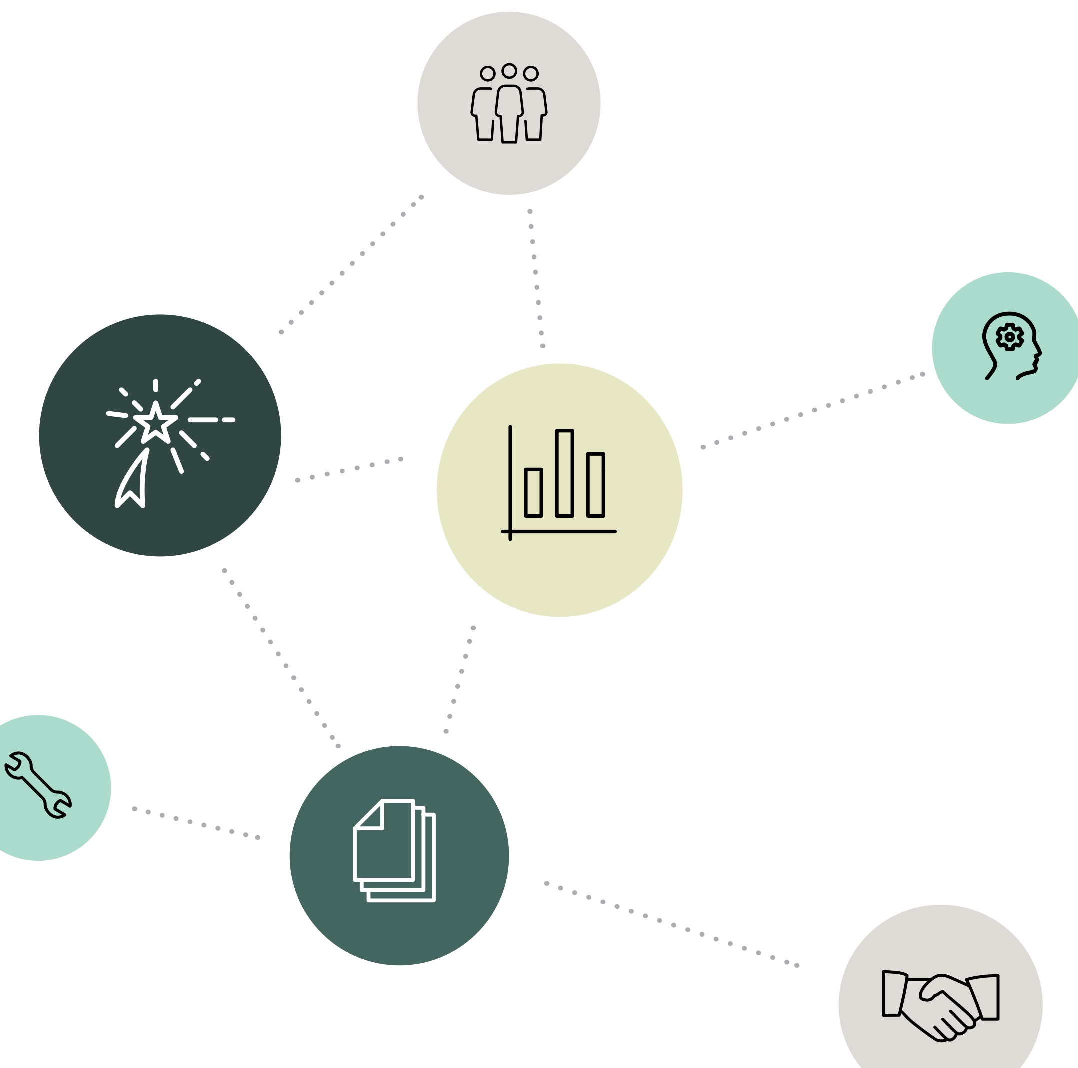
A BRIEF GUIDE

ATLAS INSTITUTE FOR VETERANS AND FAMILIES

MAPPING YOUR ASSETS

LOOKING THROUGH A NEW LENS



WHAT IS ASSET MAPPING?

Asset mapping is the process of identifying and listing assets as an inventory of resources available to the community. An asset map enables the community to start to use the assets to address the community's needs and improve their health.[16]

Asset mapping has its roots in community development, where is has been shown to be effective, but the practice can be applied to other settings, such as healthcare.[3-6]

What is a health asset?

The World Health Organization defines a health asset as, "any factor or resource which enhances the ability of individuals, communities and populations to maintain and sustain health and well-being and to help reduce health inequalities."[2] This includes health assets that are tangible (e.g., practice, programs, policies), but also those that are intangible (e.g., vision, philosophy, values, human and intellectual capital).[7]

What are the benefits of asset mapping?

