# Tool 7: Framework for Undertaking a Needs Analysis

# *See Glossary at the end of this document for definitions.*

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| **Tools in this series:**   * [Tool 1: Evaluation Approach for Complex Procurements](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/publications/tool-1-evaluation-approach-complex-procurements) * [Tool 2: Evaluation Approach for Simple Procurements](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/publications/tool-2-evaluation-approach-simple-procurements) * [Tool 3: Example RFT Template](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/publications/tool-3-example-rft-template) * [Tool 4: Checklist for Onboarding New Suppliers](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/publications/tool-4-checklist-onboarding-new-suppliers) * [Tool 5: Procurement Lifecycle Checklist](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/publications/tool-5-procurement-lifecycle-checklist) * [Tool 6: Supplier’s Report – Template](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/publications/tool-6-suppliers-report-template) * [Tool 7: Framework for Undertaking a Needs Analysis](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/publications/tool-7-framework-undertaking-needs-analysis) |

## Disclaimer

This document was developed by procurement specialists for the National Mental Health Commission (NMHC). The guidance is high level and organisations should adapt this checklist to suit their requirements. Organisations are responsible for ensuring the approach is appropriate for their workforce and engaging any additional expertise as indicated.

This document provides guidance only and should not be considered legal advice. You may wish to obtain independent legal advice if your organisation has concerns about obligations under law.

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## What is a needs analysis?

To develop a Workplace Mental Health Strategy or address the 3 pillars of the NMHC’s *Blueprint for Mentally Healthy Workplaces* – as outlined in the sourcing [mentally healthy workplace supports module](https://beta.mentallyhealthyworkplaces.gov.au/explore-modules/mentally-healthy-policy-and-practice/sourcing-mentally-healthy-workplace-supports) – it is important to understand your organisation’s mental health needs. A needs analysis is a way of extracting information about your organisation’s needs, and how you can address them. A needs analysis involves the following steps:

1. Understand the future state that you are striving to achieve – developing a Workplace Mental Health Strategy or plan to align to the Blueprint pillars will drive what the future state looks like.
2. Review your organisation’s current state relating to mental health – what is working, what isn’t working and why.
3. Undertake a gap analysis to determine the gaps between the future state and the current state and the steps needed to close the gaps.

The framework below outlines the 3 steps of a needs analysis. Use it to determine what mental health supports your workforce needs and whether you need to procure them.

## Step 1 – Understand future state

The first step is understanding what your organisation’s workplace mental health will look like in the future. You need to consult, or develop, a Workplace Mental Health Strategy or a plan that aligns with the Blueprint pillars. The guide explains what a Workplace Mental Health Strategy is, what the Blueprint pillars are and how they can help your organisation create a mentally healthy workplace. The guide introduction has more details.

Developing a strategy or plan determines the desired future state or goals for your workplace. It helps you identify the supports your organisation needs to create a mentally healthy workplace.

## Step 2 – Review current state

Reviewing your organisation’s mentally healthy workplace status helps determine what works well and what does not, along with understanding how and why things happen the way they are. To understand the current state, your organisation must answer the following questions:

* Are there existing mentally healthy workplace issues within the organisation? What are they? What causes them?
* Who are the stakeholders that will benefit from supports to build a mentally healthy workplace?
* What are the processes currently in place for supporting a mentally healthy workplace?
* What supports are currently in place that contribute to a mentally healthy workplace?

The data collected should provide information on:

* your organisation’s demographics, e.g. gender profile, age profile, geographic profile
* your organisation’s make up, e.g. technical staff vs non-technical staff, organisational structure, geographical locations
* the mental health supports in place, if they work and why (or why not)
* processes to manage workflow and capture data, behaviours etc across the organisation, e.g. incident reporting, access to mental health supports
* mental health issues that exist in your organisation and their causes.

You can use a variety of data collection methods to answer these questions and understand your organisation’s needs. Data collection methods can include:

* Worker forums or working groups – These approaches typically involve a group of workers from different levels who discuss the workplace mental health landscape. Data can be qualitative, quantitative or both.
* One-on-one discussions with workers – These discussions can discretely and safely help workers reveal their honest feelings and opinions about their workplace mental health experiences.
* Anonymous feedback surveys – These surveys are an efficient and effective way of receiving written responses on workers’ experiences and opinions about mental health at work.
* Wellbeing self-checks – Workers self-assess their mental health situation. These checks can occur regularly, to see if a worker’s mental health changes over time.
* Performance metrics – These can be collected from existing mental health support contracts.

The NMHC also provides guides for *Measuring Mentally Healthy Workplaces*. These guides outline how organisations can use measurement to help inform how to create a mentally healthy workplace. Data collected can also be used to inform your organisation’s mental health support needs. You can find the guides [here](https://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/projects/mentally-healthy-work/national-workplace-initiative/measuring-mentally-healthy-workplaces).

The data collected for the needs analysis must be relevant, reliable and valid:

* Relevant –The data is related to concerns you are addressing, e.g. if you are exploring the cause of high absenteeism in the workforce, look for data sources that directly address this issue.
* Reliable – The data is from a trusted source and the metrics are correct, e.g. look for metrics from a credible source such as an HR system.
* Valid – The data is correctly formatted and stored.

Most importantly, confidentiality is crucial here. Data must be stored in accordance with relevant confidentiality and privacy legislation and policies.

## Step 3 – Gap analysis

When you understand what works well and what does not, how and why, the next step is to determine the gaps between current state and future and how to close those gaps. This process is called a gap analysis.

The guide outlines how to undertake a gap analysis. Once these gaps are identified, your organisation can determine what you need to close them, using a range of methodologies:

* consulting with HR representatives
* seeking external mental health expertise
* speaking with the workforce to hear their thoughts and suggestions.

Once your organisation has identified what it needs, the next step is to determine how to fill that need. For instance, can it be delivered through in-house resources (e.g. additional processes or communication relating to existing mental health supports) or does your organisation need to procure new or additional mental supports?

If procurement is required, then a market analysis helps identify what supports are available. The guide explains how to undertake a market analysis.

When considering potential mental health supports that are available in the market, make sure you also gather and consider evidence about the supports’ quality and effectiveness (e.g. qualifications, scientific research, referee reports).

# Glossary of terms

**Contract** – An undertaking by one person to do something or refrain from doing something if another person does something or refrains from doing something or makes a promise in return in a legally binding manner. A contract may be entered into either in writing or orally.

**Current state** – The state that your organisation is currently at, such as having presenteeism at 20%.

**Desktop market scan** – Use of external information, reports and data from the market that will support the organisation’s sourcing activities. (Also referred to as market analysis.)

**Future state** –The state that your organisation desires to be at, such as having presenteeism at 0%.

**Gap analysis** – Comparison of what has been achieved against what was targeted or planned (e.g. in the project initiation document and project plan). It can be applied to budget, scope, schedule and project deliverables.

**Market analysis** – See ‘desktop market scan’.

**Needs analysis** – An assessment to determine a true demand exists for the goods, services or works being purchased, and to identify the most environmentally efficient way of meeting that need.

**Performance management** – Getting better results by improving the outputs from individuals and teams

**Procurement** – Every activity involved in acquiring goods, services and/or works either outright or by lease (through to subsequent disposal or lease termination)

**Procurement activities** – The procurement team oversees the steps of the procurement cycle, covering core activities such as market analysis, sourcing, negotiation, contracting and supplier relationship management for goods, works and services, covering both acquisitions from third parties and in-house providers. The process spans the whole procurement cycle from identifying needs, through to the end of a service contract or the end of an asset’s useful life.