



ACT
Government

healthier
work

HELPING PEOPLE AND
BUSINESS THRIVE

CASE STUDIES 2017-18



PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

UNSW Canberra – 400 staff

UNSW Canberra is the only national academic institution with an integrated defence focus. Its strength is in defence-related security and engineering research. UNSW Canberra prides itself on its five research centres and unique state of the art facilities for its students.

Offering tailored health and wellbeing activities is an investment UNSW Canberra has embraced with enthusiasm since being recognised by Healthier Work almost four years ago.

“There is no better investment for a business than in their employees’ health and wellbeing,” says Vaish Muralidharan, Senior Health, Safety and Facilities Officer from UNSW Canberra. “Physical and mental health and wellbeing influence each other and effect productivity, absenteeism, presenteeism costs and morale.”

“I strongly believe prevention is better than cure.”

UNSW Canberra’s range of activities for physical and emotional health is impressive, ranging from boot camp and nutrition demonstrations to resilience seminars, walking groups, yoga and the popular Global Challenge, where teams of seven compete globally over 100 days to improve physical and psychological health. In addition, they bring people together for national ‘days’ such as Ride to Work Day and Harmony Day.

“It does not have to be expensive or time-consuming,” explains Vaish. “Linking your staff into other programs in the community is a good start.”

Given the size of the university, they decided to share the coordination load to encourage greater engagement with staff within the different schools.

“We decided that trying to do it all centrally was not working and now we have a team of five health and wellbeing champions across the various schools who actively campaign the events among their unit staff members,” says Vaish. “Since doing this, we have seen a gradual rise in interest and engagement among staff in general.”

The investment in time and planning has paid off, with an improvement in social engagement, morale and productivity among employees.

“Kudos to the ACT Government and Healthier Work for this initiative and in supporting many more workplaces in making an investment that is worthwhile!”