Mapping your organization's assets allows you to see what resources are already available to support your workforce in relation to a key area of concern.[8] By starting with what you do have, rather than what you don't, you can create more effective and relevant solutions.[2,5]

Having a map of available assets is beneficial in many other ways:

- To raise awareness of services.[9]
- To increase use of existing services.[9]
- In building partnership and collaboration.[9]
- To challenge your perception about how others may see and experience the same organization.[5]
- In planning for the development of additional support, in an informed way.[8]

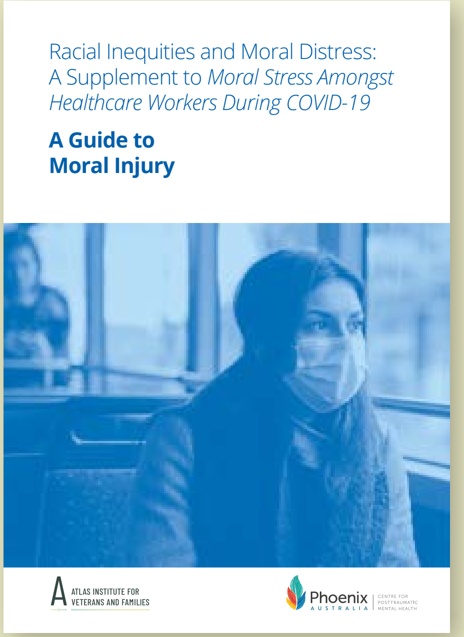
Why we recommend mapping your assets now.

Organizations and leaders are attuned to many factors to keep staff safe, both physically and psychologically. When an issue arises that is new, or less familiar, it can be tempting to find a fresh solution, instead of first looking at what exists that could be further promoted or leveraged in a different way. The rising awareness of moral injury, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, may be such a circumstance. Understanding what assets you already have will help your organization to move quickly on those in place, to identify where there are gaps, and to offer targeted support to your staff.

MAPPING YOUR ASSETS AGAINST THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE MORAL INJURY GUIDE

The Centre of Excellence on PTSD, along with Phoenix Australia, lays out recommendations that are specific to preventing and addressing moral injury at the organizational, team leader, and individual level, in ***Moral Stress Amongst Healthcare Workers during COVID-19: A Guide to Moral Injury***. Mapping your organization's assets, through the lens of the recommendations laid out in A Guide to Moral Injury, can support you to address and protect against moral injury in your colleagues and staff.

As you read through the recommendations summarized below, you may note that you already make use of some, but hadn't considered them in relation to moral injury. There may also be some recommendations that are not in place, or not as robust as they could be. If this is the case, your organization may want to consider introducing or augmenting those assets.



Steps that organizations can take:	Steps that team leaders can take:
• Recognize possible moral stressors staff face due to COVID-19. • Promote a supportive culture, including supportive services, for staff. • Ensure there are adequate resources to support the health and safety of informal and volunteer service providers, who also play an important role in health care. • Rotate staff between high and low stress roles. • Establish policies to guide staff through ethically difficult decisions. • Remove ethically difficult decisions from frontline workers. • Arrange rosters for shift workers, with a cycle of morning to afternoon to evening shifts, when possible.	• Provide strong leadership and establish cohesive teams with high morale. • Be prepared to discuss moral and ethical challenges. • Support team members to understand moral stressors. • Model positive coping and encourage self-care and help-seeking, as needed. • Celebrate successes, large and small. • Arrange regular check-ins with staff to monitor well-being. • Facilitate referrals for further support or counselling, if required.

YOU'VE CONVINCED ME, HOW DO I DO IT? [2, 5, 7-9, 11-15]

The steps below outline a basic process and key considerations as you map your assets.

STEP 1

CREATE A TEAM

Create a team to guide the asset-mapping process. Include representation from varied departments, roles, professions, locations, and cultures. Having diverse perspectives will provide you with more opportunity to create a representative process and result in an inclusive asset map. Some considerations for pulling a team together:

Group size

There is no perfect group size, it will depend on your circumstance and organization. Think about availability for meetings, representation, expertise required, and how many people you need to get the work done. You can always involve people outside the core team, as needed.

Expectations for members

Consider the timeline for your project and the time commitment expected for group members to attend meetings and to complete tasks outside of meetings.

Designated leader(s)

Consider roles and responsibilities within the team. Determine who is accountable for this project, and who will guide the team.

