be responsible for managing all aspects of the project, including literature review, stakeholder consultation and options development.

#### **Jack Hennessy, Senior Consultant**

Jack will assist in all aspects of the project, including environmental scan, stakeholder consultation, data collection and analysis and options development. Jack will be the primary contact for all communications for the project.

#### **Emma Fehring, Senior Consultant**

Emma will assist in the desktop review, including analysis of relevant literature to inform the project.

#### **Anvi Le, Associate Consultant**

Anvi will assist with data collection and analysis, and support the HMA team in scheduling consultations.

### **Expert advisors**

Due to the specific nature of the project, HMA has engaged the expert advice of the following associate:

#### **Technical adviser- professional development programs**

- Amanda Scotland, Learning and Development Consultant, Endeavour Training and Development

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you would like further information regarding any aspect of the current project, please contact:

### **HMA**

**Jack Hennessy**

Senior Consultant

Ph: (03) 9998 1947

M: 0404 911 467

[jackhennessy@hma.com.au](mailto:jackhennessy@hma.com.au)

### **DVA**

**Sarah Chong**

Assistant Director, Mental & Social Health

Ph: (07) 3223 8701

[sarah.chong@dva.gov.au](mailto:sarah.chong@dva.gov.au)