Get moving at work

A RESOURCE KIT FOR WORKPLACE HEALTH & WELLBEING PROGRAMS
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The Premier’s Physical Activity Council acknowledges the support of WorkCover Tasmania in the production of this kit. To access WorkCover’s wide range of health and safety publications please visit: www.workcover.tas.gov.au
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This kit has been developed by the Premier’s Physical Activity Council in consultation with Business and Community Pty Ltd.

Suggested Citation: Premier’s Physical Activity Council – Tasmania (2007). Get Moving at Work: A resource kit for workplace health and wellbeing programs.
Welcome

This resource kit has been designed to assist organisations, and in particular employers, to implement health and wellbeing programs in the workplace. It outlines the impact of the programs on employee health and wellbeing, workplace productivity levels and the economy as a whole.

It also examines the background of workplace health and wellbeing, the financial and corporate reasons for investing in such programs and the outstanding benefits that can be gained from implementing a workplace health and wellbeing program.

Workplace health and wellbeing initiatives can range from simple programs requiring minimal resources to more detailed programs supported by substantial resourcing. This kit will provide you with information on how to develop a program suitable for your organisation.

Along with an identified process to develop a program, the kit includes a range of resources and case studies on health and wellbeing programs provided by Tasmanian employers.
1. Your simple guide
Your simple guide

Introduction

Each workplace has a variety of options for implementing a health and wellbeing program. These range from simple to more detailed approaches to establishing a program.

For those ready to get started right away, Your Simple Guide will provide a basic approach to getting underway. It shows that spending lots of money is not always necessary and implementing initiatives can actually be done without great cost.

A workplace health and wellbeing program refers to activities or initiatives undertaken within the workplace that are designed to impact positively on the general health and wellbeing of workers. In some instances, such programs may also impact positively on the general health and wellbeing of the associated families of these workers.

It is important to highlight that workplace health and wellbeing programs will differ in cost, size and the range of initiatives offered. If you think you will need to implement a more detailed program, please see Your Detailed Guide.

Productivity and Profitability

Employing staff means relying on human resources for productivity and profitability. This is just as true for a small business as it is for a big business. If we rely on people for the ongoing operation of our business then we must also invest in keeping our people happy, motivated and healthy. Health and wellbeing in the workplace is an important strategy that benefits both the employer and employee.
Getting started

Setting the Foundation

Initial momentum may be sparked by the interest and enthusiasm of one employee. This person becomes the champion, providing the energy to encourage management and others within the workplace to get on board and move forward. Without this energy and enthusiasm it is not easy to establish commitment and without commitment there is little value in progressing.

**Building Commitment:**

The need to establish a solid commitment from management and employees is essential. A program or initiative supported by management has a firm foundation and is more likely to see higher employee engagement and involvement. Commitment from both staff and management contributes to a positive culture throughout the organisation. It is important for management to be openly seen to support the initiative and is even better if they can ‘talk the talk’ and ‘walk the walk’.

It is also important to make sure staff members understand the rationale behind the initiative. Be honest about what’s in it for both the company and its people. From a management perspective, the objective might be about improved productivity, whilst for the staff, the objective may be about having a better lifestyle and better work/life balance. A well-conducted program will achieve both these objectives.

**Involving Employees:**

The next important step in setting the foundation is to involve employees in the initial discussions. Here you can brainstorm ideas about what kinds of programs are needed, how they might be introduced and who would like to be involved. This is important to ensure your initiative or program is relevant to the people or environment at your workplace and will also help to engage participants.

**REMEMBER**

- Educate and highlight the benefits, to establish the WHY
- Encourage involvement and ideas, to determine the HOW
Constructing your simple health and wellbeing program

The key to getting started is to keep it relevant and simple.

Without a budget, your organisation’s contribution might be as simple as committing some time to getting started.

As part of this simple approach, there are no committees required and no policies to write, just a shared belief that some simple ideas could go a long way to improving the health and wellbeing of staff.

To identify the issues faced by staff, a big organisation might choose to undertake a whole-of-staff survey. This is not a necessary step to establish a simple health and wellbeing program. A simple approach might be as easy as approaching all, or a cross-section of, employees to identify their current issues, ideas and preferences.

For access to an employee health and wellbeing survey, please see the Resources section of this kit.

Along with an understanding of staff issues, an understanding of your workplace infrastructure (e.g. shower facilities, kitchen facility) and policies (e.g. flexible work time) will help you identify what initiatives are likely to be suitable for your workplace. Questions that might help you understand these issues are included in the workplace audit tool (please see the Resources section of this kit).

