

BE CHILL CPD - A doctor's continuing professional development & well-being retreat on stress reduction and burnout prevention

Do you need some help to complete your CPD?

Would you like to make CPD fun, relaxing, useful & empowering?

Fancy a chilled-out weekend beachside escape?

Are you into surfing or fancy giving it a red-hot go?

Make this November a happy one with yoga, mindfulness, time to rest, ocean views, and plenty of CPD!

Treat yourself and your career to a fresh new approach to continuing professional development. Step away from the demands of medicine and into a weekend designed just for you—a space to rest, laugh, learn, and reconnect with what truly matters. Come with friends and family or alone and make new ones. This retreat is designed by registered doctors for registered doctors to support CPD that makes an impact and supports doctor well-being

Join us Friday 13th- Sunday 15th November 2026, Caves Coastal, Caves Beach NSW



What to expect

This will be a chilled weekend of relaxation, restoration, laughter, smiles, and connection. Bring friends and/or make new ones through personal and professional growth - enjoy learning from each other. There will be plenty of time for networking and learning from like-minded peers. You'll enjoy shared wisdom, and the chance to learn powerful skills to prevent burnout and manage stress in a sustainable, restorative way. Soak up the laid-back vibe where judgments and expectations are left behind to foster compassionate self-awareness for personal growth. Everything is optional, so you can tailor your attendance to suit your needs. Need a nap or beach run? No worries, we will see you at the next session - it's all good; just do what you need. Enjoy breaks at the beach and immerse yourself in the soothing sounds of the waves and glorious views. Plenty of included yoga is on offer, specifically designed to promote stress reduction for doctors. Allow the flow and mat to guide you within to foster a more integrated awareness of self. It will be beginner-level with lots of stretching and breath work. The shared meals will be cozy and comforting pub grub. Expect laughter, drinks and tunes. Don't worry about dressing up too much, come casual and even in thongs!

Hear from expert, passionate speakers on stress management in medicine, burnout prevention, professional and ethical practice, cultural safety, how to professionally share and actively listen for peer review, and how to practice sustainably where you can give your heart and soul in a restorative way. The CAPE themes of CPD will be incorporated into all CPD activities. Up to 12 hours of CPD will be accrued with full attendance to the CPD activities, including the mandatory professional development plan and 5 hours of reviewing performance and measuring outcomes, making completing your minimum AHPRA CPD

requirements a breeze. Enjoy conducting a professional conversation to review your performance as a doctor & complete or review your mandatory professional development plan with expert coaching. Conduct a burnout prevention audit to leverage your practice. Be professionally supported & inspired to leave knowing yourself a little more and be able to manage yourself and your practice more masterfully.



You will learn

- Yoga for stress management and work as a doctor
- Mindfulness skills for relaxation and stress reduction
- How to professionally share and actively listen for peer review as a doctor
- How to identify & prevent burnout
- Your biases and blind spots
- What is cultural safety & the CAPE requirements
- The Medical Board of Australia CPD requirements for doctors and how to meet them

Inclusions

- Talks on our CPD requirements, stress management skills & burnout
- Group CPD sessions are designed to empower, & equip you with take-home skills for well-being, stress management and burnout prevention
- Up to 12 hours CPD with 5 hours of reviewing performance, a professional conversation, completion of your professional development plan, & 5 hours of measuring outcomes
- Mindfulness and self-care sessions are incorporated into all group CPD sessions

- Delegate handouts with CPD templates to complete & upload into your CPD home, along with take-home skills & other resources
- Enjoy daily sessions of gentle yoga and stretching, yoga and relaxation, and mindfulness practice with one of Newcastle's best yoga teachers, Melanie Dawson. If the weather permits, we might do it on the grass outside or on the beach! Don't forget to bring your mat and comfy yoga gear
- Welcome afternoon tea, Friday evening welcome drinks and bistro 2-course dinner at Caves Bar and Bungalows
- Morning and afternoon tea and lunch on Saturday and Sunday are provided by the bistro team
- 2-course meal at [Mawsons](#), Caves Beach, just up the road, a short walk away on Saturday evening
- Just so you know, accommodation, surf lessons & breakfasts are not included

Exclusions

- Accommodation, travel and transfers
- Breakfasts, extra drinks and food orders not specified above
- Surf lessons

Continuing professional development

With attendance to the group CPD session & pre-reading/work, you will complete 12 hours total of CPD, with 5 hours of Reviewing Performance, including a professional conversation and the mandatory professional development plan, and 5 hours of Measuring Outcomes with a burnout prevention audit. All activities embed ethical practice, cultural safety and professional behaviours. Attendance to all group sessions aims to support your minimum CPD requirements. We don't want you to stress, & we do want more for you than a tick-box experience. Following the retreat, you will be set up with optional self-directed CPD activities. Give yourself the gift of making CPD easy, useful & joyful.

