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If you require this information in an alternative language or format please contact SA Health on the details provided above and they will make every effort to assist you.



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**Government
of South Australia**

SA Health

SA Health

Healthy Workers Healthy Futures



A step by step guide to developing your
workplace health and wellbeing program

This initiative was funded by the Australian Government.



Good work equals good health. Being engaged in good work has benefits for individuals, families and wider society. A workplace that provides 'good work' through positive and healthy interaction with employees creates a healthy workforce, which in turn promotes healthy business.

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SYMBOLS

You'll find these symbols throughout the toolkit to indicate that more information is available. These (plus additional tools) are available for download at:

www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/healthyworkers



There is a fact sheet for more information



Further reading is available

For further support and access to templates contact the *Healthy Workers Healthy Futures* team at HealthyWorkers@health.sa.gov.au or 8226 6329.

This National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health initiative was funded by the Australian Government.

This toolkit was written by:

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- > National Heart Foundation of Australia
- > WorkSafe Victoria
- > Beyondblue
- > Cancer Council Australia
- > Quit SA
- > Be Active: South Australian Office for Recreation and Sport
- > Health Promotion Branch, Department for Health and Ageing, SA Health.



Introducing *Healthy Workers – Healthy Futures*

Good work equals good health. Being engaged in good work has benefits for individuals, families and wider society. A workplace that provides ‘good work’ through positive and healthy interaction with employees creates a healthy workforce, which in turn promotes healthy business.

Workplaces are ideal settings for health promotion, not just because of the significant amount of time employees spend at work, but also because colleagues and organisations can be an incredibly positive support base for those trying to improve their health.^{1,2}

That support is really important, as there is strong evidence to show that where workplaces encourage employees to make small changes to their behaviour, the health of those employees does benefit, especially through reduced smoking, increased physical activity, healthy eating and stress reduction programs.²

The rise in chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease and some cancers, coupled with an ageing workforce, means that we need to make changes across society if we are to recruit and retain a healthy workforce. The *National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health* (NPAPH) initiative, funded by the Australian Government, is assisting each state to help their working population become healthier in the workplace.

Workplaces offer great potential to reach many South Australians who otherwise might not respond to health messages, access primary health care, or have time to make positive changes to their behaviour, such as participating more regularly in exercise.³ So, in South Australia, the state government has worked with industry and community stakeholders, industry associations, unions, non-government health organisations and numerous providers of health and wellbeing programs, to create the *Healthy Workers - Healthy Futures* initiative. It is designed to help organisations develop health and wellbeing policies, activities and events in the workplace so that individuals can enjoy a healthier, more active life at work and at home.

One of the initiative’s main aims is to prevent certain chronic diseases, by promoting risk reduction, quit-smoking initiatives, healthier eating, increased physical activity, and reduced alcohol consumption both in and through the workplace. Also of considerable influence is the impact that obesity and mental wellbeing can have on these risk factors and employee health. The risk factors are often referred to as ‘SNAP’ risk factors and will feature strongly throughout this toolkit.

What's the kit all about?

The *Healthy Workers – Healthy Futures* toolkit is a guiding document designed to make it easier for workplaces, large or small, to implement and manage their own health and wellbeing programs, and to strengthen existing ones. Workplaces are most likely to succeed where they use these steps to complement and expand upon other health and safety priorities within their workplace, adopting health and wellbeing standards alongside employee safety and operational practices.

Together with the *Healthy Workers – Healthy Futures* website, this toolkit provides tips and information that organisations can use to develop practical and successful programs that suit their workplace.

We know that each workplace is different and this kit has been developed with this in mind. Regardless of the size or function of an organisation, this kit will be invaluable in creating a workplace that is healthier, happier and more productive.

How do I use the toolkit?

The toolkit is designed for workplaces to get their health and wellbeing program started. The toolkit has been written for those who are responsible for the health and wellbeing program at their workplace. This includes management, business owners, health and safety representatives or other employees who have been given this responsibility.

To get the most benefit from this kit, simply read each step by step approach to:

- > Get started with management commitment and encourage the support of your workforce
- > Assess needs
- > Take action to put a health and wellbeing plan into place
and finally...
- > Evaluate its success.

While it is tempting to get right into the 'Action' stage of implementing the program, we recommend starting at Step One. The process is more likely to succeed when approached with planning and communication methods in place first.

Small businesses may find it useful to refer to our FAQ for Small Business and the Checklists at the start of each step as they contain tips and hints as to how to simplify some of the steps, to make the workplace program manageable and successful.

Still need assistance?

If you find you still need support and guidance and want to access print resources, tools and templates, see our webpages www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/healthyworkers, email us: HealthyWorkers@health.sa.gov.au or phone: 8226 6329

Healthy Workers – Healthy Futures in your workplace: Quick reference guide

It is straightforward to plan, develop, deliver and evaluate a successful *Healthy Workers - Healthy Futures* health and wellbeing program for your organisation. Successful programs go through a step by step approach. So, follow the steps below and use the recommended resources to guide your planning and success.

These fact sheets and more are available from: www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/healthyworkers

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Good health equals good business

Did you know?

- > The healthiest Australian employees are almost three times more productive and more effective than their unhealthy colleagues⁴
- > Healthy workers achieve 143 effective full-time hours per month compared with 49 effective hours for unhealthy counterparts⁴
- > Employees with poor overall health status are far more likely to be absent from work (18 days compared with two days per year)⁴
- > A 20% reduction in a person's wellbeing leads to a 10% drop in their performance. Conversely, a 20% improvement in morale leads to less absenteeism, turnover and workers compensation.⁵

What are the benefits to your business?

Employers are becoming increasingly engaged in the health of their employees, not only to be socially responsible, but also to improve workplace performance. Through properly designed workplace health and wellbeing initiatives, organisations are increasing recruitment, retention and productivity and creating a competitive edge as an employer of choice.⁶

Greater staff retention means that recruitment and training costs can be reduced. For example, replacing employees is estimated to cost a workplace between 75-150% of that employee's annual salary, leading to big costs for any business.^{6, 7, 8, 9}

Successful organisations know that investing in workplace health promotion programs makes good business sense, producing returns on investment through cost savings and increased productivity. Evidence shows that for every \$1.00 spent on programs the return on investment can range from \$1.50 up to \$5.80.² *The cost of not investing in preventive health can be immense. A report by Access Economics estimated that in South Australia in 2008 the productivity losses due to recovery from injury, work duty limitations and disability attributed to obesity reached \$273 million.^{10, 11}

Health and wellbeing programs can contribute to:

- > Improved culture of the organisation
- > Maintaining a good corporate reputation
- > Attracting talented employees to their organisation and
- > Fulfilling corporate social responsibility obligations.¹²

(*this figure relates to presenteesim, absenteeism and health care costs).

The benefits to business increase over time. A small investment now has the ability to grow into large gains. The benefits to workplaces and organisations range far beyond return on investment and although less tangible, these benefits are still highly sought after and valued. Organisations can realistically expect to see these positive changes in their workplaces.¹³

Within months	One to two years	Three to five years
Greater employee engagement	Better health knowledge	Reduced absenteeism
Improved teamwork and morale	Improved job satisfaction and productivity	Reduced injury
	Better corporate image	Reduced workers compensation costs

You don't need a large investment to receive significant gains. Positive benefits to health and costs can be attained regardless of the amount a workplace has to spend on prevention.

Put simply, if an organisation cares, and can demonstrate care for the health and wellbeing of its employees, then that organisation stands to benefit considerably.



Comcare, Canberra Australia, Benefits to business: The Evidence for Investing in Worker Health and Wellbeing.



The case for health promotion

In 2005, chronic disease led to approximately 60% of deaths worldwide, a rate that will increase according to predictions by the World Health Organisation.¹⁴

In addition, the impact of disabilities and illnesses as a result of chronic disease has significant consequences on a person's quality of life and ability to contribute within society. When translated into rates of absenteeism, chronic disease contributes to an estimated \$7 billion annual cost to Australian businesses.⁴

Fortunately, in many cases the severity and burden of chronic disease can be halted by influencing preventable risk factors. Improved nutrition, physical activity, reducing obesity, risky alcohol consumption and smoking cessation can significantly impact individual health.¹⁴

Australia-wide, almost all adults (99%) aged over 15 years have one risk factor, while most adults average three. This is an alarming statistic, especially since having multiple risk factors creates a much greater risk of some chronic diseases.¹⁵ Men are known to have a higher number of risk factors than women.¹⁶

The table below, from the 2007-08 National Health Survey, outlines some of the known links between chronic diseases and their risk factors, particularly those that are affected by lifestyle choices. By focussing on addressing these behavioural risk factors, their frequency and severity can be minimised.¹⁷

Conditions	Behavioural				Biomedical		
	Tobacco smoking	Physical inactivity	Risky alcohol consumption	Poor diet	Obesity	Hypertension ^(a)	High blood fats
Ischaemic heart disease	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Stroke	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Type 2 diabetes	✓	✓		✓	✓		
Kidney disease	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Arthritis	✓ ^(b)	✓ ^(c)			✓ ^(c)		
Osteoporosis	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Lung cancer	✓						
Colorectal cancer		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	✓						
Asthma	✓						
Depression		✓	✓		✓		
Oral health	✓		✓	✓			

(a) High blood pressure

(b) Relates to rheumatoid arthritis

(c) Relates to osteoarthritis

Note: The relationships shown above are between the causation (development of the chronic disease). They do not to reflect the determinant's role (affect) on management of the chronic disease.