Planning is important. It clarifies what you are trying to achieve and the strategies you plan to use to achieve it. Your plan doesn’t have to be formal or highly-structured but it should establish a clear and shared understanding throughout the organisation, of the direction the program will take.
## Selecting some simple Strategies

In the **Resources** section of this kit you will find a range of strategies to consider. These range from simple strategies to those that require lots of planning and a more significant investment of time and money.

Remember to keep it simple, with strategies that are tailored to your organisation’s needs, employee interests and available resources.

A simple program might include any one, or a combination of, inexpensive strategies that link to the issues identified in your workplace. These strategies might include any of the following actions:

- provide educational material and other information on health and wellbeing issues
- host on-site visits from organisations such as QUIT Tasmania, or similar
- use promotional and motivational posters encouraging employees to make active choices, such as using the stairs instead of the lifts or escalators
- establish a physical activity notice board or circulate physical activity opportunities to staff via newsletters, pay slips, etc.
- provide access to filtered water to encourage appropriate hydration
- when catering for meetings, request the food supplier to provide foods of nutritional value
- if you have vending machines, stock them with healthy food
- provide a fresh fruit bowl in the meeting or lunch room
- provide a dedicated eating area that is clean, comfortable and inviting, to encourage staff not to eat at their desks.
- establish a simple ‘Walk Challenge’ (for examples, please see the Launceston City Council or call centre case studies)
- establish a time-in-lieu arrangement to support individual or group physical activity

Be inclusive in your selection of activities. Try to appeal to the majority, while being careful not to alienate others. For example, in addition to the more physical strategies, you might consider other low impact activities, like dancing. These types of options can help build a good program mix and encourage broad participation.
Managing your Program

Managing a program can be a very simple process. There are some fundamental steps to keep in mind when planning and delivering a program.

Program management comprises three key areas. These include:

- program design
- program implementation (coordination of activities)
- program evaluation.

You may choose to select initiatives as part of your program design and implement these to fit with workplace requirements.

Program evaluation can provide important insight into the success of the overall program or specific initiatives and generate ideas for future activities. The outcomes of your evaluation can also be used to promote the benefits of your health and wellbeing program within the organisation.

Evaluation can be done both formally and informally. This may include repeating the process you used to identify staff issues (e.g. a staff survey) or informal discussion amongst staff who took the opportunity to participate in particular initiatives.

Any kind of feedback will help you understand what worked and what could be improved for next time.

The key is to seek feedback from employees and then to act on that feedback!
A closing word

Improving health and wellbeing in the workplace is not a one-dimensional process. It can take time to change the culture of a workplace, but by involving employees and listening to what they have to say, you will be able to tailor a program to their needs, within the capacity of the organisation and the business operating environment.

A simple program is as much about showing a genuine interest in staff as is a sophisticated program. Taking care of staff and their health and wellbeing in the workplace will achieve greater productivity and better job satisfaction.

**A FLOW CHART FOR A SIMPLE WORKPLACE HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROGRAM**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Establish organisational commitment</th>
<th>Construct your program</th>
<th>Manage and evaluate your program</th>
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<td>Identify key champion(s)</td>
<td>Identify staff issues</td>
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<td>Ensure a commitment from management</td>
<td>Identify the workplace environment and policy issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage staff commitment</td>
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**Remember:**

*Excited about life means being excited about work.*
2. Your bottom line
Your bottom line

Part 1: Current Situation

The increasing demands of modern life over recent generations have eroded our standards of health and wellbeing. Gradually, we have fallen victim to competing demands, both at home and at work. The cost of this kind of lifestyle to our health and wellbeing has been profound on all levels: individual, workplace and community.

This direct cost has been reflected through workplace injury and disease, which is estimated at over $7 billion per year, nationally.¹ This alarming situation is played out in workplaces across Tasmania and represents an enormous cost to our employers, our community and our economy.

A health profile of Australian workers revealed that 62 per cent are overweight, 50 per cent are either totally inactive or engage only in minimal exercise and almost half survive on poor diets. Over 50 per cent of our workforce is overwhelmed and stressed and 56 per cent are in the medium to high-risk range associated with smoking and excessive drinking.²

To address this major concern, we must focus on the underlying causes of our poor health. The role of prevention is recognised, both within the workplace and outside, as a key to reducing disease and injury. As a primary element in any such prevention, the promotion of positive, healthy lifestyles and initiatives which both encourage and support this have been recognised as fundamental to reducing a range of chronic health conditions.

Over 50 per cent of our workforce is overwhelmed and stressed
1.1 Why Promote Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace?

Most adults spend at least half of their life working. Therefore it makes good sense to consider this environment as an important setting to address health and wellbeing issues.

Changes to the way we work are contributing to inactive lifestyles and unhealthy living. Our workplaces have become increasingly sedentary.

