



Asking for help, and supporting a colleague

What to say, for everyone in the practice

If you need to ask for help

Reaching out is a strong thing to do, and it does not have to be big. You can start with one sentence.

- “Can I talk to you about something? I have been finding work hard lately.”
- “I am not feeling like myself, and I would like to talk it through.”
- “I think I might need some support. Can you help me work out where to start?”

Choose someone you trust: a friend, a colleague, a family member, your manager, or a counsellor or doctor. Be specific about what would help, such as “I just need someone to listen”.

If a colleague is struggling

You do not need to be an expert. Four steps from R U OK? can help:

- **Ask.** Pick a private moment and ask, “Are you okay?”
- **Listen.** Give them time, and do not rush to fix it.
- **Encourage action.** Gently suggest a next step, like talking to a doctor or counsellor.
- **Check in.** Follow up in a few days.

Helpful things to say: “That sounds really hard.” “Thank you for telling me.” “What would help right now?”

Try to avoid: “It could be worse,” “Just push through,” or telling them what they should feel.

If it sounds serious

If someone talks about harming themselves, take it seriously. Stay with them, and help them reach Lifeline on **13 11 14**. If there is immediate danger, call **000**.

If you need support

Lifeline	13 11 14	24-hour crisis support
Beyond Blue	1300 22 4636	support by phone and online
Dental Practitioner Support	1800 377 700	registered practitioners; free, confidential, 24/7
In an emergency, call 000		

Look after yourself, and each other.

Reference: R U OK? (ruok.org.au), the four steps of a conversation: Ask, Listen, Encourage action, Check in.