Source: adapted from AIHW 2008a.

As well as chronic disease such as type two diabetes, heart disease and some cancers, the more risk factors an adult has, the more likely they are to suffer from depression. This increased risk of disability can impact on an employee's ability to perform to their potential.

By supporting and enabling employees to address the behaviours that they can change, employees are more likely to recover faster from illness, manage pre-existing health conditions and reduce their chances of developing further chronic disease.



Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, Canberra, population-wide report, Risk Factors Contributing to Chronic Disease, 2011.

The state of health: South Australian adults

South Australians enjoy one of the highest rates of life expectancy in the world, and as a result are more likely to work to an older age. It's essential that we stay healthier for longer to protect our ability to work and live an active life. However, most adults have at least one risk factor that challenges this capacity.¹⁷

The table below looks at the health and prevalence of some risk factors in South Australian adults.

Life expectancy	Average male life expectancy is 81 years, for females 85. ¹
Weight	Nearly 60% of South Australians over the age of 18 are overweight or obese, a steadily increasing figure. More men (64.9%) than women are overweight (53.9%). ²
Fruit and vegetable consumption	South Australian adults eat an average 2.7 of the recommended five vegetable serves and 1.5 of the recommended two fruit serves. Only 10.6% of males and 14.9% of females regularly consume the full five serves of vegetables. A lower intake of fruit and vegetables is more likely in working aged adults. ¹⁸
Physical activity	Only 41% of South Australian males, and 38% of females, meet the physical activity recommendation of 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity most days, therefore doing sufficient activity to prevent heart disease, reduce the risk of developing type two diabetes and some cancers. Older South Australians are even less likely to take part in sufficient exercise. ^{15, 3}
Alcohol	Regional South Australian workers have a higher chance of risky drinking than working adults in the city. Overall, one in two workers drinks more than two standard drinks every day, often without incorporating alcohol free days. In general, males are more likely to consume alcohol at risky levels than females. ⁴
Smoking	Despite attempts at quitting (79% have tried in the past) 20% of males and 15% of females self-report smoking daily, weekly or less often. ⁵ Whilst 22% of South Australian workers smoke, this varies across occupations. High prevalence occupations include labourers (36%), manufacturing/construction/ accommodation/ transport and food service industry employees (30%) and trade and technical industry workers (28%). ⁶
Sun exposure	Risk of sun exposure is high with Melanoma being the fourth most commonly diagnosed cancer, for both males and females. Melanoma is the fourth highest cause of cancer deaths in males. ⁷
Mental wellbeing	Psychological distress (stress, anxiety and depression) affects one in ten South Australian adults at some stage in their lives (10.5% total, males 7.9% and females 10.4%). ¹⁸
Overall outlook	South Australians from regional areas are more likely to be diagnosed with type two diabetes and may be more likely to have high cholesterol and/or high blood pressure, contributing to South Australia's higher than Australian average rates. ¹⁷ South Australians with a lower income and education level are much more likely to have health problems and die younger. Obesity is one of the likely causes of these health problems and adds considerable risk. Additionally, they are more likely to smoke and less likely to perform sufficient physical activity. ¹⁷ Despite prevention and treatment progress, males are more likely to die from heart disease and at a younger age than female counterparts (heart disease being 2.1 times more common among males and remains the leading cause of death). ¹⁷ Whilst female life expectancy is topping global levels, if South Australian females don't manage their weight, nutrition, stress and physical activity levels they are likely to endure burdens of disability and illness, particularly from diabetes, heart disease, stroke and depression. ⁸ Aboriginal males and females are more likely to have higher rates of all risk factors and therefore a shorter healthy life expectancy.

What is a healthy workplace?

Workplaces that have a good health and wellbeing program in place include a focus on changing the workplace culture so that the easy choice is a healthy choice. These health and wellbeing programs can be wide-ranging in their scope and their size, but a well run program doesn't need to cost a lot, or use a lot of resources to make a real difference to the health of employees.

To be effective, the following features should be considered as you build your healthy workplace program:

1. An approach, centred around people, that:

- > Actively involves workers and managers
- > Collaborates with employees in finding solutions to issues
- > Develops programs based on insights gathered from workers
- > Aims for ongoing improvement to work processes, practices, cultures and management styles
- > Recognises the hard work of workplace champions.

2. Has a connection to worker health, safety and welfare, and core organisational values, products and services by being:

- > Evident within business plans
- > Acknowledged by the organisation's leaders, and communicated widely.

3. Management support that is shown through:

- > Promotion and participation in programs at all levels of management
- > Middle level management links with workers
- > Management support through motivating and communicating with employees.

4. A tailored program that:

- > Is matched to specific industry, workplace and employee needs
- > Is flexible in design and delivery
- > Includes incentives and rewards aligned to suitable individual accomplishments.

5. Long-term focus that:

- > Recognises that the overall program design should be comprehensive, starting with modest targets and implementing, then evaluating pilot initiatives that allow for scaling up of effective small initiatives.

6. Allocation of sufficient resources to achieve results through:

- > Appropriate funding
- > Using qualified and credible service providers
- > Equal access to all employees.

7. Regular communication to ensure:

- > Relevant messages and the appropriate delivery of messages
- > The values and direction of the program are communicated to the organisation
- > High visibility of the program's progress and outcomes.

8. Evaluation that:

- > Measures progress against objectives, and analyses data against agreed criteria
- > Integrates tracking and monitoring systems with other business monitoring systems
- > Focuses on continual program improvement and feedback loops that involve staff.

A highly effective way to ensure workplace health and wellbeing programs are a success, is to link them with other health related efforts already in the workplace. These might include:

- > Occupational health safety and welfare (OHS&W) initiatives
- > Disability management programs
- > Employee assistance programs.^{20 25 26}

In developing this toolkit, we have endeavoured to incorporate these features to support sustainable behaviour change. We have provided simple guidelines and links to supports to make it easier to implement effective, successful and popular health and wellbeing initiatives.



Health and Productivity Institute of Australia HAPIA, Best Practice Guidelines Workplace Health in Australia, Sydney Australia, 2009.

Bellew, Primary Prevention of Chronic disease in Australia through interventions in the workplace setting: a rapid review, Sax Institute for the Chronic Disease Prevention Unit, Department of Human Services, Victoria, 2008.

Acknowledgements

Department of Health and Ageing, 2011, Quality Framework for the healthy workers initiative: Principles for healthy workplaces

Health and Productivity Institute of Australia (HAPIA) 2009 , Best practice guidelines to workplace health in Australia, Sydney Australia

Healthy@Work, 2011 Public Sector Management Office, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Tasmanian Government, Guidelines to implementing a health and wellbeing program.



Step One: Getting started

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Step One Checklist		
Management Commitment	Small Business	Medium to Large Business
Held initial discussions with key stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Completed a workplace snapshot	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Created a proposal for management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered resource availability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Confirmed management commitment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Created a health and wellbeing policy to support program		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered ability to align program to workplace goals and day to day operations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Engaging Employees		
Informed employees of opportunities to get involved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promoted workplace champion roles and tasks (particularly multisite)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established a Health and Wellbeing Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attached health and wellbeing to pre-existing workplace structures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drawn up a communications plan		<input type="checkbox"/>

Step One - Getting started

Leadership is critical. This step tells you how to get the ball rolling in the right direction from the start, from getting management on board and establishing policy and a budget, to setting up a committee so you can work in a team.

Management commitment

Management support can make a big difference to the success of program outcomes and in getting the program off the ground.

To be successful, your workplace health and wellbeing program will need the support of those around you, including employers, employees and those who can influence the workplace environment such as managers, team leaders and Health and Safety representatives.²⁷

It is important that all levels of management understand and support the program. Without this it will be harder to achieve positive results. So seek support early in the process to ensure its success.

In large organisations this may see involvement from middle management as well as senior levels of management. For smaller organisations, the owner or general manager may need to be involved in early and ongoing discussions.

Raising the support and profile of the intended program are important steps to seeing it become a success. Different workplaces will have different methods of doing this. It is important to detail the benefits of a health and wellbeing program concisely and in a manner relevant to your workplace and its managers or owners. Part of your proposal might include evidence to support a workplace health and wellbeing program, otherwise called a business case.

If you are in a smaller business, then the emphasis might be on getting business owners to commit to the program.