Labour-saving technology has significantly reduced the physical effort required, even for occupations that were traditionally very physical. The extension of this inactivity beyond the workplace is a major reason for our increasingly inactive lifestyles.

- Jobs today are significantly less physical and employees often sit for long periods of time in front of computers
- The range of leisure-time options are more often than not inactive activities, such as watching television or movies
- People are often working long hours in mentally and physically demanding positions
- Many employees have limited leisure-time during the working week
- It is common in many families for both parents to be employed outside the home, which results in an emphasis on doing domestic activities outside of work hours
- Many people hold down more than one part-time job.

These changes in the nature of work and our increasingly inactive lifestyles are compounded by the growth in consumption of fast foods, and general life stresses. The result is a negative impact on our health and wellbeing.

Occupational Health and Safety legislation means that the health of employees is, in fact, a duty of care for employers. Your health and wellbeing program will assist by contributing to these legal responsibilities.
1.2: The Workplace Impact

The increase in preventable disease and workplace injury, resulting from unhealthy living and low levels of physical activity, are a major cause of workplace absence or disruption in today’s workforce.

Across Australia, increases in the prevalence of degenerative disease and the ageing population have heightened the need to change lifestyle behaviours and increase physical activity levels. The workplace is a critical setting for such change.

An employer will benefit from the improved health and wellbeing in the workplace through reduction of the economic costs associated with high levels of sick leave, workplace accidents, poor productivity and increasing health-related litigation.

1.3: The Tasmanian Perspective

Seven out of every ten Tasmanians do not undertake sufficient physical activity to meet the National Physical Activity Guidelines of at least thirty minutes of moderate physical activity on most days of the week. The direct health care cost of physical inactivity nationally is $377 million per annum.

The impact of poor health and wellbeing in the workplace is felt across Tasmania, through reduced productivity, high stress levels, poor job satisfaction, increased sickness and high staff turnover.

With an ageing population, major state and national skill shortages and spiralling health costs, it is clear that Tasmanian workplaces will need to take the promotion of health and wellbeing very seriously.

In a 2001 survey of 220 Tasmanian employers, 75 per cent indicated that they regarded physical activity for employees as important or very important.
1.4: The Australian Perspective

A study undertaken by Medibank Private revealed that the “...healthiest Australian employees are almost three times more productive than their unhealthy colleagues.”

### COMPARISON OF THE AUSTRALIAN WORKER²

**Unhealthy:**
- 18 days annual sick leave
- Self-rated performance of 3.7 out of 10
- 49 effective hours worked (full-time) per month

- High fat diet
- Low energy levels and poor concentration
- Obese or overweight
- Irregular sleep patterns
- Poor stress management techniques

**Healthy:**
- 2 days annual sick leave
- Self-rated performance of 8.5 out of 10
- 143 effective hours worked (full-time) per month

- Healthy diet
- Fit, energetic and alert
- Normal body weight
- More attentive at work and better sleep patterns
- Actively manage stress levels
Part 2: A sound investment

2.1: The Workplace - ‘An Ideal Setting’

Workplaces across Tasmania are recognising the importance of health and wellbeing to productivity and profitability. Like their counterparts, both internationally and in other states of Australia, they can see that the road to improved workplace health and wellbeing is one that delivers greater job satisfaction, reduced staff-related costs, less absenteeism, reduced staff turnover, higher individual productivity and, ultimately, higher profits.

Promoting health and wellbeing in the workplace makes good business sense.

Not only does it contribute to a positive culture and a workplace surrounded by healthy, happy and balanced employees BUT it also contributes to the bottom line.

THE BENEFITS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROMOTION OF HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN OUR WORKPLACES INCLUDE:

- increased productivity
- improved staff health and wellbeing
- staff who feel valued
- increased staff morale, satisfaction and motivation
- decreased stress and other work-related illness
- reduced sick leave
- fewer worker’s compensation claims
- reduced employee turnover
- increased return on training and development investment
- improved corporate citizenship and image
- increased ability to attract new employees
- improved industrial relations
- improved alertness and concentration among staff

“Lifestyle ‘risk’ factors such as smoking, drinking, lack of physical activity and excess weight contribute to time away from work. Employee morale and stress in the workforce contribute to absenteeism and sick leave.”

The relationship between employee health and wellbeing and workplace performance sends a clear message to employers that the health and wellbeing of their workforce is a critical ingredient in management and business success. Management has a unique opportunity to create a culture at work that supports and encourages such initiatives.

So the question you might well ask is: Can I afford NOT to invest in the health and wellbeing of my workforce?
2.2 Tasmanian Workplaces ‘Leading the Way’

Many Tasmanian organisations have already recognised the benefits of promoting health and wellbeing in the workplace. Like their international counterparts, these workplace environments are providing supportive, coordinated and encouraging initiatives designed to improve the health and wellbeing of their employees.

