Goodwin Aged Care Services – 545 staff

Goodwin Aged Care is a community-based, not-for-profit organisation that provides Canberra and regional communities with experience-driven independent living villages, reliable in-home care, and superior standard residential aged care facilities.

“We recognise how important it is to have healthy and happy employees who feel valued, and we want to help provide them with opportunities to make a difference to their wellbeing,” says Emma Woods, Wellbeing and Rehabilitation Advisor at Goodwin Aged Care.

Over the several years that Goodwin has implemented a wellness calendar, they have seen an overall improvement in staff morale. Staff culture has also been enhanced, with workers naturally encouraging each other to be healthier.

“With such a large and dispersed workforce, the main challenge for Goodwin is to get the word out about what activities are available to attend and when they’re on,” explains Emma. “A lot of our employees work across a 24/7 roster, so aligning events and activities so that all employees have a chance to participate can be difficult.”

Some of their successful initiatives include multicultural food festivals (where staff register to bring a traditional dish to share with their colleagues at their staff meeting), a health quiz prize draw (where staff are given a free Goodwin water bottle with a short quiz inside), and Thank You boards (which give employees the chance to recognise each other’s efforts).

They also trialled a ‘health journey’ where staff could register their weight loss goal and several staff received a gift voucher for their weight loss efforts.

Goodwin suggests having a few keen champions from different areas or teams – particularly with a larger workforce – to spread the word and help build enthusiasm.

Plus, it’s important to recognise how valuable a flexible and tailored approach can be.

“It’s best to start small with your activities, and then as staff become more engaged, gather their ideas and feedback to tailor some of your wellness activities,” suggests Emma. “If we hold workshops, we ensure that there is more than one session available or hold them on more than one day so that more staff have a chance to attend.

“I think it is exciting to offer staff something that is of benefit to them, and sometimes something that they can enjoy with their colleagues, for example participating in the Dementia Australia Memory Walk or Canberra Times Fun Run.”

No matter how many years Goodwin has been involved with Healthier Work, they still rely on the expertise of others to keep them inspired.

“Healthier Work ACT has been instrumental in providing resources, advice, and pointing us in the right direction with getting our wellness calendar going,” says Emma.