Having management support:

- > Indicates commitment
- > Builds a strong profile of your program
- > Secures resources and long term support
- > Develops strong communication links between management and employees
- > Indicates leadership by example.^{25 27}

Further information:



[Managers FAQ.](#)



[FAQ for Small Business.](#)



Create a business case

A business case provides a rationale for investments and highlights the potential benefits a health and wellbeing program can offer your workplace.

A business case is an opportunity to provide supporting evidence to promote your cause. By showing that there are numerous ways in which your program can benefit both employees and the organisation, you are more likely to gain support from management.

It is often useful to identify, and then discuss the issues relevant to your workplace in your business case and then identify how your program will address and impact these issues. For example, your senior management or owner might be most interested in reducing staff turnover rates, absenteeism, or improving low staff morale. Your business case should address prominent issues and consider how a health and wellbeing program might offer solutions.

Measuring and proving these factors can be complex, but in many cases there is already evidence or indication of the positive impact of health and wellbeing programs on business. Our business case fact sheet provides statistics, quotes and figures to build your case.

Have a look at these resources to develop your business case:



[Building your business case.](#)



[Medibank Private, The Health of Australia's workforce 2005.](#)

Create a health and wellbeing policy

A health and wellbeing policy can be instrumental in communicating what you are trying to achieve.

Senior management can demonstrate their commitment to the health and wellbeing of employees in an organisation with a health and wellbeing policy.

Composing and committing to a policy ensures there is formal agreement and documentation on the structure and purpose for your health and wellbeing program. Taking the time to commit thoughts and planning to paper, allows a program to be followed through to the end.

Where possible, use the standard policy and procedure documents or templates of your workplace. These will be easily recognised by those involved such as employees, management or a human resources department.

Smaller businesses might not be as familiar with creating policies, but this process is still an important component of acknowledging and committing to health and wellbeing so should be considered nonetheless.

To create a good health and wellbeing policy, include elements that identify the purpose of your program, who is included, communication of the policy and a review date. This policy should be developed in consultation with employees, including your workplace champions, elected Health, Safety and Wellbeing representatives and any other appropriate pre-existing committee.

Identify the resources available

Once you have in principle support from management for your program, you will need to think about the resources you need to set the program in motion.

While many health and wellbeing workplace initiatives can be achieved at no or minimal cost, determining if you have the resources to support your endeavours is important. This will give you some scope of the size and type of program that you can offer.

The resources required to run a health and wellbeing program will take many shapes and sizes and may include:

Financial	Funds for equipment, services, general day-to-day costs, incentives or prizes.
People	Time, energy, focus and commitment. This may be offered internally and/or utilise external local services or providers.
Environmental	Infrastructure, pre-existing equipment, access to local or on site equipment, programs or services.

It is important to think beyond budgets in terms of allocating resources. Asking the following questions will help:

- > Where can we access free or in-kind services or equipment?
- > What is available in-house?
- > What can be tied into pre-existing budgets or event plans?
- > Can we seek out program partners or sponsors?
- > Can we join forces with another local or allied business to source items or services at a cheaper cost?

To assist you:



Engaging external providers.

Engaging employees

Having employees involved will strengthen your program. Involvement can take many different forms along the way.

Involving employees at each step of the planning and day-to-day running of your program will be essential for a successful, high-quality program.

Employees can take part in many ways, including:

- > Health and Wellbeing Committee
- > Development of the health and wellbeing policy
- > Test some ideas (for example, in a focus group)
- > Workplace's needs through the audits and surveys
- > Organising an activity or event, such as arranging venues and bookings
- > Seeking incentives, resources or equipment through their links to the local community
- > Bringing their own skills to the program (for example, qualified yoga instructor, nurse, massage therapist or cook)
- > Champions encouraging others to participate.

Getting fellow employees involved with these activities may relieve the pressure from you and reduce the costs of your program.

As planning progresses, don't forget to update employees about ongoing involvement opportunities.

Find a workplace champion and/or coordinator

Programs need champions to promote and support them.

While a comprehensive workplace health and wellbeing program with dedicated staff is ideal, this may not be feasible for small or medium-sized businesses, or those that are just beginning to think about a program. Engaging and supporting workplace or site champions is a way of increasing the quality and ability to reach more employees with your program. Initially, one or more workplace champions might be identified to get the program started at your site.

Depending on your organisation your workplace champions may have a few different roles. At a minimum, they will primarily be responsible for raising awareness about the program and encouraging co-workers to participate, but they may also be responsible for some elements of planning and administration of the program.

The coordinator on the other hand, is the person who does more of the administrative and organisational work, to ensure the program runs smoothly.

A list of suggested pre-requisites has been compiled to help you identify and support potential champions and/or coordinators in your workplace.

To help you with this, take a look at our tips:



[Supporting workplace champions.](#)

Establishing a workplace Health and Wellbeing Committee

No one expects you alone to do all the work, you need a strong team behind you.

The team that will assist you in achieving success in your program is the Health and Wellbeing Committee (though you may want to give them a different title that suits your workplace and the people within the team). You might find it easier to attach this function to a committee already in place, ensuring it is a standard agenda item, or create a subcommittee to another structure, such as OHS&W committee or social club.

Regardless of its name, this team ideally consists of a diverse range of people. Try to include at least one representative from management who has the decision-making capability required for your program, and is also in a position to advocate for the initiative.

The remaining members might come from a broad cross-section of employees and levels of authority. Importantly, all should share an interest in (or interest in learning about) health and wellbeing and an enthusiasm to make the program work within your organisation.

The committee will be responsible for speaking to and for colleagues, so they must be willing to act as advocates, both of employees and your program. They will also work to motivate and communicate the program to their workmates.

The best people for the job

For your program to be a success, the Committee will need to steer it through three critical stages:

1. Designing a program with employee needs in mind
2. Implementing the program in a coordinated manner
3. Evaluating the program.

So, think about whose skills you could use to make these steps happen. In some instances, the workplace champions might undertake some of these tasks and responsibilities, while managing their primary role of ensuring ongoing support from managers and/or owners.

In the case of smaller organisations, a Health and Wellbeing Committee may not be required. A simple program that concentrates on the issues important to your employees can be just as successful as a large program. Simply work to your capacity, involve fellow employees' ideas, and harness their expertise and interests.

For ideas how to recruit and run a Health and Wellbeing Committee:



[Tips for creating a Health and Wellbeing Committee.](#)



Step Two: Needs assessment

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Step Two Checklist		
	Small Business	Medium to Large Business
Considered the information you would like to collect and how you will do it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered privacy and confidential storage of information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communicated the voluntary nature of taking part	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Set yourself a time frame to collect the information and some people to assist you with the tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying needs of people		
Collected information about the wants and wishes of employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered the health and wellbeing issues of employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying need within places		
Identified gaps and priorities in workplace environment (eg facilities and practices that may prevent healthy behaviours)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identifying need for vision		
Identified the opportunities for social and management support of health and wellbeing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Step Two: Needs assessment

Identifying needs - people, places and vision

Now that you have the support of management and employees, policies, a business case and a dedicated committee, it is time to look at what your workplace needs and what your employees want from their program.

Have a look at your workplace and ask, *what would be relevant, interesting and appropriate to your employees?* This step will help you to answer these important questions.

A 'needs assessment' is another way of saying 'a collection process' for identifying priorities related to needs and interests. It is essential to consider the needs and interests of your workplace before you start putting actions, activities and programs in place. To do this you must seek input from those who will be participating, i.e. the employees, to ensure that your program is going to be relevant and useful.

By conducting a needs assessment you will get some idea about the activities that your organisation should provide as part of its health and wellbeing program.

This will help you to determine:

- > The top health issues of your workforce
- > What has been done before
- > What worked and what didn't
- > What is already in place
- > What motivates and interests your workforce
- > Who is able to lend their support
- > Social practices that might promote or prevent health and wellbeing
- > How the work environment could support health and wellbeing.

How to involve people

The health issues and the interests of your employees will direct the way in which your health and wellbeing program will run; its direction, speed and themes. Methods of determining the priorities of your program according to the people who will take part, include:

- > Collaborating with your Health and Wellbeing Committee
- > Gathering workplace champions to discuss employee perspectives
- > Talking at a staff meeting to encourage general discussion and ideas
- > Running a focus group or workshop with a range of employees across varying positions, ages, shifts and sites
- > Using a needs assessment survey to determine areas of interest and priority for employees
- > Using the health and wellbeing workplace audit (people) to help you to understand the cultural environment of your workplace, including a focus on what has been done before
- > Having a suggestion box.

The ideas outlined above might not be relevant to all workplaces or organisations, but it is still important to seek the input of as many employees as possible, and give them the opportunity to be involved. This could mean setting an ongoing staff meeting agenda item, regular promotion of your surveys and focus groups or establishing a permanent health and wellbeing suggestion box. Make sure that the methods you use to obtain feedback are suitable, for example, only use an email if most of your employees can easily access email.