Zinifex Tasmania has recognised the need to move beyond the ‘disposable asset’ view of people. “We want to care about them in and out of work.” Reference: Case Study – Zinifex, Rosebery Mine.

A Tasmanian call centre has reported that their program has been instrumental in reducing ‘lost-time injury-frequency’ by 50 per cent. Reference: Case Study – Call Centre.

Our Tasmanian Department of Police and Emergency Management highlight their impetus for establishing a health and wellbeing program: “If you’re not genuinely concerned about the health and wellbeing of your employees and invest energy into the whole person, you may get compliance but not commitment.” Reference: Case Study – Tasmanian Department of Police and Emergency Management.

By promoting positive, healthy lifestyle behaviours Tasmanian workplaces are playing a major role in the prevention of chronic disease and, in doing so, can also benefit from a more positive workplace and community culture, a reduction in workplace absenteeism and increased productivity.

As joint winner of the 2006 Workplace Safe Awards – Best Workplace Health and Wellbeing Program, Zinifex Rosebery mine, located on the west coast of Tasmania, is able to go further in involving the local community.

With absenteeism amounting to 8 to 10 per cent of all labour costs and musculo-skeletal injuries contributing to 42 per cent of workplace injuries, they became proactive in promoting healthy lifestyle choices.

“The workplace was transformed in terms of health interest and knowledge and the holistic approach witnessed the active involvement of spouses, families, schools and the local community.” Reference: Case Study – Zinifex, Rosebery Mine.

The emerging importance of workplace health and wellbeing programs is highlighted by the introduction of award programs such as:

- The Workplace Safe Awards – Best Workplace Health and Wellbeing Program category
- The Employer of Choice Awards

(see the Resources section for further information on these awards)
2.3: Australian and International Results

National and international studies provide compelling evidence supporting the value of workplace health and wellbeing initiatives.\(^9,10,12\) This evidence supports the impact such initiatives are having on physical, mental and social wellbeing amongst employees.

2.4: Reaping the Benefits

A shift in corporate philosophy that embraces health and wellbeing will lay a foundation for success. Such a philosophy is underlined by the following principles:

- an organisation’s most precious resource is its people
- concern and care for the health of people is a key to business success
- employee health is an integral part of the business and is built on the belief that all injuries - and most illnesses - are preventable
- healthy employees contribute significantly to an organisation’s competitive position
- a company with healthy employees will impact positively on its community and customers
- optimal employee health is consistent with business excellence
- people adopt values that are emphasised by their organisational leaders
- every employee at every level has responsibility for creating a healthy work environment and promoting healthy lifestyles.

An examination of Australian workplaces found: \(^12\)

- Organisations which implement health promotion strategies in the workplace can reduce their employees health risk factors by up to 56 per cent
- Productivity gains of up to 15 per cent can be achieved by upgrading the workplace environment
- The average worker is up to seven per cent less productive because of their health risks.
2.5: Attract and Retain the Best People

Attraction and retention of staff is a critical issue for Tasmanian organisations facing skill shortages or looking to engage the best staff.

Confront the skill shortage – engage the best staff – build your reputation – retain your most productive employees and improve your corporate image.

Build your reputation as an employer focused on the health and wellbeing of your staff and you will benefit from the retention and engagement of high quality employees that want to work in an environment that is interested in their health and wellbeing.

As an employer that encourages health and wellbeing you will not only stand out as an employer of choice, but it’s likely your bottom line will reflect the increased productivity within the workplace.
3. Your detailed guide
Introduction

The following section is focused on developing a comprehensive workplace health and wellbeing program. Organisational commitment and support, together with a structured framework to successfully develop and implement the program are critical to your success.

A workplace health and wellbeing program refers to activities or initiatives undertaken within the workplace that are designed to impact positively on the general health and wellbeing of workers. In some instances, such programs may also impact positively on the general health and wellbeing of the associated families of these workers.

It is important to highlight that workplace health and wellbeing programs will differ in cost, size and the range of initiatives between organisations. A simple program, as outlined in Your Simple Guide, can be implemented with little or no cost, while a more detailed program may be the result of a substantial investment.

Health and wellbeing is defined by the World Health Organisation as; “...a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

This section comprises three parts:

PART 1:

Setting the Foundation – getting the commitment, promoting the benefits, identifying the needs and setting the benchmarks.

PART 2:

Constructing your Health and Wellbeing Program - identifying suitable initiatives.

