GOODWIN AGED CARE

555 staff

Goodwin Aged Care was interviewed by Grosvenor Management Consulting on 2 May 2018 as part of a formal Healthier Work Evaluation. Goodwin Aged Care runs a number of nursing homes and aged care services across the ACT. They have 500 employees on their sites, plus over 100 staff in their remote workforce.

Turin Prasantha is Goodwin Aged Care’s Manager People and Culture. In 2016, Goodwin had introduced an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and begun a concerted effort to improve health in the workplace. Turin heard about Healthier Work at an ACT Worksafe event sponsored by Access Canberra. Goodwin’s CEO was supportive, so Turin put together a business case. He secured funding to hire a dedicated Wellbeing and Rehabilitation Advisor and a budget to implement Healthier Work.

“Healthier Work has been very valuable to us,” says Turin. “They helped us to put together the business case to get started and they have provided material support for many of our challenges, for example giving us water bottles for our staff during our hydration initiative and helping to organise and fund seminars. We post the content from their monthly newsletters onto our intranet, the Healthier Work networking lunches and breakfasts are very useful, but most of all, Michael’s support and mentoring over the last 24 months has been invaluable.”

With a workplace like Goodwin, ready to commit resources to health and wellbeing, Turin feels that participation in Healthier Work provides a ready supply of new ideas and a structured framework within which to implement them.

“We’ve created a seasonal calendar of activities, with two activities per month,” explains Turin. “Our initiatives have included distributing Fitbits for walking challenges, a hydration initiative and a recent round of flu shots, which had an 82% uptake from staff. Flu shots are very important given the nature of our business, we’re aiming to get that up to 95% next time.

“We put up ‘Quit Smoking’ posters and offered staff material help to quit smoking. Six staff members did; that sounds small, but it’s one of the hardest behaviours to change and the impact on their health is huge. We repeat some of our activities based on the participation rate and the feedback from staff. Our social events have been very good for morale, and events with food always have high participation!”

Goodwin has invested in Healthier Work, and so they have tracked their outcomes carefully. Turin says the business has already seen significant benefits.

“Absenteeism has fallen from 7% to 5.6% in the last 12 months; now we’re aiming for 4%. Staff turnover used to be around the industry average of 23%; it’s currently at 13.7%. We have improved employee engagement and all our managers agree that morale is visibly higher. In particular, we’ve made it easier for people to come back to work after injuries, and so we’ve seen a huge decrease in the time taken to return to work, and we estimate that we’ve saved $500,000 in rehab costs.”
This return on investment has given Goodwin Aged Care the confidence to commit even further to their staff’s health and wellbeing, bringing in more policies aimed at making Goodwin a healthier and happier place to work.

“As part of Healthier Work, we’ve introduced domestic violence leave,” says Turin. “Healthier Work has also inspired us to put together a business case for a suite of targeted activities and reforms to improve our mature age [45+] workforce retention. Many of our jobs are very physical and can have quite antisocial hours, so we hope that by addressing some of those pressures and introducing more flexibility, we can induce more of our older staff to stay here.”