How to assess the workplace environment

It is important for workplaces, large and small, to assess the physical environment in which their employees work. An assessment will reveal if there is infrastructure immediately available to employees that may influence their ability to adopt healthy behaviours. This includes the environment beyond the worksite and may take in the local area, including businesses, facilities and transport links to and from work.

Methods of assessing your workplace environmental needs could include:

- > Performing an audit of the worksite
- > Liaising with key stakeholders such as managers and OHS&W representatives
- > Running a discussion group with interested employees to talk about barriers in the workplace that prevent participation
- > Taking the time to consider any previous health initiative successes and challenges. Did the environment influence their success or failure?

What about healthy workplace vision?

Encouraging a whole of workplace approach to your health and wellbeing requires the involvement of policy makers, management or business owners. You should aim to have an understanding of previous and current efforts to address health and wellbeing through policy and procedures in your workplace. Find out if:

- > There have been previous health and wellbeing policies or attempts to align health with other parts of your business
- > There is an opportunity to add to, review or commence a health and wellbeing policy
- > You can align this policy with other business strategies, such as health, safety and welfare objectives, work/life balance, and organisational goals
- > The level of support and commitment that managers and the organisation as a whole provide will be sufficient.

Importantly, don't forget to look 'outside the square' for resources that are already available to do this assessment step. These might include external expertise or expertise within your organisation. Often there are skilled people or departments that can assist you to gather data, or managers who can advocate for the process you are undertaking. Workplace champions will also be allies in increasing the momentum of these tasks. You may be able to access resources through Work Cover, SafeWork SA, employer and employee associations, local businesses or within the local community.

There are additional suggestions and tips for conducting the needs assessments within your workplace in our *needs assessment fact sheet*.



Three important rules for assessing needs

1. Ensure employee privacy

When collecting employee details, health information and opinions it is important to consider aspects that could identify respondents within the workplace

Once collected, survey information should be stored securely and handled sensitively by a minimum number of staff, with results collated or summarised before they are circulated within the organisation. Any disclosure of personal information without a person's written consent is unethical and in some cases may be illegal.

2. Follow the ethics approval processes of your organisation

Some workplaces may have their own ethics approval process that must be followed before asking employees to fill out surveys. Check with your Human Resources department or management for assistance with this step. These departments will also often be useful in sending out surveys and information throughout the organisation.

3. Be aware of personal choice in participation

Efforts should be made to ensure that the rights of employees, to choose to take part, in the needs assessment stages of your program are protected and communicated.

Care should also be taken to ensure that individual employees do not feel alienated if they are unable to take part in some or all of the program activities.

To assist you to assess the needs of your workplace:



Needs assessment.



Step Three: Action

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Step Three Checklist		
	Small Business	Medium to Large Business
Set priorities according to need and interest		<input type="checkbox"/>
Identified goals that you would like to meet to address these priorities		<input type="checkbox"/>
Set out a plan of activities to address these goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered the feasibility of the proposed plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered a mix of program activities to appeal to a range of employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established methods to evaluate the success of the activities		<input type="checkbox"/>
Gained endorsement of plan from stakeholders and management		<input type="checkbox"/>
Set a task list (and people to assist) to help you prepare and run the approved activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategy in place to promote activities and efforts to employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Step Three: Action

Developing an action plan

Now you have support for your program and have identified the needs and wants of your employees, you can start delivering a program to promote better workplace health and wellbeing.

The first thing you'll need to do is develop an action plan. Drafted with the support of your Committee, it will form the everyday 'how to' of your program. Having a written plan in place will make it easy for stakeholders and 'helpers' to follow what's going on and what's expected.

An action plan will take time to develop, but will be made simpler and more efficient if you already have:

- > Management on board
- > Support of fellow employees and, where appropriate, have established a Health and Wellbeing Committee
- > Worked out the aim of your health and wellbeing program
- > Collected and understand employee needs and wishes
- > Performed a quick audit of what is already available or being done on site
- > Knowledge of the resources available to you.

Pulling all of these elements together will highlight the priorities of your program. Remember, while it is important to include priorities that appeal to employees, it is essential that the program activities are realistic, feasible and are ones that the organisation is willing to support.

How do we get started on action planning?

Firstly, it's important to consider all of the elements required to achieve your priorities, including setting goals (the 'whys'), objectives (the 'hows') and strategies (the 'whats') for each of those priorities.

Often there are several ways to achieve a particular health and wellbeing goal, and as a result, you may end up with more than one way to achieve what you set out to do. That's fine, and it's often how thorough and wide-reaching programs become successful.

Action planning isn't just about establishing the goals of particular activities or events – it should also incorporate planning for promotion, sourcing of resources, coordinating staff and reporting.

Timelines and timeframes

Include a timeframe to plan and conduct your program. Be sure to allocate time for review.

Negotiating this time frame is essential, as it will:

- > Give you a start and finish
- > Let you set manageable goals within that period
- > Allow you to consider your budget within that period
- > Give your champions an idea of their time commitment.

Ready for action planning? Get started now with these tools:



Action planning tips.

Developing an evaluation plan

As well as the delivery of your program, you'll need to look back and evaluate it, to make sure it's running as well as possible. A bit of time spent on considering what you would like to evaluate now, will save a lot of energy later.

Evaluating is the process of working out if your program:

1. Was interesting to participants
2. Achieved your goals and
3. Did so in an efficient and effective way.

After all, there's no point to running the program if you don't know whether it's having any impact both on the organisation and on the health of employees.

Evaluation is essential for ongoing planning, to inform the wider stakeholder group, and to satisfy the requirements of management. Evaluation can also inform you of the changing needs of your participants so that new goals and objectives can be established.

You'll find more about planning and conducting your evaluation at Step Four of this toolkit.

Remember, good evaluation includes:

- > Using a mix of quantitative (numbers) and qualitative (stories and comments) feedback
- > Being certain of your evaluation questions. What are you trying to change? Consider productivity, health indicators, participation numbers or satisfaction and morale. Discuss this with your Health and Wellbeing Committee, and also involve management
- > Whatever data you capture must match what you are doing with your employees. For example, measuring participation levels at a cooking demonstration and workshop series may not show management that you are improving rates of absenteeism. If you were to measure both participation levels at the workshops and get Human Resources to assist you to measure rates of absenteeism, over time you may see some correlation
- > Only measuring what you need to measure. Evaluation can take time to plan and implement, and often asks a lot from participants, so cut out anything you don't really need
- > Being realistic about the changes you can attribute to your program, and about the time required to achieve change. Have a look back at the table on page 7 to get an idea of the positive gains you could achieve
- > Capturing some baseline data. This might be related to employees' health such as smoking, nutrition, alcohol, physical activity levels or be related to the organisation, such as absenteeism levels or productivity.

From action planning to delivery

In the next section, we'll turn your action plan priorities from ideas into real strategies that are relevant, appropriate and engaging to employees.

These strategies will come into play once you've decided on the goals and objectives of your program, so use our *Action planning tips* to assist you in your planning.

The *Healthy Workers – Healthy Futures* initiative has a focus on the SNAP risk factors, which are going smoke free, healthy eating, being active and alcohol reduction. It also covers the way emotional wellbeing and excess weight interacts with these risk factors and overall health.

The suggestions encourage you to look at multiple aspects within the workplace to address health, including:

- > **Healthy Vision:** focuses on creation of a healthy workplace policy, addressing cultural behaviours and strategies that promote and support management commitment
- > **Healthy Places:** a focus on creating a supportive workplace environment, that addresses barriers that might prevent individuals from being healthy and considers additional supports that actively encourage healthy behaviours
- > **Healthy People:** has a focus setting up the individual supports, such as through access to services, education and promotion, that will encourage all employees to adopt healthy behaviours.

The strategy suggestions recommended in this toolkit might be used to build upon pre-existing activities, or be used as start-up ideas as you develop a plan specifically for your organisation.

Each workplace has different needs, resources and starting points, so this is a rough guide. You may choose to select simpler opportunities if you are new to health and wellbeing programs then increase the amount of detail over time. Alternatively, you might pick and choose according to the resources you have available at various times throughout your program.



Health and wellbeing program strategies

Smoke Free

Why promote going 'Smoke Free'?

Tobacco smoking is the single greatest cause of preventable death in Australia. Every year, around 1140 South Australians die from tobacco-related causes.

Smoking causes a range of serious health problems including cancers, coronary heart disease, stroke and chronic lung diseases. There is no safe level of tobacco smoking.

In 2011, 15.2% of South Australians said they smoked on a daily basis. Furthermore, 20.2% of adult males and 15.2% of adult females reported smoking daily, weekly or occasionally. A quarter of all South Australians aged between 30 and 44 years identified themselves as smokers – more than any other age group.²⁸

Nicotine in cigarettes is highly addictive, and quitting is extremely difficult. In fact most people try to quit multiple times before they are successful. Quitting is one of the best things someone can do to improve their health and the health of friends and family. Importantly, some health and other benefits can be enjoyed almost immediately. These benefits occur at any age, and can range from increased life expectancy and improved quality of life, to significant financial benefits.