Existing groups

Consider if there are any existing committees within your organization that would be well-positioned to take on and champion this project. For example, for an asset map related to moral injury, you may have a health and wellness committee that you could leverage. If a group exists, consider if it would need to be supplemented with other members. If so, who and what would they contribute?

STEP 2

DETERMINE YOUR PURPOSE

Asset mapping can be as big or as small as you need, depending on the purpose. Defining the scope is key. As you plan, consider the following:

What question(s) are you trying to answer?

You may want to look at the recommendations from *Moral Stress Amongst Healthcare Workers during COVID-19: A Guide to Moral Injury* that are listed above and map your assets against all of them, or you might want to focus on one or two.

For example, if you want to understand how your organization creates a supportive culture you may choose a more complete process that maps your assets against the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace. This would provide a thorough understanding of what assets are available.

Or perhaps, you want to start smaller and understand only what assets exist to address moral and ethical challenges.

Whatever your choice, be clear about what question(s) you are seeking to answer in order to clearly contain the scope of the project.

What outcome are you trying to achieve?

In addition to being clear about what question you are trying to answer, determine from the beginning why your organization is undertaking this work. What do you expect will change once the mapping is completed? Sometimes, beginning with the end in mind can help you to further refine the scope and make project goals clear.

What parameters are you placing on the project?

Organizations come in all types of configurations. It can be helpful to think about the parameters you are placing on this map before you get started. For example, if you have staff in more than one location, you may need to define if you are mapping for all locations or just one.

How much time can you dedicate?

If the objective is too grand to complete in the time available, you may need to rethink the scope, extend the timelines for the project, or bring on additional help.

What resources do you need?

Assess if you have all the resources (financial, physical, IT, and human) required to achieve the objective. For example, depending on your methodology you may require particular software or financial resources to host workshops or meetings.

What will you do with the results?

Determine, from the beginning, how your organization intends to use the map. A criticism of asset mapping is that, often, once the asset map is done, little happens with it. Ideally, you will use the map to identify gaps and inform the planning of future initiatives required to address the particular issue. If there are no gaps, then it can inform a communication strategy to tell the story of what you already have.

What barriers or risks might you encounter and how can you mitigate them?

Risks and barriers may become more apparent after you choose a methodology, but they are important to consider from the beginning. For example, if you want to involve many staff in developing your asset map, this may be a risk to your timeline and require consideration from the beginning.

STEP 3

IDENTIFY YOUR STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR ROLES

In its purest form, asset mapping is a community driven process that provides an opportunity to unite people around a collective cause.[5] The more people you can involve, the more clear it will be what your true assets are, and they might not always be what first comes to mind. Given this, make your initial project team list as inclusive as possible. You can always refine it later.

Who, outside of your core team, do you need to involve?

Using your questions and intended outcomes as a foundation, brainstorm a list of who you need to involve in the development of your asset map.

How will each stakeholder contribute?

Looking at your list, consider how you see each stakeholder participating. Specifically, think about how their expertise would support the development of your asset map and where it would be might be best to involve them in the process. Remember that as you refine your process, it may spark further ideas for who you want to involve and how. Be open to this.

What challenges can you anticipate?

As with any project that contains many moving parts, you may encounter challenges when stakeholders are involved.

For example, some stakeholders may have concerns about the time commitment, or it could be logistically difficult to involve stakeholders from multiple locations.

Try to identify the potential challenges of working with stakeholders before starting, so you can build mitigation strategies into the process. For example, to quell any concerns about time commitment, be clear from the outset, not only how much time will be required, but also when you will be engaging them.

STEP 4

PLAN FOR INFORMATION-GATHERING

Gathering information about assets can be done in a number of different ways and, as with anything, there are pros and cons to each approach. Depending on the complexity of the project, you may want to use more than one type of collection mechanism.

For each collection method you use, consider what questions that method will answer, which stakeholders will be involved, in what order the collection methods will occur, and where/how you will store the data you collect.

How staff-driven will your collection method be?

In other words, will it be bottom up where a broad representation of staff and management generate a list of assets, or will it be top down where your team pulls together an initial list and then goes out more widely to staff to validate? Or maybe a hybrid of the two (e.g., initial staff and management workshop with broader staff validation)? This consideration is important because what you decide is likely to impact the methodology you choose and the outcomes you can hope for. Key strengths for each approach are outlined below:

Driven by a small team, with validation from staff:

- Can lead to discovery of unexpected assets, (e.g., individual assets), and the opportunity to learn from one another.
- Less biased by pre-conceptions of what an asset is.
- More likely to identify true assets initially as they are community-generated.
- Engaging people early can foster buy-in regarding the need to address this topic.

