



BusinessBalance

Supporting small business mental health and wellbeing

Small businesses are significant contributors to the Australian economy—yet they suffer more from symptoms of depression and anxiety than the general population and are under increased financial and emotional pressure as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. To address this, the Australian Government’s Business Balance initiative will provide \$7 million in 2020-21 to support to support small businesses. This includes:

- \$4.3 million to provide free, accessible and tailored support for small business owners by expanding Beyond Blue’s *NewAccess* program in partnership with the Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman, and
- \$2.2 million to expand a free accredited professional development program that builds the mental health literacy of trusted business advisers so that they can better support small business owners in times of distress, delivered through Deakin University.

BusinessBalance will support small business owners take proactive steps to improve their mental health and will be implemented early in 2021.

New Access for Small Business (Beyond Blue)

Developed by Beyond Blue, [NewAccess](#) is a free and confidential mental health coaching program for anyone feeling stressed or overwhelmed about everyday life issues, such as work, study, relationships, health or loneliness. Through the BusinessBalance initiative, the Australian Government is providing funding to expand the NewAccess program to deliver tailored, free mental health support to small business owners.

Supporting Small Business Advisers for Better Mental Health (Deakin University)

The Australian Government is providing funding to Deakin University to deliver a professional development program for small business advisers. The program, run in partnership with the Institute of Public Accountants, CPA Australia, Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand, integrates mental health first aid training with relationship-centred, business mentoring that will empower small business advisers to better support the mental wellbeing of their small business clients.