The majority of South Australian smokers have made a previous quit attempt. More than a third have tried to quit in the past year and more than half intend to try to quit in the next six months,²¹ indicating that there is the desire and need to support those considering quitting.

A smoke-free workplace is the best way to start addressing smoking rates within your organisation. The benefits of this include:

- > Increases in productivity due to fewer smoking breaks and fewer staff affected by tobacco-related illness
- > Lower absenteeism due to improvements in the health of employees ^{29 30}
- > Enhanced workplace safety
- > Minimised risk of prosecution or civil action by employees who are exposed to environmental tobacco smoke
- > Compliance with legislations including the Tobacco Products Regulation Act, 1997, Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act, 1986 and smoking bans within enclosed workplaces from 2004 (2007 for hospitality venues)
- > Improvements to staff morale
- > Reduced risk of fire damage or other accidents related to smoking
- > A cleaner and more pleasant workplace environment with lower cleaning and maintenance costs associated with smoking ^{30 31}
- > Creation of fair working conditions for both smokers and non-smokers
- > Your workplace's promotion of a healthy corporate image.

How do we help employees to go 'smoke free'?

The table offers strategies that can be used to address smoking in the workplace. There are several areas of focus, especially through the creation of policies as well as providing information, support and changes to the workplace environment.

Ideas to get you started:

Description	Healthy Vision	Healthy Places	Healthy People
Promote a smoke-free workplace by developing and implementing a 100% smoke-free policy directed at the workplace environment and culture, including conducting information sessions to inform employees of policy	•		
Embed no-smoking support procedures into OHS&W procedures and policies	•		
Promote and provide a smoke-free workplace		•	•
Include smoke-free policy and information in staff induction materials	•		
Foster the quit smoking message with promotional materials, embed these messages into communication and media forms, for example memos, newsletters and notice boards		•	•
Update your knowledge in regard to existing South Australian tobacco legislation	•	•	
Promote the use of support services for those wanting to quit or reduce smoking levels, and allow access to these services during work hours			•
Promote information about the harm caused by tobacco smoking and the benefits of quitting			•
Remind staff that a General Practitioner can assist, support and provide referrals to other health professionals			•
Workplace Employee Assistance Programs can often focus on goal setting and behavioural change. Promote your workplace program widely and inform employees of access options and topics			•
Provide staff with information regarding Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) patches and make them aware of those that are subsidised by the Pharmaceutical Benefit Scheme (PBS)			•

Building on your program:

Description	Healthy Vision	Healthy Places	Healthy People
Embed no-smoking support procedure into OHS&W procedures and policies	•		
Embed quit smoking messages into communication and media forms, for example newsletters, memos and CEO updates		•	
Sponsor comprehensive quit programs, for example subsidise aids to quit smoking such a nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) or provide incentives for those who quit smoking (as appropriate)			•
Provide quit smoking programs during work time			•
Support participation in quit smoking programs during work time			•

Want to know how your quit smoking strategies are going?

Head to Step Four: Evaluate your program

Resources and support:

For more information on assisting employees to go smoke free and addressing barriers to smoking cessation, as well as links to promotional materials and services, go to the Healthy Workers - Healthy Futures website www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/healthyworkers



Healthy eating

Why promote healthy eating?

There are lots of reasons why it is important to promote healthy eating within the workplace, especially for those employees who eat a major proportion of meals at work, or have meals provided by the workplace.

Good nutrition contributes to general health and wellbeing as well as the prevention and management of chronic disease such as heart disease, some cancers and type two diabetes.³¹

Healthy eating can also benefit productivity by maintaining energy levels and concentration while at work. These factors have a flow-on effect to efficiency and wellbeing.

Healthy eating can mean many things to different people. Generally a healthy diet includes getting fruit and vegetables into your day, watching your salt, saturated fat and sugar intake and balancing kilojoule intake according to our body's needs.

Each additional daily serve of fruit and vegetables can reduce the risk of coronary heart disease and stroke.³²

Sometimes healthy eating at work can be difficult to initiate and manage, and employees can face issues such as:

- > Lack of healthy food options from surrounding cafes, local food services or while travelling for work
- > Lack of facilities
- > The social culture of eating in the workplace and
- > Additional factors, such as access to vending machines, shift work practices and unhealthy meeting and function catering. These can make it difficult for employees to maintain consistent healthy eating habits and will depend on the type of workplace.

How do we help employees choose healthy eating?

The workplace is in a great position to encourage and support employees to learn about and make healthy food choices.

The list that follows, suggests strategies you can use to improve diet and hydration in the workplace through policy, environmental and people-centred approaches. It is important to attempt to incorporate a range of these across the workplace, as they complement each other and are more likely to be successful when used together.



Ideas to get you started:

Description	Healthy Vision	Healthy Places	Healthy People
Incorporate healthy food choices into a healthy food and drink policy for all worksites. This might include catering for meetings and social occasions, drinks including water and alcohol, vending machines and food service	•		
Breastfeeding policy, including dedicated space for breastfeeding for return-to-work mothers (where relevant)	•		
Provide a breastfeeding/expressing room (or a room that can be booked for this use over the day)		•	
Include healthy food and drink policy information in staff induction packages	•		
Provide amenities for staff meal breaks such as microwaves, toasters, refrigerator and sink and ensure their regular cleaning. Consider off-site employee access		•	
Negotiate to remove sources of high sugar and fat (for example, biscuit jars, soft drinks, chocolate or cake at regular morning teas) from the workplace		•	
Sponsor (or collect staff money) for a weekly fruit box to share on site		•	
Improve the range of beverages available. Provide fresh clean tap water, decaffeinated coffee, herbal teas at all meetings and lunchrooms, in addition to usual options such as tea and coffee		•	
Communicate healthy food choice and nutrition topics via fact sheets, newsletters, intranet, posters and print materials			•
For specific dietary advice, recommend individuals seek the assistance of a qualified health professional, such as a dietitian or Do It for Life Adviser			•
Workplace Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) can often offer additional assistance regarding goal-setting and behavioural change. Promote your workplace program widely and inform employees of access options and topics			•
Include links to local food providers that stock healthy choices within intranet or newsletters for example, local markets, fruit and veg that sell local produce and food co-ops			•

Building on your program:

Description	Healthy Vision	Healthy Places	Healthy People
Consider becoming accredited within the Australian Breastfeeding Association's Breastfeeding Friendly Workplace Initiative (where relevant)	•		
Collaborate with meal providers, cafeterias, food delivery suppliers and local food outlets to ensure that healthy choices are easily available		•	•
Support the healthy eating message with healthy vending machine content. This may involve negotiating with suppliers		•	
When supporting or initiating fundraisers, recommend healthy food options or non-food-related ideas			•
Invite a health professional to visit the site and run on site seminars on making healthy food choices			•
Host workplace challenges such as healthy lunch competitions and fruit and vegetable weekly challenges. Encourage team or multi-site competition with incentives			•
Host regular events such as the 'Biggest Morning Tea', but encourage only healthy food choices be on offer			•
Consider activities such as: Fruit and vegetable tasting sessions A cooking seminar series or healthy food fair Shared lunch days at regular intervals throughout the year. This can be a way to recognise and try new foods and methods of cooking			•
Sponsor the production of a healthy food cookbook with staff recipes. Consider it as a fundraiser			•
Work with your local greengrocer to establish a partnership to access fresh and affordable produce and support your healthy eating program strategies			•

Want to know how your healthy eating strategy is going?

Head to Step Four: Evaluate your program

Resources and support:

For more information on promoting healthy eating, as well as links to promotional materials and services, go to the Healthy Workers - Healthy Futures website www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/healthyworkers

Drink Responsibly

Why promote responsible alcohol consumption?

Alcohol is the most widely used drug in Australia and is an accepted part of our culture and way of life. Australians consume alcohol for relaxation, socialising and celebration. In 2010, around 6% of South Australians were daily drinkers and approximately two in every five reported that they drank on a weekly basis.³³

However, alcohol can have a variety of negative effects that are costly for both employers and to the employees themselves.^{34 20 35} These include:

- > Implications for workplace safety
- > Reduced productivity
- > Absenteeism
- > Staff turn-over
- > Increased frequency and cost of workers compensation due to an unsafe working environment and accidents
- > Costs to the individual employee
- > Costs to other employees.

The implications for workplaces and employees can be wide reaching, including illness, absenteeism, loss of work productivity. All have the potential to cause social, relationship and financial problems.

Factors within the workplace that increase people's risk of alcohol misuse include:

- > Access to and availability of alcohol increases people's risk of alcohol misuse (for example, in the physical environment and at workplace functions)
- > Shift work
- > Working conditions (for example, hazardous or dangerous work, poor quality equipment, insufficient resources)
- > Management style (for example poor or low levels of supervision)
- > Interpersonal factors such as workplace bullying and conflict
- > Inadequate job design and training
- > Workplace culture^{36 37 38 39}
- > Stressful workplace environment with unrealistic responsibilities, targets , over or under work.

