



Health and Safety

for congregations

Compassion fatigue

Compassion fatigue is mental and physical exhaustion people can experience when caring for and empathising with others:

- Where emotional demands are a part of the role, ensure staff and volunteers are informed at the pre-selection stage so they can voluntarily opt-out if they are vulnerable
- Roster activities in such a way that staff and volunteers are not required to approach difficult client situations on their own
- Provide breaks and opportunities to regroup following emotionally demanding situations
- Ensure tasks are matched with the staff member or volunteers' skills and experience
- Rotate tasks and activities to ensure there isn't overexposure to emotionally demanding activities
- Ensure sufficient supervision so that workers can access support to deal with challenging situations
- Build the capability to manage conflict and deal with aggressive behaviour
- Foster a culture of openness so everyone feels comfortable speaking up about situations that they have found challenging
- Follow up with people who have experienced an emotionally demanding situation
- Offer the employee assistance program for staff and volunteers