A long-term wellbeing focus

Office of Parliamentary Counsel – 106 staff

The Office of Parliamentary Counsel is a Commonwealth Government agency delivering legislative drafting and advisory services for Bills and subordinate legislation, preparing compilations of laws, and publishing laws and instruments on the Federal Register of Legislation website.

The Office of Parliamentary Counsel uses thorough planning and evaluation to devise their health and wellbeing activities, and this has been integral to their continued success.

“High levels of staff satisfaction and positive feedback about the activities we have run keeps us inspired,” says Susan Roberts, General Manager and Chief Finance Officer.

Their 12-month plan involves a series of activities to support staff mental health, such as Bootcamp for the Brain, as well as mental health training for managers, supervisors and other staff. They also offer health checks, and nutrition and cooking presentations.

Importantly, keeping their people healthy is truly valued and supported by management.

“As many employees stay with the Office for many years, both short-term and long-term health issues are important to us,” says Susan.

It makes a difference, with higher levels of staff awareness of the importance of good health and wellbeing at the Office.

“I see more people using the stairs instead of the lift, getting out for some form of physical activity at lunch time, and making healthier food choices,” Susan says.

Susan notes that at times the plan’s activities will ebb and flow with the pace of work and that’s to be expected.

“It can be challenging to introduce new activities and encourage participation when staff are very busy,” says Susan. “To overcome this, we generally try to choose more than one date or time to run an activity to widen the opportunity for more staff to attend, and we also try to conduct most activities on the premises.”

Regular engagement of staff through a champion network can help keep the plan running.

“Form a group of champions from all levels across the organisation to assist in creating and implementing a healthier workplace,” Susan recommends. “Survey staff and ask them what they would like to see in the plan.”