High-risk alcohol consumption is not only a potential workplace safety concern, but also a risk to the health and wellbeing of individual workers and the wider community.

How do we help employees to reduce their alcohol consumption?

The list that follows gives some suggestions on what you can do as an employer to encourage employees to adopt healthy behaviours around alcohol consumption, both for their own personal health and also that of their fellow employees.

If you are worried about the consumption of alcohol on site or socially, or about individuals being under the influence at work, it is important to address this by using a range of these strategies to change the environment, change the social culture and to assist employees in their personal endeavours to reduce their drinking.

A formal alcohol policy should be at the heart of preventing and managing alcohol-related problems in the workplace.²¹ This should be developed in consultation with employees, preventing and managing applied equally to all levels, with clearly stated acceptable behaviours. The consequences of any unacceptable behaviour should be clearly communicated to all staff.

Ideas to get you started:

Description	Healthy Vision	Healthy Places	Healthy People
Develop and implement a formal workplace alcohol policy, in consultation with employees	•		
Conduct information sessions where staff can be informed of the policy and the rationale, and have the opportunity to ask questions	•		
Embed alcohol support procedures into OHS&W procedures and policies	•		
Update your (your manager/ employers) knowledge of South Australian legislation relevant to alcohol	•		
Include alcohol policy and information in staff induction materials	•		
Promote standard drink sizes and drink driving reminders in the workplace		•	•
Promote the use of support services such as the Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS) and allow confidential access to these services during work hours			•
Promote information about the safe consumption of alcohol and the harms of alcohol, including the Australian drinking guidelines in communication and media, for example newsletters, memos and CEO updates			•
Provide in-house training or seminars on safe alcohol consumption and the key requirements to respond to alcohol in the workplace			•
Remind staff that a General Practitioner can assist, support and provide referrals to other health professionals as needed			•
Workplace Employee Assistance Programs deliver confidential assessments and short term counselling to employees who have voluntarily or been referred to their program through workplace policy			•
In planning informal social occasions, replace drinking or trips to the local pub/bar with other activities. This might include informal team activities such as kicking the footy or going bowling			•
Provide plenty of non-alcoholic drinks and food on occasions that alcohol will be offered promote responsible service of alcohol and spread the message of your expectations that individuals act responsibly and spread the message of your expectations that individuals act responsibly		•	•
Provide alternative public transport options following the low risk alcohol guidelines from workplace events, that will offer alcoholic beverages		•	•

Building on your program:

Description	Healthy Vision	Healthy Places	Healthy People
Consider training needs of managers or team leaders so that they can recognise and react appropriately to the impact of alcohol within the workplace			•
Deliver brief interventions in the workplace to help employees change their alcohol use			•
Develop and implement a health promotion program focusing on the overall health of employees and incorporating information regarding harms associated with alcohol			•

Want to know how your alcohol consumption strategy is going?

Head to Step Four: Evaluate your program

Resources and support:

For more information on promoting responsible drinking, as well as links to promotional materials and services, go to the Healthy Workers - Healthy Futures website www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/healthyworkers

Be Active

Why promote physical activity and reduce sitting time?

'Physical inactivity has been ranked second only to tobacco smoking, in terms of burden of disease and injury from risk factors in Australia.'⁴⁰

It's good to be active. No matter the stage of life, everyone can benefit from being active, and it doesn't have to be strenuous to be physically and emotionally beneficial. All it takes is 30 minutes a day on most days of the week, including activities like walking, to feel better and live longer.

Longer working days and increasingly sedentary work and leisure practices have made it challenging for the majority of people to meet recommended levels of physical activity. In 2010, only 47% of South Australian adults met the recommended activity levels (a positive increase from 40.3% in 2001).⁴¹

The benefits of promoting physical activity within the workplace can include:

- > Reduced employee stress
- > Fitter and stronger employees
- > Reduced absenteeism.⁴²

Additionally, in 2010, 14.4% of South Australian adults self-reported that they were completely inactive. They reported spending long hours sitting at work and/or engaging in hobbies that involved sitting, such as computer games or watching television.⁴¹

Too much sitting is bad for health and time spent being completely inactive is now associated with heart disease and diabetes, particularly in relation to increased blood pressure, blood fats and blood glucose levels.⁴²

The Stand Up Australia study showed that for the average office or retail worker, most of the working day is sedentary, attributing to a total of 67% of work and non-work time being spent sitting down for study participants.⁴² The remainder of the day was spent in light intensity activity, like walking or standing and only a small part of the day (4%) was spent doing moderate to vigorous activity, such as running, cycling or participating in sports. Interestingly, most of the participants felt that they were significantly more active at work than their results showed. Whilst the study was based in an office setting, these findings can be translated to other mostly sedentary occupations within manufacturing, transport and others.

To put this in the context of your workplace, even if your employees are active before and after work, they should still be encouraged to sit less and move more to reduce their risk of significant health problems.

How do we help employees to increase their physical activity levels?

The table that follows will give you some ideas on how to tackle inactivity and also reduce sedentary habits in the workplace. There are many ways to support employees to incorporate physical activity into their daily lives. The workplace is a great place to offer activities and encourage employees to be more active.



Ideas to get you started:

Description	Healthy Vision	Healthy Places	Healthy People
Support the creation of a physical activity policy, including elements around activity, active transport and preventing workplace sedentary practices	•		
Create opportunities for flexi-time or time in lieu for training/physical activity, with management and embed within relevant OHS&W policies	•		
Include information about access to physical activity opportunities (local and on site) in staff induction materials	•		
Conduct a mapping exercise of local opportunities for physical activity, including parks, gyms, sports clubs and opening times. Consider workplace ability to form teams for team sports or its own league		•	
Organise 'come and try session(s)' or a guest speaker Q&A session with an accredited personal trainer or exercise physiologist			•
Provide information and promotional materials about the benefits of activity and regular movement and local opportunities via communication and media channels for example, newsletters, CEO memos, noticeboards and lunchrooms			•
Encourage the use of stairs and walkways with signage and promotion within internal communication channels		•	
Organise a corporate rate to the local gym or swimming pool			•
Map local public transport options and promote them to staff. Also consider options to subsidise public transport fares for those choosing this means of travel			•

Building on your program:

Description	Healthy Vision	Healthy Places	Healthy People
Create friendly stairwells and walking loops. Consider work site staff teams 'sponsoring' a stairwell or track, decorating and promoting its use		•	
Create a dedicated exercise space. Consider the budget required to provide exercise equipment, TV and DVD player with fitness DVDs, or a stretching space		•	
Take part in the 'beactive Corporate Cup', informing participants of training opportunities (consider time in lieu arrangements)			•
Promote regular walking including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Lunch time walking > Groups or walking team challenges > Heart Foundation walking groups > Provision of pedometers 		•	

Provide access to showers, change rooms, locker facilities where possible, or offer alternatives if these facilities are not within scope of your workplace		•	
Create bike storage space to encourage active transport to and from work		•	
Hold cycling information sessions about defensive cycling strategies, cycling road rules and bicycle maintenance			•
Provide onsite physical activity classes (for example, yoga or pilates) after discussing with staff their ideal class type, preferred times and days		•	
Coordinate an eight, ten or 12-week physical activity challenge, focused on individual goals to increase levels of physical activity		•	

Ideas for preventing sedentary practices within the workplace

Description	Healthy Vision	Healthy Places	Healthy People
Place the topic of creating a non-sedentary workplace on planning committees and staff-related meeting agendas	•		
Encourage stretch breaks, standing and walking within meetings and work training sessions			•
Support and promote regular stretch and walk breaks for delivery and transport employees, account for this time in delivery schedules	•		•
When purchasing new office equipment consider the purchase of height-adjustable desks so employees are able to work standing or sitting		•	
Provide computer software with pop up messages or disabling mechanisms that support regular breaks and actively encourage breaks with posters and within newsletters		•	
Set up print stations, bins, lunchrooms and other facilities away from work stations		•	
Audit the amount of sitting time that employees are participating in to give you a starting point for improvement			•

Want to know how your physical activity strategy is going?

Head to Step Four: Evaluate your program

For more information on physical activity and the workplace and supporting employees to be more physically active, as well as links to promotional materials and services, go to the Healthy Workers - Healthy Futures website www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/healthyworkers

Mental and emotional wellbeing

Why promote workplace wellbeing?

Work is generally considered to be beneficial to mental health and wellbeing. It can contribute to an individual's sense of identity and self-worth; provide opportunities to develop skills, form relationships and practice social skills. However, prolonged or repeated exposure to work related stress or even a single serious event can cause adverse health effects and reduce a person's capacity to work.⁴³ Workplace stressors might include bullying, unreasonable workload, inflexible work scheduling, or inability to participate in job related decisions.