Driven by staff and management:

- Allows for more control over the types of assets that are identified.
- Ability to validate with a large group of staff and management.
- Less time-consuming.

What methods or combination of methods can you use to gather the information?

Workshops: Workshops provide an opportunity for members of your organization to come together and collectively generate a list of assets or to validate existing lists. They can be virtual or in-person and can take a variety of formats. For example, check out these examples from an interprofessional healthcare workshop to identify intangible assets and a community-engaged mapping event. Workshops also allow you to go beyond the initial asset map and work with participants to identify areas for growth and action planning. However, workshops are time consuming to organize and if you have a large organization it can be hard to engage everyone you want to.

Interviews: Interviews offer an opportunity to go deeper into a topic and can be particularly useful to understand available assets on a specialized topic. For instance, if the question your asset map is addressing is specific to supports around ethics and you have access to an ethicist in your organization, it may be valuable to meet with them to understand exactly what assets you have available to you. Who you choose to interview will be dependent on what question your asset map is looking to address.

Surveys: While surveys aren't particularly engaging or helpful for building community, they can allow you to gather a large amount of information in a relatively short period of time. This is particularly useful in large organizations. It may also be a way to validate asset lists collected using other methodologies.

Document/website review: Document and website review can be a useful method to start with, if you plan to first gather assets yourself and engage the community to validate them. (e.g., internal websites, employee survey results, etc.)

Spreadsheets/documents that can be populated asynchronously: Asynchronous asset collection can be a helpful method if you want those with access to see what others have added and build upon that content. It allows for a more iterative experience than a survey. (e.g., SharePoint, Google docs)

STEP 5

"MAP" WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED

Traditionally, when an asset map is developed for a community, the geographical locations of assets are shown on a map. This isn't an ideal format for organizations, so you may be need to be creative in how you lay out your findings. The key is to synthesize all of the information you have gathered and make it meaningful to your audience.

This may mean grouping assets into categories like your objectives, staff needs, departments, or any others that emerge when you look at your list of collected assets. For example, if you were identifying assets to answer a relatively simple question (e.g., How does our organization address moral and ethical challenges?) the list of resulting assets may be short. In that case, it might be enough to just share the list through an email to those who need to know. However, if the question you are answering is more extensive (e.g., How does our organization support staff's psychological health and well-being?) you may find the list of assets to be quite lengthy. In this case, it can be helpful to theme the assets into key categories or topic areas (e.g., human resources, policies, programs, communications, etc.) before determining how you will mobilize what you have found.

STEP 6

MOBILIZE THE FINDINGS

Once you've completed the work, and you know what your assets are and where the gaps may be, it's time to get the information out there to staff and any other people who need it.

Consider how you want to share it and who you want to share it with. Contemplate what information each audience needs to know and why they need to know it. For example, does everyone need to know all of the assets that are available, all of the gaps, or just some of the information? What might you want to tell them about next steps for the project? What modality will you use for each of your audiences? Are there any existing mechanisms you can leverage to share information (e.g., 1:1 meetings, team meetings, newsletters, blogs, intranet, etc.)?

If you have access to a communications team, it would be great to involve them as they may have ideas on how to promote these assets through various channels.

STEP 7

EVALUATE THE PROCESS

Ideally, you will think about an evaluation in the broader scope of your project (find tips for how to do this and why it's needed in Section 5), but it is also important to evaluate the work at each step of the process.

As you think about how to evaluate this portion of your project, think about how you will measure both the outcomes and also the asset-mapping process itself. For example, you could consider completing a process retrospective, and/or reporting on relevant outputs (e.g., who was involved at each stage, who received the completed asset map, who shared the asset map). Outcomes could include measuring the changes in people's awareness of moral injury, awareness of the available assets to address it, and capturing any additional initiatives to address moral injury that resulted from the asset-mapping process itself.

SUMMARY

Asset mapping is a helpful exercise to undertake when you are faced with a new issue or priority, like addressing moral injury, and aren't sure where to start. Often, organizations already have tools or supports at the ready but haven't looked at them with that particular lens. It also allows you to highlight gaps and move forward in a way that doesn't leave you duplicating work or efforts.

It is key to remember that asset mapping is a place to start but it shouldn't be where you finish. Make sure you consider how you will use your asset map to identify what you need to do, or can do next, to continue the conversation of moral injury within your organization.

Other sections of this toolkit will give you guidance on how to use your asset map to its fullest potential to plan future initiatives.

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