Dr David Bell is a psychiatrist who works in a range of positions. These include as the psychiatrist for the Lower North Shore Community and Crisis Mental Health team at Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney, as a clinical lecturer at the University of Sydney and running a small private practice. He also flies weekly to Narrabri and Moree in the north-west of New South Wales as a visiting medical officer. A previous career as a military engineer helps provide an interesting experience mix.

David’s interest in humour derives from the search for the establishment of meaningful connections between health workers and those suffering from mental illness. Bringing together the complexities of the mind, particularly in relation to mental illness, with the breadth and depth of humour, produces fascinating and powerful insights into human relations. David has conducted extensive research into humour, including a world first randomised controlled trial on the effects of humour on therapeutic engagement on an acute mental health ward.

In the rural settings where he works, David is endeavouring to inspire creativity and a focus on the individual amongst the grind of the health system and its impersonal nature. With limited health resources and the enormous difficulties rural populations face, the power of strong connections in health settings, assisted by the power of humour, can help people suffering get better.