It's estimated that one out of every seven workdays lost due to mental health, are attributable to work-related issues.⁴⁴ In Australia this comes at an annual cost of \$200 million to workplaces.⁴⁵

These health issues could include stress, depression and anxiety. Workers in specific industries, including medical practitioners, law enforcement, defence, teaching, nursing and social work, are more likely to develop poor mental health.⁴⁶

Good mental health, and a positive frame of mind, means employees are better equipped to resist stress, tackle challenges and develop resilience.⁴⁷ An individual's mental health and wellbeing can be enhanced when focus on addressing smoking, alcohol, nutrition and physical activity (SNAP) risk factors is made. The adoption of these healthy behaviours creates a state of sound emotional wellbeing and resilience.

The benefits of taking action to address work-related stress, physical and emotional health can also have a positive impact on the organisation, including:

- > Creation of a positive work environment, with higher job satisfaction
- > Decreased staff turn-over, illness and absenteeism
- > Reduced accidents and incidents
- > Improved employee and customer loyalty.⁴¹

How do we support employees in their mental and emotional wellbeing?

The workplace can provide an ideal setting for educating people on the link between health and wellbeing. It is also the obvious place to provide a foundation for employee and visitor wellbeing, since much of our time is spent in the workplace.

Employers have a duty of care to recognise and appropriately manage the aspects of the workplace that can impact general wellbeing, and should appreciate that factors in an employee's personal life can affect mental health.

Listed on the following pages are some suggestions to manage and improve the wellbeing of employees. The suggestions include addressing the balance of emotional health through activities that can resolve stress. These include healthy eating, participation in physical activity and social interaction in the workplace community, as well as addressing stressors within the workplace.



Ideas to get started:

Description	Healthy Vision	Healthy Places	Healthy People
Include staff wellbeing on relevant meeting and planning agendas. This may include: > flexible working arrangements > return to work planning > social planning	•		
Manage staffing levels to ensure that adequate resources are available to meet workload requirements during times of high demand	•		
Survey or consult with Health and Wellbeing Committee, health and safety representatives and staff to determine work related stressors and encourage contribution of ideas to minimise stressors	•		•
Initiate a feedback mechanism or forum for employees to participate in general or specific issue decision making	•		
Develop appropriate policies and procedures in workplace bullying prevention and occupational violence. Ensure managers and team leaders are appropriately trained to support the policy	•		
Develop and support a procedure for addressing conflict, grievances and critical incidents in the workplace	•		
Establish a culture of recognising and taking lunch breaks and other breaks as awarded in your sector. Provide suitable spaces for these breaks	•	•	
Include a regularly updated social calendar and volunteering opportunities in staff induction materials along with other relevant wellbeing policy and information	•		
Analyse the level of noise and excessive or restricted unnatural light in workspaces and improve where able		•	
Promote Employee Workplace Assistance Program as an option to confidentially discuss stress, anxiety, confidence or other issues			•
Promote opportunities to manage and contribute to a social planning committee or calendar			•
Promote links to local community opportunities such as book clubs, libraries, art, dance, sporting, craft and woodworking clubs			•
Provide links and updates to local support services, such as local chronic disease management groups, support groups, domestic abuse support, mental health support, financial and time management services and local community health services			•

Have an accredited guest speaker attend the worksite to discuss health and wellbeing on topics such as helping those in distress			•
Provide on-site seminars or workshops on a number of topics such as financial planning, stress reduction techniques, organisation management			
Update staff on recognised health assessment tools (self-assessment or services offered by local services for example, General Practitioner practices)			•

Building on your program:

Description	Healthy Vision	Healthy Places	Healthy People
Senior management encourage work life balance with policies and practices reflecting individual employee needs	•		
Provide training opportunities to team leaders and management regarding managing and addressing emotional distress, building resilience or other			•
Audit the amount of space available for relaxation, storage and socialising. Improvements (where able) could include adding comfortable chairs, reading materials, lighting, access to healthy food and drink options, private phone call areas, managing noise levels, cleanliness and accessibility to safe storage of personal belongings		•	
Consider enforced break opportunities for example, computer disabling programs, worksite stop and stretch or rest breaks		•	
Create opportunities for management and team leaders to attend Mental Health First Aid or other similar accredited programs			•
Allocate time to employees to take part in Mental Health Awareness training or other similar accredited program			•
Conduct sleep and fatigue management seminars with either a guest speaker or appropriately trained employee			•

Whilst the focus of a good workplace wellbeing program will be on the creation of a workplace environment that fosters a safe, respectful and positive workplace, general health concerns and social responsibility can also be addressed. Consider how some of these additional ideas might fit into the wellbeing component of your health and wellbeing program:

Description	Healthy Vision	Healthy Places	Healthy People
Implement and enforce a comprehensive sun safety program for employees (where relevant)	•		•
Host a general wellness challenge over several weeks focused on wellbeing, for example, improved stress management techniques, increase fruit and vegetable intake, trialling new exercise ideas			•
Run an annual family fun day or workplace picnic. Consider opportunities for a guest celebrity to attend or access to free give-aways. Think broadly, egg and spoon races, a healthy cooking challenge, game-show or quiz night			•
Offer staff access to confidential personal health assessments. These can focus on chronic disease risk factors but also include sight and hearing tests, stress and blood screening tests			•
Create a health 'lending library' including a health journal subscription, quality nutrition and fitness books or magazines and information on goal setting		•	
Promote, local and roving cancer screening units, such as BreastScreen and vaccination programs. Allow employees time to visit local services or register the unit to come to your workplace		•	
Survey staff about local volunteer and fundraising opportunities, and establish committees to increase participation (as appropriate)			•

Want to know how your wellbeing strategy is going?

Head to Step Four: Evaluate your program

For more information on wellbeing and supporting employees to have positive interaction with their workplace, as well as links to promotional materials and services, go to the Healthy Workers - Healthy Futures website www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/healthyworkers

Promoting a healthy weight

Why promote a healthy weight?

Workplace programs are effective at reducing body weight, when used appropriately and with mechanisms to increase physical activity and improve foods available in and around the workplace.⁴⁸ This is important as recent statistics indicate that over half of all South Australian adults are overweight or obese.¹⁸

The *Healthy Workers – Healthy Futures* initiative doesn't focus, or advocate for a focus, on weight (such as biometric measurements of employees). However, it is important to recognise that employees often want to learn more about their healthy weight range.

Encouraging discussion and opportunities regarding healthy weight may encourage employees to take part in activities on other topics offered in the workplace. And remember, being underweight can pose just as many health risks as being overweight.

How do we help employees to maintain a healthy weight?

The following table provides appropriate options for policies and approaches to promote healthy weight ranges and its relationship to general health. There are many ways to support your employees through education, promotion and creation of a supportive environment to assist employees to attain and maintain a healthy weight.

Ideas to get you started:

Description	Healthy Vision	Healthy Places	Healthy People
Promote annual healthy weight week with promotions and materials		•	
Encourage recognition of healthy food, activity and healthy living with posters and promotion materials		•	
Host a general wellness challenge over several weeks with a healthy eating and activity focus for example, increase fruit and vegetable intake, new activity or trying new foods and cooking new recipes			•
Encourage employees to seek the assistance of accredited and trained health professionals such as dietitians or Do it For Life services for specific dietary advice, including under and overweight concerns			•
Promote workplace Employee Assistance Programs which often offer services around behaviour change and goal setting			•
Promote visiting local General Practitioners. There are several referral options to health professionals and a General Practitioner can conduct overall health risk assessments			•
Organise a question and answer nutrition session or drop in day with a dietitian			•
Organise an on-site question and answer session or drop in day with an exercise physiologist or qualified personal trainer			•
Allow for access to support coaching telephone services during work hours			•
Offer confidential Body Mass Index checks with your organisation's nurse or local medical clinic			•

For more information on promoting a healthy weight in the workplace, as well as links to promotional materials and services, go to the Healthy Workers - Healthy Futures website www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/healthyworkers

Promotion Planning

At this point you probably have some good ideas about how your workplace health and wellbeing program will run. Now you need to promote it.

It is important that your program is promoted to employees. People can only get involved in the program if they know about it, and know how to take part. Promotion is vital to the success of your program because it will:

- > Create recognition of your program and its 'brand'
- > Stimulate interest, anticipation and motivation
- > Inform potential participants of their role in the program
- > Provide important contact details.

Before each activity or event, you should ensure that there is plenty of promotion throughout the workplace to relevant staff. Thought and planning is required to ensure staff are aware of each activity and have enough notice to participate or attend.

Let the organisation (managers and employees) know about your program, what it aims to achieve, and the things that you are doing in your workplace to support health and wellbeing. This may include promoting new or reviewed policies, or changes and upgrades to facilities, for example notifying employees about repairs to walkways or the purchase of a new microwave.

Check with management or your Human Resources department regarding policies on the ways you can advertise or promote your program. Also consider who in your workplace has the skills and knowledge to assist you in developing and distributing your marketing materials, such as a marketing team member or someone with an interest in design.

