



The Hon Andrew Gee MP

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

MEDIA RELEASE

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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.

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