Location

The stunning coastal town of [Caves Beach](#) is home to one of Australia's top-ranked beaches. It secured the 9th spot on the "Best Australian Beaches" list, according to Tourism Australia. See for yourself what all the fuss is about. Bring your surfboard, swimmers and joggers. Explore all the coast has to offer with walking tracks for days, beginner and advanced surf spots, caves to explore and a flat white sand beach to roam or lie down on and breathe. Caves Beach has a few lovely cafes and dining spots, including Mawsons, Caves Bar, and Bungalows. Just over an hour from Sydney and Newcastle Airport, Caves is conveniently and ideally placed for a weekend escape. There are plenty of kid-friendly activities around and playgrounds, so you can extend the visit and even make it a family holiday. Caves Beach is 40 minutes from Newcastle, making exploring the town a fun option too! Other close and divine spots to investigate include Blacksmiths and Redhead

Beach, Catherine Hill Bay and Murrays Beach, Pelican and Naru. The Swansea Channel opens up into spectacular Warners Bay, so if you love Lake life, you will love this area.



Surfing at Caves Beach

If you love surfing or fancy having a try, there is time the Friday before or the Sunday after the retreat to jump into the green or the salty white waves. You can book a lesson with one of Caves Beach's excellent providers. You can head into town and catch a wave with the Newcastle locals at Nobbys, Merewether or Newcastle beaches, but there is no need to drive all that way! Caves Beach, renowned for its distinctive cave formations and dynamic waves, offers a surfing experience like no other in Newcastle. As a prominent location for [Newcastle Surf School](#), Women's, and [Learn to Surf Newcastle](#), it provides a blend of natural beauty and exciting surf challenges, making it a favorite among both beginners and seasoned surfers. For those new to the sport, the surf lessons at Caves Beach offer a comprehensive introduction, ensuring that every beginner grasps the basics while enjoying the beach's unique landscape. Whether you're just starting out or looking to refine your skills, a surf lesson at Caves Beach promises an adventure that's both thrilling and memorable. Don't have a board or wetsuit? No, worries these guys will provide for you. Coming with friends or family? Book them in too!



Accommodation

[Caves Coastal](#) offers a range of accommodation options onsite nestled in the dunes of Caves Beach. Whether you travel alone and soak up some much-needed downtime, come as a couple or bring the whole family, Caves Coastal has townhouses, bungalows and villas to suit. Embrace the perfect combination of location, elegance, and comfort, surrounded by the natural beauty of coastal greenery and expansive ocean views. This beachside haven offers white sandy beaches, a restaurant, and a bar, all just steps from your deck, providing the perfect backdrop for your getaway. You can book direct through the hotel. Delegates can receive a 15% discount off the best available rate for accommodation booked directly through the Caves Bungalow [accommodation team](#) by calling reception on 02 4980 9999. They have 16 individual bungalows and other larger 2-3 bedroom options. If you would like to share accommodation with an attending friend or put your name down to share with another event delegate please let the accommodation team know. Please note all available onsite accommodation has been placed on hold for this event until 1st August. So please book asap to avoid missing out on their special discount.

There are also onsite accommodation options and many local options through [Weekender](#) and Air BnB. [Weekender](#) will offer 5% discount if you book with them (code: **BECHILLCPD5**) for stay of 2 nights minimum, redemption between 10/11/26 until 17/11/26

But you needn't stay onsite; and can find your own place to stay. Just be sure to keep close so you're not fussed by travel. We recommend nearby [Raferty's Resort and Squid Ink Motel Belmont](#), and the [QT](#), [Kingsley](#), [Rydges](#) and [Novotel](#) in Newcastle.