Here are some ideas on how to market and promote your program:



Marketing your program.



Step Four: Monitor and review

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Step Four Checklist		
	Small Business	Medium to Large Business
Recorded the outcomes of the program and maintained a record of all activities/environmental changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintained regular feedback from participants	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continued to look for new opportunities, links to workplace structures and other local resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collated feedback from participants and stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regularly compared outcomes to initial goals and reflected on all successes and challenges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Established regular feedback loop to stakeholders and management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recognised the efforts and support of key employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Continued planning for next phase of program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Step Four: Monitor and review

Record keeping

It's important to maintain good records of the program, just as you would for any project taking place in the workplace.

By maintaining appropriate records you:

- > Make reporting to management and other key people much easier
- > Keep everyone involved informed and up-to-date
- > Maintain the momentum of the program when other priorities arise, such as key team member departures or holidays
- > Are prepared for any unexpected issues such as injury, damage to infrastructure or cost blowouts
- > Assist future planning by looking at records of past events
- > Are reminded of the outcomes of your hard work.

Keep the following records for each event or activity, and store these records securely with one person responsible for them. Your organisation may have additional requirements and their own templates. Some templates to consider include:

- > **Activity planning template:** a planning document which also details the history of planning and reminds you who was responsible for each task.
- > **Promotions plan:** a template used to record your planning for promoting each activity and event, listing who is responsible and key dates. By having a record of the promotion effort you may be able to determine the most and least successful promotion methods when directly comparing event outcomes.
- > **Risk assessment:** since a risk-free environment isn't possible, it is important to calculate the risks involved with activities and events within your program. By accounting for these risks, you can develop strategies to deal with emergencies if they occur and consider the actions required to prevent these happening in the first place.
- > **Activity log sheet:** a report of the event or activity, detailing how the activity ran and a record of participation rates.
- > **Participant satisfaction and feedback survey:** to record and collate employee participation and feedback of your event or activity.

Evaluate your program

What is evaluation? Why do it?

Evaluation is the process of collecting, analysing and reporting on the impacts (positive or negative) of any particular elements within your program. It allows you to use previous experiences to guide and improve your program and determine whether the program was a well-targeted investment.

This important process determines how you have made a difference to the health and wellbeing of employees, and to the workplace culture and environment.

Ongoing evaluation and review will see your program become established in your organisation as an initiative worth maintaining and investing in.

Think back to the action planning step, when you had to identify goals (why) objectives (how) and strategies (what) for the health and wellbeing priorities in your workplace. You have put that plan in place and now it's time to work out how to measure the effectiveness of these elements.

When planning the evaluation of your program remember that evaluation doesn't need to be long and complex to be effective. Simply consider:

- > Setting aside time during and after the program to evaluate and report on results
- > Understanding participants' time constraints and setting evaluation criteria that still give you results
- > Talking with your key stakeholders about the type and style of evaluation they're looking for, and how they want to see program results reported. Include this in your communications plan
- > The privacy of participants in the evaluation process, participants should be unidentifiable throughout the process and data must be stored securely
- > It is unlikely you'll see results immediately in relation to your organisation's goals for employee health and wellbeing. In fact it may take up to three years to show significant changes. Collecting and reporting on this data is still useful but consider capturing simple data, such as employee participation, satisfaction, and impact on health knowledge, skills and motivation.

How do I evaluate?

Take these steps to help ensure the results of your evaluation are meaningful and useful.

A: Identify indicators

By setting goals, objectives and strategies, (particularly SMART goals) as part of your planning, you have already set the starting point to evaluating your program. The outcomes that you wanted from your goals, objectives and strategies will give you clues as to what data needs to be collected over the life of your program.

Refer back to the *Action planning* fact sheet to assist you. Try to address the following indicators:

- > Outcome: Measuring why you did it (the goals of your program)
 - > What were the effects on your organisation and employees?
 - > Were there changes in health, absenteeism/presenteeism or staff turnover rates?
- > Impact: Measuring if what you did made a difference (your program objectives)
 - > Was there a change in the health knowledge or skills of employees?
 - > Were there physical, cultural and/or organisational changes to the workplace environment, which supported health and wellbeing?
- > Process: Measuring how well you did it (the strategies that you used)
 - > How effective were your strategies and activities particularly in relation to: participant numbers and satisfaction, the ability to reach a wide number and variety of employees, venue and service provider satisfaction?
 - > Did activities generally run according to plan and budget?

B: Collect the information

Data can be collected in a number of ways to form a comprehensive evaluation. Think about which of the following might best suit your needs and your workplace. A mix of qualitative (feedback and comments) and quantitative (numerical) data should be collected. This data can be collected from:

- > Surveys (online, on paper, in person)
- > Numbers (participants)
- > Focus groups
- > Human Resources data and reports
- > Interviews
- > Observations.

Try to get as many participants to provide feedback as possible, so that you have a broad sample of opinions. This will provide a better overall picture of how participants really felt and behaved.

C: Analyse the information

Look at the results that you have obtained, and draw conclusions from the data to determine the effectiveness of your strategy. Include in your analysis, the comments and conclusions on your strategy log sheet. This will tell you if there were any outside factors affecting your results, for example conflicting work priorities preventing attendance on the day of your event.

D: Review and report

Taking the time to review the results, gives the team the chance to reflect on the successes, the challenges, the strengths and the weaknesses of the program and an opportunity to plan for the future.

Your workplace may have had specific requirements for reporting and may provide a template and process in which to do this. Even if your workplace does not require this step, take the opportunity to recount and share the information with the wider workplace. Include the participants themselves, key stakeholders, management and team leaders. By promoting this phase of your program you draw attention back to its existence and this naturally generates interest in its future.

Ideas to help you evaluate your health and wellbeing program



How do you know if your strategy has been a success? Smoke free, healthy eating, drink responsibly, be active, wellbeing.



For more information, try these websites:

The South Australian Community Health Research Unit, Flinders University. Evaluation Wizard: Assists you to build your evaluation plan.

Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (USA) Workplace Health Promotion Evaluation concepts and Ideas.

Centre for Health Promotion Health Communication Unit, 2005 Evaluating Comprehensive Workplace Health Promotion.

Maintain freshness

Over time, consider revitalising your workplace health and wellbeing program, and reminding management and employees of its importance to them.

The following tips will help you to maintain the freshness and momentum of your program over its lifetime. Hints that your program isn't running as well as anticipated might include lagging participation numbers or events and activities that don't run to plan. Consider the following tips:

- > Take a phased approach, so you don't do too much at once
- > Consider changing tack if your program isn't achieving participation response. Think about tweaking formats, timing, providers or incentives
- > Consider a guest speaker to present on certain topics
- > Mix your health and wellbeing events with other events that are happening in the workplace to maximise involvement
- > Remember to reconsider influences outside your program that may be affecting morale and involvement. Tell management about the impact these influences might be having and how improvements could be made
- > Consider revamping your promotions to increase awareness and interest
- > Link your activities to others going on in your local community or with national campaigns
- > Re-convene your Health and Wellbeing Committee to discuss whether an increased diversity of membership is required
- > Go back to the needs assessment step and consider whether it might be useful to re-assess employee interests. These can change over time based on the season, media popularity or even with employee turnover
- > Be creative in your incentives and rewards to raise interest and motivation and participation levels.

More ideas needed?



Go to the [Healthy Workers - Healthy Futures initiative website](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/healthyworkers) to access health events and links to South Australian campaigns www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/healthyworkers

Incentives and rewards

Workplace health and wellbeing initiative studies have shown that one of the key factors in the success of thriving programs is the inclusion of incentives or rewards. These lead to stronger participant involvement and a larger number of health behaviour changes which are sustained for a longer period.²

It is important to consider the following when deciding if you will offer incentives or rewards for participation:

- > Will management approve use of program funds for incentives?
- > Are incentives required for all activities and events or only a selection?
- > Who will receive the rewards, all attendees or only dedicated 'active' participants?
- > How will you reward extensive participation, for example venue hosts and event organisers?

Care should be taken to ensure value and appeal to all employees (sometimes this might include a large range of preferences and income levels), and that incentives do not appear tokenistic. At the same time however, they don't necessarily have to have a large cost attached. Ask employees what they would consider a positive and enjoyable reward.

Celebrating achievements

It is common to celebrate a program as it nears its completion. Ideally, your program will gain momentum and the program will continue, however you may have a turnover of employees involved in the program (for example, organisers, Health and Wellbeing Committee members and champions). Alternatively, you may wish to celebrate milestones within the program.

Celebrate participant input and recognise hard work where it's deserved. Programs such as these often require the dedication and energy of motivated people and this shouldn't be taken for granted. Additionally, a key milestone would be an ideal time to recognise participants' achievements, for example sustaining exercise levels or ceasing smoking (where they are happy to share this information).

Reward and celebration doesn't have to be financially draining, but mention could be made in employee newsletters, through certificates or celebrated at staff meetings.

Need ideas?



Incentive and rewards.



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