

# Best-Practice Studies

A large number of Australian organisations have implemented highly successful workplace health programs and are reaping the benefits. A brief snapshot of award-winning and best-practice programs is outlined.

# Case Study

## Forestry Plantations

### Queensland (FPQ)

Forestry Plantations Queensland began their Workplace Health Program in 2005, and is accessible to all business units across Queensland. The program consists of an onsite health and medical assessment conducted by an Exercise Physiologist and Doctor including body composition, blood pressure, cholesterol, blood glucose, cardiac risk assessment, skin cancer check, flu vaccination, bowel cancer screening and vision test.

Further advice and support is conducted through the lifestyle coaching program where participants receive follow up phone calls and written action plans to ensure appropriate follow up and lifestyle modifications were understood and adopted. The follow up lifestyle coaching program is categorised according to the participant's **health risk status; those at higher risk are contacted more often than those with lower risk.**

All the above information is then compiled into a corporate report that compares previous years to demonstrate health improvements attained. With an average participation rate of 70% in both the health and medical assessments and skin cancer checks, the program has resulted in positive benefits for both FPQ and employees, including a reduction in cardiovascular risk factors (overweight/obesity, smoking prevalence, systolic blood pressure), and referral for skin cancer investigations (e.g. 39% in 2009). This is reflected in the below quote from a thankful staff member:

"Without FPQ's health assessment program I may not have discovered the moles and the heart problem so early and things could have been much worse" Forest Ranger-in-Charge



ForestryPlantationsQueensland

# Case Study

## Boral

The Boral "BWell" Program has been in operation since 2004. This is a whole of company initiative which offers a wide range of assessment and intervention options to 10,000 employees across hundreds of sites within Australia. The program is reviewed annually with new services regularly being added to keep the program "fresh" and participation high.

The program was recognised internationally by both the Institute of Health and Productivity Management (IHPM) in the US (awards for reporting and management support) and the World Economic Forum in London (2007).

The ROI for the program runs at about 4 to 1 and there has been a significant drop in the prevalence of all major health risk factors in those employees who have participated in the program long enough to have their second health assessment. The number of employees exhibiting 3 or more risk factors has dropped by 37%.

Boral took a long term view in relation to the time frames required to produce significant outcomes. The first two years of the program focused on health literacy and understanding personal health risks – This was considered "consciousness raising" for the "Pre-contemplators". The program subsequently moved through the action and maintenance phases by focusing on different skill sets and outcomes.

The strong endorsement from senior management has ensured the "BWell" brand is highly visible and continues to be well supported both financially and philosophically within the company.

The program aligns strongly with both HR and OH&S and is considered by Boral management to be an essential component of managing an ageing workforce.



# Case Study

## Department of Public Works

**2007** - NSCA/Skilled Group Award for Excellence in OHS, 2007  
NSCA Member of the Year

**2006** - Premier's Awards for Excellence in Public Sector  
Management

The Department of Public Works 'Pathway to Better Health and Safety' Program was developed in conjunction with an external provider. The program includes comprehensive health risk assessments, flu vaccinations, ergonomic and posture care, corporate sporting events, health seminars, early intervention centre for workplace injuries or illness, and activities on a user-pay basis (e.g. massage, exercise classes).

After 5 years, the program has demonstrated a ROI of \$9 for every dollar spent through three interventions (blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose screening), together with significant other benefits including a 27% reduction in Work Cover premiums, and reduction in sickness-related absenteeism.



# Case Study

## Greenslopes Private

### Hospital, Brisbane

**Winner** – National Human Resources Award for Best Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2006, 2007 & 2009; Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI) Best Health and Wellbeing Strategy, 2009; National Work and Family Award 2005. Accredited as a World Health Organisation Health Promoting Hospital 2005

In striving to position itself as an 'employer of choice', GPH launched a Staff Wellness Program (GWP) in 2001. Following success of the initial program, a state-of-the-art Wellness Centre was launched in 2003, providing employees with a convenient facility in which to improve their health and wellbeing. The program is 'more than a gym', targeting individual wellness from a holistic perspective, together with a range of team and organisational wellness initiatives. These are subsidised or provided at no cost, and are available to GPH staff, third party staff, volunteers and family members (where applicable).

The award-winning GPH Staff Wellness Program is led by a Wellness Coordinator and facilitated by a dedicated team of wellness professionals including contractors. To ensure integration with corporate strategy, the program is driven by a Wellness Advisory Group consisting of key senior stakeholders including Hospital Executive and Human Resources, Occupational Health and Safety and Marketing Managers. The Wellness Ambassador Network, a formal network of department-based wellness 'champions' across GPH, ensures effective communication between departments and the program. Where possible, the expertise of hospital staff is also utilised in program delivery (e.g. stress management), facilitating a sense of program ownership.

The GWP has demonstrated positive impacts in the areas of staff retention and recruitment, health and safety, workforce health, hospital image, staff satisfaction and financial capability. Most importantly, they are 'walking the talk' as a health care organisation. This is reflected in the following comment from a recent staff survey:

"The whole Wellness Centre is a wonderful thing to have in the workplace. It makes me proud to be associated with GPH as it shows support for the staff in more ways than just job security."  
GPH Nurse