PART 3:

Managing your program.
Part 1: Setting the foundation

Setting the foundation is easy if you remember the following steps:

1. Establish **commitment**, especially from management within your workplace

2. Promote the **benefits** to employees and management

3. Look to build a picture of the health and wellbeing **issues currently impacting on employees**

4. Take into account your **workplace environment**, including infrastructure, policies and procedures.

*Let’s have a closer look at these steps!*
1.1 Establish Organisational Commitment

Building support for your health and wellbeing program is an important place to start. This commitment is the foundation for any health and wellbeing program. Three groups within the organisation should underline this commitment.

They include:

1. **Management and the Leadership Group** - should demonstrate their commitment to the program

2. **A Key Individual (or Group)** - must be prepared to drive the health and wellbeing program. This person must become the champion that provides the energy and motivation to drive the initial impetus and ongoing commitment. This person may be given the responsibility of program administration and coordination

3. **A Committee** - in larger organisations a committee representative of different interest groups within the organisation should ideally be charged with the responsibility of program planning and policy development. This may be either a new committee or an existing committee.

1.2 Promote the Benefits

The success of your health and wellbeing program will be a direct reflection on the enthusiasm of employees. Programs should therefore be introduced and promoted from the perspective of employees.

Employees are unlikely to be interested in the corporate benefits of a health and wellbeing program. Communicating a message that clearly outlines the benefits to them is a key element in setting the foundation.

Some messages that are important to communicate to the employee are; how the program is designed to improve their health, how they can access important information and how you will deliver the flexibility and opportunity for them to become more active and healthy.

These messages are more likely to build support and overcome reluctance, or even suspicion. A failure to engage employees in the development of the program is likely to create barriers. Without employee involvement during the foundation stage the program is less likely to succeed.
13: Identify the issues and establish your benchmarks

It is important that your program is designed to address the issues and needs of your employees. A simple staff survey is one way to identify the health and wellbeing issues facing staff.

**An employee health and wellbeing survey** will allow you to identify the key issues for staff and help you include initiatives in your program that are suited to their needs. This will increase the likelihood of your program making a difference and increase staff involvement in the program. To reassure staff and to encourage honest answers, surveys should be completed anonymously.

**An example** employee health and wellbeing survey is included in the Resources section of this kit.

Conducting an employee survey every 6 to 12 months is also one way to evaluate the progress of your program. This evaluation will help you to continually improve your program content and make sure it is making a difference.

**Other measures** you may want to use to evaluate the progress of your program include sick leave, absenteeism, medical assessments, fitness testing or progress against the workplace audit tool, discussed in the following section.

Information obtained from employee surveys, or other measures, must be used by the organisation to identify issues across the employee group and **not used by the organisation to identify issues for specific individuals**. Support for staff to identify individual issues (e.g. health checks), can be done as part of your program, in a confidential environment with trained professionals.

**Important Notes**

It is vital the collection of information to identify issues and measure program performance is done in a way that does not impinge on employee privacy. A high level of sensitivity should be given to personal health information.

**An organisation should not have access to or collect identifiable individual information.**

All care should be taken to ensure individual employees do not feel alienated if they are unable to participate in your program for any reason. By developing your program based on employee issues you will decrease the chances of this happening.

**Make health and wellbeing choices easy choices.**

**Remember** that ultimately, the organisation can only educate and provide opportunity. It is the employee that must choose their lifestyle. However, the organisation can undertake many activities that help make health and wellbeing choices easy choices.

An active communication and education program, along with ongoing encouragement and a supportive culture, are critical factors influencing motivation and sustained participation.
1.4: Assessing Your Workplace

Your existing **workplace environment** (e.g. infrastructure, policies, and procedures) will play a part in the kinds of activities chosen for inclusion in a health and wellbeing program. There will be areas within the physical environment that make it easy to conduct particular activities. For example, a multi-story building may provide an opportunity for a ‘take the stairs’ program, or the existence of shower facilities may make it easier to promote a ‘bike to work’ initiative.

**On the other hand**, the absence of these characteristics may make it difficult to include all suggested activities generated from employee surveys. For example, if a large number of employees showed an interest in a ‘bike to work’ initiative or a lunch time walk/run, the existence of bike racks, a shower and change room facilities becomes an important part of the decision making process. Without these the option is impractical.

Listed under **2.3 Multi-Level Approach** is a range of **environmental factors** that you might take into account. We refer to this approach as taking a ‘multi-level’ perspective. Simply put, it means taking into account your workplace and other factors that are likely to impact on the decisions you make as you establish your health and wellbeing program.

To assist in the evaluation of your workplace, a ‘workplace audit’ tool has been included in the **Resources** section of this kit. It will assist in identifying existing levels of support, along with barriers that might exist in the workplace physical infrastructure, policies or general procedures.

