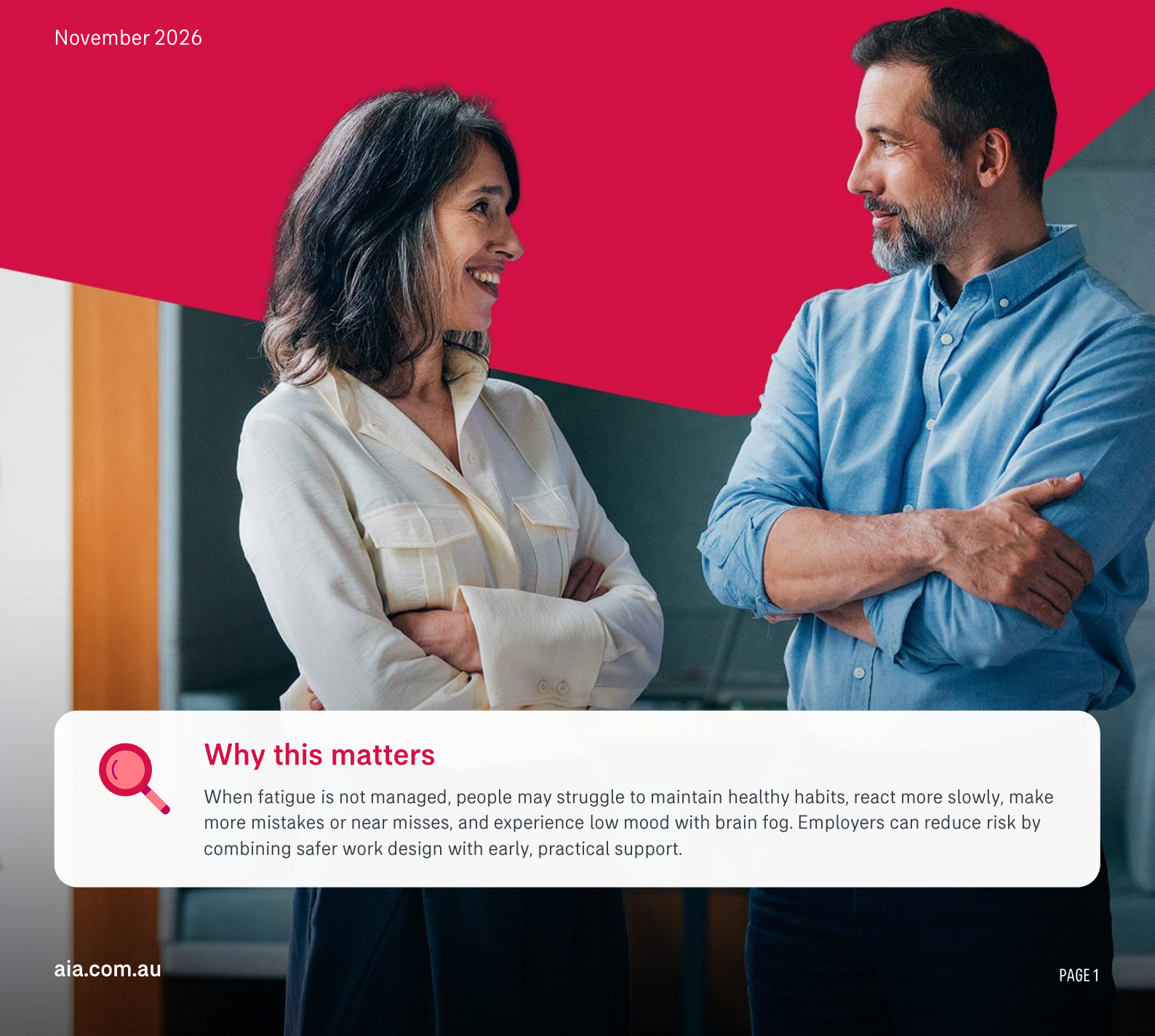
SHIFT WORK & FATIGUE

Practical Actions for Safer Shift Work

Fatigue is not a personal weakness. Shift work creates sleep pressure and moves the body clock out of alignment, affecting mood, alertness, concentration, decision-making and recovery.

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Why this matters

When fatigue is not managed, people may struggle to maintain healthy habits, react more slowly, make more mistakes or near misses, and experience low mood with brain fog. Employers can reduce risk by combining safer work design with early, practical support.

Workplace Actions

What employers can put in place



Design rosters around recovery

Provide adequate recovery between shifts. Review extended hours and consecutive night shifts and build in flexibility where operations allow.



Notice changes and check in early

Watch for reduced concentration, mistakes, near misses, withdrawal or absenteeism. Ask how the person is coping and focus on support, not diagnosis.



Build fatigue awareness

Promote education that helps employees understand and manage the health impacts of shift work. Encourage open conversations about managing fatigue to stay well.

Personal Management

What employees can do themselves



Protect your sleep window

Create a repeatable wind-down routine. Keep the room cool, dark and quiet, reduce bright light before sleep and use caffeine earlier in the shift rather than close to planned sleep.



Use movement as a recovery tool

Plan realistic activity around sleep and shifts. Use short movement breaks for alertness and keep a Plan B for low-energy days.



Act early when something changes

Seek support if sleepiness, mood changes or concentration problems persist, or if there are microsleeps, near misses or difficulty staying awake while driving.



Need support?

Explore AIA Embrace programs for insured HESTA members, including links to My Psychologist.

Visit AIA Embrace

Access to services varies by insurance policy. Members can confirm eligibility with their super fund.

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