VENUE

Caves Coastal is the go-to for a change of pace from city boardrooms. Located on the beach, the venue is framed by breathtaking beach views. This venue turns CPD meetings into something more than the usual. It's the perfect blend of business and laidback leisure. In a space where the ocean is your backdrop, the beachside conference halls offer a comfortable escape, encouraging a clear mind for reflection, peer review and self-care. The event space is filled with natural light and designed with simplicity in mind. With the bar and bistro next door, it makes refuelling easy peasy! This venue is chilled and humble. There is no pretension, just welcoming smiles and relaxed vibes. It is a family-friendly venue with an outdoor playground. There is plenty of outdoor dining, and the deck is the ideal spot to unwind and enjoy great company, with live tunes and a relaxed, beachy atmosphere. Come and experience coastal hospitality at its best. With a spotlight on the freshest ingredients, the menu has something for everyone. The seasonal menus ensure a cozy and memorable dining experience throughout the year. Discover the delights of modern Australian cuisine at [Caves Coastal](#), served up with the stunning scenery of Caves Beach as your backdrop. Expect a chilled and easy few days.



What to bring

The dress code is easy and casual- you can even wear sandals or thongs. But feel free to get fancy for dinner and drinks if you are sick of scrubs and keen to wear normal clothes for once. Don't forget your swimmers, joggers, hat, and if you plan to partake in yoga, don't forget to pack comfy yoga clothes, your mat and any other props you may need (we won't supply mats). Bring your laptop or other smart device with access to your CPD home. But most importantly, bring self-compassion and a willingness to permit yourself to rest, relax and have some fun.

PROGRAM (subject to change)

Friday 13th November - Check-in and check-out of the grind. Join the optional well-being activities or head to the beach and do your own thing!

230 pm Arrivals & afternoon tea - Meet your new friends over coffee & cake

4 pm: Optional gentle yoga and relaxation

5 pm: Welcome circle and mindfulness skills practice,

6 pm: Welcome drinks i

7 pm: 2-course dinner at Caves Bar and Bistro

830 pm: quiet time & self-directed reflection activity (or kick on at the bar)

Saturday 14th November - Reviewing Performance

830 am: Optional yoga and stretch

915 am: Optional beach walk
10 am: Group CPD session: 2025 CPD requirements, Professional sharing and listening for reviewing performance
1115 am: Morning tea break
1130 am: Group CPD session: reviewing your performance and a professional conversation i
1 pm: Lunch is provided by the Caves Coastal Bistro. Take it away and sit on the beach if you prefer!
2 pm: Group CPD session: complete or review your professional development plan
4 pm: Optional yoga and relaxation
445 pm: Optional beach sunset walk
7 pm: 2-course dinner at Mawsons, Caves Beach just a short walk up the road.
830 pm: quiet time & self-directed reflection activity (or keep chatting at Mason's!)

Sunday 15th November - Measuring Outcomes

8 am: Optional yoga and stretch
9 am: Group CPD session: burnout prevention audit
11 am: Morning tea break
1130 am: Group CPD session: burnout prevention audit
1 pm: lunch
2 pm: Close & time to explore the caves before you head home (or stay longer and make a vacay of it - you wont regret it).

GUEST FACILITATORS

Dr. Sancha Robinson is a specialist anaesthetist and certified professional coach based in Newcastle, Australia. Her career bridges clinical excellence, medical education, and physician development, with a core focus on improving both patient care and the well-being of doctors. Dr Robinson earned her medical degree in London in 2003, gaining her Fellowship with the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (FANZCA) in 2013. She has postgraduate qualifications in both Medical and Perioperative Education and has developed clinical expertise in perioperative medicine, gynaecological oncology, colorectal surgery, and vascular interventional procedures. As an anaesthetist in the public system, Sancha champions patient-centred initiatives, including Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) pathways. She also contributes to translational research and continues to support clinical training as an educator. Her journey into coaching began during her role as an ANZCA Supervisor of Training, where she witnessed the powerful impact of mentorship. This inspired her to formally train as a coach, completing multiple certifications, including a Master Certified Physician Development Coach through the Physician Coaching Institute (USA), and attaining her Professional Certified Coach (PCC) credential with the International Coaching Federation in 2024. Her “Lighthouse Coaching Philosophy” centres on values-driven living, strengths-based growth, and positive reframing. She believes coaching amplifies impact, stating, “When I give an anaesthetic, I help one patient; when I coach, I serve tens of thousands.” Her vision is to embed coaching into the medical culture, empowering doctors to thrive and, in turn, enhance the care they deliver.



