

MEDIA RELEASE
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Mates show the way to better Defence wellbeing

Veteran service organisation Mates4Mates has developed a successful blueprint for helping to tackle the alarming number of Defence personnel and veterans taking their own lives.

CEO Simon Sauer said thousands of current and ex-serving personnel, and their families, had found a renewed sense of purpose, friendships and practical support through Mates4Mates programs.

“For several years, we have been uncovering what works not only in supporting wounded and ill Defence personnel when they transition out of service, but also supporting their family and loved ones,” Mr Sauer said.

“The key is providing a range of options for individuals to heal holistically through a combination of psychological support, physical rehabilitation activities, employment and education support, and peer support through social connection.

“It’s also vital that the veteran’s family is part of the process – loved ones are a safe harbour for so many veterans and need our care and active support too.

“Ultimately, we are committed to using our experience to help save lives.”

Mates4Mates will be participating in a national forum at the start of September to collaborate with other ex-service organisations.

“One size does not fit all when it comes to supporting people with depression, anxiety and PTSD,” he said.

“Each of Mates4Mates’ services caters to individual circumstances and abilities. It takes time and effort, but those who serve our country, and their kin, deserve to lead happy, healthy lives during and after service.”

Mates4Mates was established in 2013 by RSL Queensland in an effort to provide safe, effective support services for younger veterans.

“It is a travesty that any soldier, sailor or airman would feel lost and alone, and unable to ask for help. As a nation, we owe them much better and the expansion of the Mates4Mates Family Recovery Centre model, in conjunction with our outreach services, would be a good start,” Mr Sauer said.

“With a model like ours, not only would there be a place to go for those who serve and their families, but it would also mean there would be a network of highly experienced psychologists to offer confidential counselling during and after service.

“It is important that Defence personnel know where and when they can get help.”

Mates4Mates receives no ongoing government funding and is reliant upon donations and various grants to provide its valuable services. To support Mates4Mates, donate online at mates4mates.org or via their Facebook page.

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About Mates4Mates

Mates4Mates is a not for profit organisation providing support to wounded, injured or ill current and ex-serving Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel and their families.

Mates4Mates is an independent, apolitical and non-religious organisation offering a broad range of complementary services: Psychological Services; Physical Rehabilitation & Wellbeing Services; Rehabilitation Adventure Challenges; Social Connection Activities; Employment & Education Support.

Website: mates4mates.org

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