**Remember** to consult with employees in the workplace in order to identify their physical activity preferences. Once you have done this, you will need to find a balance between these preferences and what is practical in your physical environment.
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<tr>
<th>A CHECKLIST FOR ‘SETTING THE FOUNDATION’</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Do we have a commitment to the program from management and staff?</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Do we have an ongoing communication process that invites feedback and encourages participation?</td>
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<td>✓ Have we found out what the health and wellbeing issues are for staff?</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Have we assessed the workplace environment (policies, procedures, infrastructure) prior to program implementation?</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Have we established program benchmarks to allow for ongoing measurement of progress and improvement?</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Have we established a person (or committee) responsible for coordination and administration?</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Have we communicated program detail and direction to staff and sought their input?</td>
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<tr>
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You might consider a Health and Wellbeing Policy containing:

- a documented declaration of the organisation’s commitment to health and wellbeing
- clearly defined program objectives that are both realistic and easily measured
- an outline of the various responsibilities for key groups, such as management, organising committee, employees and external providers.

For a guide on how to develop a Health and Wellbeing Policy please see the Resources section of this kit.
Part 2: Constructing your Health and Wellbeing Program

2.1: A Planned Approach

The implementation of a health and wellbeing program needs to be well planned. Taking into account the issues discussed previously in Setting the Foundation, the next step is to establish a clear outline for the future. This planned approach should include setting some program objectives – decide what you want to achieve through your health and wellbeing program. You might include some timelines and select the strategies you intend to use in your program.

You need to decide on a starting point and make sure this is communicated clearly to employees. Your plan should offer opportunities for immediate implementation as well as some longer-term strategies.

You might like to include an official launch, which creates some initial momentum and emphasises the support of management.

Promote Your Program:
Internal promotion needs to be sustained to build interest and participation. Communication should focus initially on the overall health benefits, followed by strategies designed to address specific workplace health and wellbeing issues.

Variety and Choice:
The program should provide some variety to cater for differing individual interests. It should include an educational component as well as the practical – ‘action strategies’, designed to change behaviour.

Building Knowledge and Awareness:
Whilst your program should include a mix of strategies, it is often good to incorporate education initiatives to support the action initiatives. These education initiatives will outline why health and wellbeing in the workplace is important. They can be in the form of seminars, workshops or simply the dissemination of information on specific health and wellbeing issues such as nutrition, hydration and exercise.

Looking Beyond the Workplace:
As part of your planning, consider the employee’s broader environment. There may be benefits to be gained from involving the family in selected workplace strategies. A good example of this was the invitation of family and also community members to a workplace health and wellbeing forum conducted by Zinifex Tasmania and hosted by AFL great and Tasmanian-born, Alistair Lynch. Reference: Case Study – Zinifex, Rosebery Mine

Points to Remember
The key to good planning is to take the time to understand your workforce, their interests and any special health and wellbeing issues. Take into account your workplace environment and any particular positive or negative features. Communicate the benefits of the program to all staff so they have a clear understanding. Once you have done this, you are in a better position to establish a way forward one that is tailored to your workplace.
2.2: Building Knowledge and Positive Attitudes

Creating Awareness: A fundamental part of any health and wellbeing program is the contribution it makes to an individual’s knowledge and understanding of their own health and wellbeing. This knowledge, together with the implementation of popular initiatives will create the necessary awareness to change attitudes and encourage involvement.

Changing Behaviour: Great options to consider as part of any program are initiatives that address the knowledge and attitude ‘gap’.

These initiatives generate behavioural change and promote lifestyle changes. This knowledge becomes the driver for making correct lifestyle choices around eating, sleeping, exercise, time management and so on.

Initiatives that provide the motivation to encourage behavioural changes are more likely to impact beyond the workplace and for longer periods of time.

Building Positive Attitudes: Building knowledge and an improved understanding of the importance of health and wellbeing are important in changing attitudes. Promoting a positive outlook that highlights the benefits of physical activity and associated health and wellbeing is important in creating improved awareness about the negative and positive factors that impact on health and wellbeing.

The lasting value of any health and wellbeing program is its capacity to change behaviour.

Points to Remember
Make sure your program is designed to create awareness and build knowledge and understanding. This will be the key to changing attitudes, encouraging participation and achieving the behavioural change that will extend the program’s benefits beyond the workplace.
2.3: A Multi-level Approach

When designing a health and wellbeing program in the workplace, consider implementation from a ‘multi-level’ perspective. This simply means acknowledging the broader workplace environment and how this is likely to impact on health and wellbeing.

A program that considers all the various factors influencing the employee and his or her participation is more likely to succeed.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS TO CONSIDER INCLUDE:

**The Individual:**
Understanding the existing levels of fitness, knowledge, confidence and general wellbeing of employees. The general wellbeing of your workforce can be identified by using the employee survey tool, or something similar.