Dr. Jo Braid is a consultant Rehabilitation Physician with over 20 years of clinical experience in neuro-rehabilitation and a nationally recognised expert in burnout recovery for healthcare professionals. Based in Orange, NSW, she is an award-winning coach, keynote speaker, and host of [The Burnout Recovery Podcast](#), where she shares practical, evidence-based strategies to help professionals reclaim well-being and purpose. Combining her deep knowledge of brain science with a passion for mental health, Dr. Braid empowers individuals and teams to move from survival to sustainable success. She offers a range of transformational services, including interactive keynotes, personalised coaching, and flexible online programs designed to support lasting change. Dr. Braid also contributes to the profession through her leadership roles as a Non-Executive Director of the Rehabilitation Medicine Society of Australia and New Zealand and as a Council Member of the Medical Benevolent Association of NSW. Known for her warm presence, clarity of communication, and deep commitment to healthcare wellbeing, Dr. Braid is a leading voice in the movement toward a more compassionate and resilient medical culture. She is also one of Dr Ward's dear friends :)



The very kind and gentle Melanie Dawson is a seasoned mental health professional and yoga teacher with over 30 years of experience supporting individuals, families, and professionals through life's most challenging moments. With a background in psychology and postgraduate training in evidence-based therapies including CBT, narrative therapy, and family systems approaches, Melanie has worked across Australia and New Zealand in counselling, case management, rehabilitation, and group facilitation roles. Her clinical career has spanned diverse settings—from supporting families at women's refuges and working in school counselling to leading functional family therapy teams and delivering trauma-informed care to frontline professionals in the NSW Police and Department of Education. In 2013, Melanie took a transformative step by integrating her passion for holistic wellbeing with her professional expertise, becoming a qualified yoga teacher. She has since completed training in Power, Hatha, and Yin Yoga, the latter under world-renowned teacher Jo Phee. Her teaching journey includes running yoga retreats in Bali, collaborating on yoga and mental health workshops, and more recently, partnering with Newcastle Surf School to deliver yoga and surf weekends in beautiful Caves Beach. Her yoga classes are grounded in mental health awareness, offering participants a chance to reconnect with their bodies, reduce stress, and return to a more calm and mindful way of being. Now based in Redhead Beach with her two teenage children, Melanie brings a unique depth to both her counselling and yoga work, informed by her own lived experience of anxiety, grief, and work-related stress. She is passionate about supporting others to balance demanding work lives with compassionate self-care, and helping professionals avoid burnout through sustainable, body-aware practices. Melanie creates spaces for real healing, human connection, and lasting transformation in a therapy room or on a yoga mat. Allow Melanie to guide you inward and nurture your whole self with yoga specifically designed for doctors and stress management. She is also one of Dr Ward's favourite yoga teachers!



HOST

Dr Susannah Ward is a Specialist Physician of Rehabilitation Medicine. She was awarded the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) fellowship Basmajian Prize in 2018. She has a special interest in well-being and is passionate about holistic health. She has been involved in research piloting wellness and mindfulness sessions in hospitals and was awarded the Advancement in Medicine Grant with Avant in 2018. She enjoys medical writing with several publications on health professional wellness and is a published author of the self-help book [Mastering Real Wellness](#). In addition to her clinical work, she founded [Ataraxia Collective](#), a health and wellness business offering doctor CPD & wellbeing retreats, well-being workshops and a blog. She is an accredited yoga teacher RYT200 with Yoga Alliance. She was a board director for the RACP 2016-2018 and is the [Chair of the Member Health & Wellbeing Committee \(RACP\)](#), Chair of RACP Wellbeing Advocates, & director for Mood Active a NFP that promotes exercise as a mental health intervention. Dr Ward hopes to encourage a compassionate and mindful medical culture that supports holistic health for patients and health professionals.



* PLEASE NOTE: ATTENDANCE TO RETREAT ACTIVITIES ARE STRICTLY FOR DELEGATES ONLY; YOU ARE WELCOME TO TRAVEL & STAY WITH FAMILY & FRIENDS, BUT ALL RETREAT OFFERINGS ARE FOR THE GUEST DOCTORS ONLY; THE PROGRAM & ALL ACTIVITIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE; ACCOMMODATION, SURFING AND BREAKFAST ARE NOT INCLUDED; IT IS THE DISCRETION OF DELEGATES TO ALLOCATE ACTIVITIES AND MEET THEIR CPD HOME REQUIREMENTS BUT WE ARE HERE TO HELP!!!!

ANY QUESTIONS? FLICK US A MESSAGE
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[TERMS & CONDITIONS](#)

