

## healthier work



### CASE STUDY: Manteena Pty Ltd

#### Name and position of person completing the survey:

Sharon Costigan  
HR Manager  
Manteena Pty Ltd

#### Number of employees within organisation:

85

#### Brief description of your organisation

Building and Construction Project Managers based in Canberra, with a team in Wollongong.

#### Why did your organisation start a workplace health and wellbeing program?

The Manteena Executive have a strong interest in health and wellbeing and have been undertaking some activities for a number of years, including offering staff annual health checks and flu shots and participating in and supporting community activities.

The Manteena Executive recognises and promotes the notion that people are the most important aspect of the business. As such they felt it imperative from a business as well as a social commitment to put in place strategies that support staff to maintain their health and wellbeing.

#### What did your organisation do to get a health and wellbeing program started?

From 2007 Manteena began looking at what it could do to help staff focus more on their health. In addition to the health checks and flu shots we began to organise fruit in the workplace to promote healthier eating and reduce the consumption of 'fast food'.

We were also aware of the high incidence of alcohol and drug use, and also noted the suicide rates in the Building and Construction Industry generally so we opted to engage an Employee Assistance Program provider. We contracted The OzHelp Foundation to provide support and health promotion services for Manteena staff as part of a company strategy to assist staff better manage the stresses of life and to promote both mental and physical wellness.



Manteena staff taking part in  
Cycle 4 Life

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This new service commenced in late 2007. Under this agreement our staff have access to support and counselling (confidential), critical incident management and crisis support/counselling, training programs that support people to manage aspects of life, health promotion activities and outreach services.

In late 2008 OzHelp provided health checks for our staff through the Tradies Tune-Up and the aggregated results prompted further action from the Manteena Executive to promote health and wellbeing more strongly in the workplace.

From this a policy was devised to allow staff paid time to undertake physical activity during the work day. Staff nominated or 'registered' their activities and the process began. Guidelines were developed to assist staff in planning their activities, and the program was promoted through our communications channels.

As well an overarching plan was developed, which is simple in actions but is aimed at reducing the risks to workplace injury, reducing sick leave and aiming to improve the general health and wellbeing of all staff. The plan falls under the Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy and progress is reported.

"There is now greater awareness of health and wellbeing issues and what opportunities are available to people within the community"

### **Were there any barriers that had to be overcome to get the program started? If so, how did you achieve this?**

One barrier that has consistently remained in place is the view by some staff that we are 'here to work' and do not understand the benefits of taking that extra bit of time away from the desk or workspace to get some exercise and to clear the mind. We have been working on breaking that down through various communications including the Senior Management Team advocating the approach

and also setting an example. Another barrier is the general busy-ness of work and getting the job done – sometimes it is easier not to make the time to exercise or eat properly!

### **What were some of the initial strategies of your health and wellbeing program?**

Initial strategies included:

- Sun smart actions
- Starting up the EAP program
- Annual flu shots and Tradies Tune-up health checks, including mental health check,
- Quit smoking actions such as staff involvement in Quitober

This has now expanded to also include:

- Physical activity time of 3 half hour sessions per week paid time. These activities do not have to cost anything to the participant and cost the company 1.5 hours of work time/wages for individuals to participate. Examples are walking groups, playing squash at lunch time, golf after work (leaving early), and running groups
- Participating in community events – this crossed over with Manteena's support of various community causes such as the Canberra Fun Run, the Hawkesbury Classic, Cycle for Life etc
  - Subsidising gym activities such as Yoga / pilates classes
- Mental Health Awareness training such as staff participating in SafeTALK run by Ozhelp
- Promoting group/social activities that promote interpersonal relationships and support, but also raise awareness of social / health issues and incorporate some fun (eg our annual RSPCA Cupcake challenge, Harmony Day Food sharing)
- Health promotion activities including all work sites having available a

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variety of health promotion brochures and information

- Health promotion information sessions – Hard Hat Chats – which has been a joint effort with OzHelp who have developed the sessions and are piloting them on Manteena work sites with funding provided by the ACT Government Health Directorate as part of our 2010 Safe Work ACT Award for Best Workplace Health and Wellbeing Program.

## **What strategies have been effective in achieving staff participation in health and wellbeing initiatives?**

Staff participation is very much a personal decision although we promote activities. Paid time has been successful in encouraging people to do something – particularly for those who may not make the time to undertake exercise.

## **What are some of the benefits that have been achieved as a result of your organisation's health and wellbeing program?**

Some staff, who ordinarily would not get a check-up unless they were unwell have had some serious health problems identified at their Tradies Tune-up health check. Follow-up of people at risk by the OzHelp staff involved in the Tradies Tune-up is promoting greater awareness of individual health.

Our latest Tradies Tune-up results show that overall our health statistics are improving and that our results are more positive than the industry as a whole.

Increased knowledge of mental health issues has meant that some staff have been steered toward getting help when they perhaps would have tried to manage their issues alone. The number of staff receiving counselling with OzHelp is steady which means people are getting assistance.

There is now also greater awareness of health and wellbeing issues and what opportunities are available to people within the community.

## **Have you been able to measure the return on investment since implementing your health and wellbeing program? If so, what were you able to measure and what results have you seen to date?**

Trend monitoring is undertaken as part of business practice such as monitoring hours of work, absenteeism, and staff survey results on work satisfaction. These all show improvements across the board and if trends are noted actions are taken immediately by relevant managers to address these issues. For example if someone is working too many hours or building up excessive leave.

The Tradies Tune-up result comparison with the rest of industry shows we are on the right track. Our staff survey also shows that staff appreciate the support and commitment the company places on health and wellbeing. We have promoted our program in recruitment. We have also been approached independently of recruitment actions by people wanting to work at Manteena due to the focus we put on our people and values – this shows that we are an employer of choice!

“We have also noted improved team work and staff relationships”

## **Would you be willing to speak with other workplaces that need help or advice developing a health and wellbeing program? If so, please provide your contact details.**

For more details on Manteena's health and wellbeing program please contact Sharon Costigan via email [s.costigan@manteena.com.au](mailto:s.costigan@manteena.com.au) or call 62807033.

*If you would like to share your organisation would like to share its health and wellbeing experiences with other workplaces, please contact the Healthier Work team by emailing [healthierwork@act.gov.au](mailto:healthierwork@act.gov.au) or phoning 02 6207 3000 (option 1, then 4).*