**The Social Environment:**
Understanding the existing corporate culture, social relationships and general social influences within the workplace. This can be achieved by using the workplace audit tool or your own resource.

**The Organisational Environment:**
Taking into account the organisation's infrastructure, the views of management and general support from the leadership group. This can be achieved by using the workplace audit tool or your own resource.

**The Community Environment:**
Understanding the organisation's external partners and stakeholders, such as community groups and government. This might mean reflecting on what is happening around your workplace, potential government or community initiatives, or even other organisations in your industry or divisions within your organisation.

**Policy Environment:**
Understanding existing organisational and government policies on health and wellbeing. Existing policies, be they organisational or government, can impact on your program, so it is useful to consider these as part of the broader environment.

The value of this type of environmental approach is that it allows you to account for any important issues within the broader environment when introducing your health and wellbeing program. This will ensure it is pitched correctly, that it reaches the largest number of employees and that it promotes a cycle of continuous improvement.
2.4: Exercise Your Options

There are numerous options to consider in assembling your workplace health and wellbeing program.

Many initiatives are inexpensive and easy to implement. In the Resources section of this kit there is a selection of initiatives for consideration. These are, of course, not exhaustive and your options may be as varied as the different workplaces and people that work in them.

The Case Studies section of this kit also provides interesting reading, with many Tasmanian organisations having already discovered innovative ways to build health and wellbeing programs in their workplaces.

A CHECKLIST FOR ‘CONSTRUCTING YOUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROGRAM’

✓ How are we going to promote our program?
✓ How does our program cater for a range of individual needs?
✓ Does our program have a mix of education and action-based initiatives?
✓ Is our program based on a ‘multi-level’ approach to the workplace environment?
✓ Does our program respond to the employee issues and workplace audit identified in ‘Setting the Foundation’?
✓ Does our program build on the strengths of our existing resources?
✓ Does our program meet the needs of as many employees as possible and recognise varying attitudes and preferences?
Part 3: Managing your program

Good administration and program coordination are important to the success of a workplace health and wellbeing program. These tasks don’t have to be complicated, but they will help with your planning and program delivery.

Managing your program includes three key areas: program design, program implementation (coordination of activities) and program evaluation.

The maintenance of a sound record-keeping system and coordination of risk-management strategies, in association with program delivery, are important elements of administration.

Let’s have a closer look at these tasks:

Program Design:

This includes the selection of activities to be conducted in the health and wellbeing program. The choice of initiatives should be in response to individual employee interests and needs. The workplace environment is also a key determinant of program design and should reflect the social, organisational, community and policy influences on implementation. The size of the organisation, number of employees and availability of resources are all important to consider during program design. See the Getting Started section for more information.

Program Implementation (coordination of activities):

This is all about ‘making it happen’. It requires leadership to manage program activities, including timing, roll-out and the recruitment of participants. This stage requires energy and enthusiasm and regular communication. A mix of strategies that include health and wellbeing awareness and education, together with practical initiatives, should be considered in a planned and structured manner. See Constructing Your Health and Wellbeing Program for more information.

Program Evaluation:

This may be based on the initial employee survey and workplace audit, along with ongoing program evaluations. It can include evaluation of the organisation against productivity, benchmarks for sick leave, employee turnover and health and wellbeing, or satisfaction surveys. See Setting the Foundation for more information.

Typically, a program evaluation will enable an organisation to:

- determine if a program has been implemented as planned
- identify opportunities for improvement in the program
- assess if a program is attracting the volume of participants that it intended
- document changes in health and wellbeing attitudes
- assess the perceived value and overall employee and management satisfaction
- identify the health outcomes of a program, as they relate to sick leave and absenteeism rates
- determine the cost-benefit of a program
- determine if a program has met its quality assurance criteria
- establish whether an ongoing commitment to the program is justified

For a Tasmanian call centre, its program design resulted from an initial on-site ‘Toolbox Meeting’. A sub-committee of the existing occupational health and safety committee was established and included representatives from management, the existing committee, and employees, ensuring all employee groups were represented. Reference: Case Study – Call Centre.
Program Recordkeeping:

This includes the maintenance of program records such as initiatives conducted, levels of interest, outcomes and general details. This information is valuable as an ongoing management tool and for program evaluation purposes, particularly for larger organisations conducting more sophisticated programs over multiple sites.

Risk Management Strategies:

Developing safety and emergency procedures and minimising risk associated with program delivery is an important part of program management. A risk-free environment is not possible, but you can manage the risk associated with your health and wellbeing program, just as you would with other aspects of your organisation.

The size of an organisation, the capacity to allocate resources and the scope of the program are variables that impact on the level of management a program requires. For a small organisation wishing to adopt only a few targeted strategies, the level of resources required will differ from a larger organisation looking to introduce a comprehensive workplace health and wellbeing program.

A CHECKLIST FOR ‘MANAGING YOUR PROGRAM’

- Do we have someone, or a group, to undertake program management and coordination?
- Has the design of our program taken into account the availability of sufficient resources?
- Do we have someone to provide the leadership and coordination of individual strategies?
- Is there a record-keeping system of prior and/or proposed health and wellbeing initiatives?
- Are employees regularly consulted and provided with feedback on prior and/or proposed initiatives?
- Do we know if our program is making a difference?
- Do we know what needs to be changed with our program?
- Is there a risk-management plan in place, including emergency response procedures?
4. Resources
Resources

This section provides a range of guides and tools to assist you in implementing a health and wellbeing program within your workplace.

THIS SECTION INCLUDES:

1. Health and wellbeing providers
2. Health and wellbeing award programs in Tasmania
3. A sample health and wellbeing mission statement
4. A sample health and wellbeing policy
5. A list of initiatives to get you started
6. An Employee Health and Wellbeing Survey
7. A Workplace Audit Tool
1. Health and wellbeing providers

These providers are grouped by topic areas, for easy reference.

The following is a list of government and ‘not-for-profit’ organisations that are able to contribute to your health and wellbeing program. This list is not exhaustive and you are encouraged to consider these as a starting point.

**Information on private providers** of health and wellbeing services is available on the Tasmanian Government’s on-line business directory, BizTas.

To register your organisation as a provider of health and wellbeing services, please visit the BizTas website at www.biztas.com

### CHRONIC DISEASE PREVENTION PROVIDERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANISATION</th>
<th>WEB ADDRESS</th>
<th>PHONE NUMBER</th>
<th>SERVICES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heart Foundation</td>
<td><a href="http://www.heartfoundation.com.au">www.heartfoundation.com.au</a></td>
<td>(03) 6224 2722</td>
<td>Information on heart health and Heart Foundation events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes Australia – Tasmania</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/services/view.php?id=2230">www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/services/view.php?id=2230</a></td>
<td>(03) 6233 3185</td>
<td>A not-for-profit organisation, whose key focus is to improve the health outcomes of people with diabetes and to improve the quality of life for people with diabetes and their families and carers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes Education Services:</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/services/view.php?id=589">www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/services/view.php?id=589</a></td>
<td>South: (03) 6222 8403 North: (03) 6348 7815 Nth West: (03) 6430 6583</td>
<td>Teaches clients about the use of diabetic equipment and provides in-service sessions and support to community education support groups and a range of diabetes education programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Asthma Foundation of Tasmania</td>
<td><a href="http://www.asthmatas.org.au/">www.asthmatas.org.au/</a></td>
<td>1800 645 130</td>
<td>Provides information and contacts for people with asthma.</td>
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</table>
### General Health Providers

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Web Address</th>
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<th>Services</th>
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| Division of General Practice        | www.gp.org.au/tas.html                           | South: (03) 6234 4230  
North: (03) 6331 9296  
Nth West: (03) 6432 1440 | Aims to improve health through general practice. |
| The Department of Health and Human Services | http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/healthyliving/ | 1300 135 513 | Provides information on the services funded by the Department of Health and Human Services. |
| Men’s Health                        | www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/services/view                | (03) 6223 6900 | Provides information on support services, specifically for men. |
| Women’s Health Information Line     | www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/healthyliving/womens/index.php | 1800 675 028 | Provides free and confidential information on general health issues and support services for women. |
| Women’s Health Program              | www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/services/view.php?id=363     | South: (03) 6222 7211  
North: (03) 6336 2401  
Nth West: (03) 6440 7331  
Toll-free: 1800 675 028 | Provides information and services, specifically for women. |

### Alcohol and Drug (Including Smoking)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Web Address</th>
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<th>Services</th>
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</table>
| Quit Tasmania                        | www.quittas.org.au                               | (03) 6228 2921  
Quitline: 13 78 48 | Provides resource material and group sessions to workplaces and information and advice on quitting for individuals. |
### NUTRITION

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ORGANISATION</th>
<th>WEB ADDRESS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eat Well Tasmania</td>
<td><a href="http://www.eatwelltas.com.au">www.eatwelltas.com.au</a></td>
<td>(03) 6223 1266</td>
<td>A state-wide program that provides support and assistance for activities or projects that promote enjoyable, healthy eating. Eat Well Tasmania has available an Eat Well @ Work resource.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition Australia (Tasmania is currently being managed by Victoria)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nutritionaustralia.org">www.nutritionaustralia.org</a></td>
<td>(03) 9650 5165</td>
<td>Provides nutrition information, including the frequently asked questions on their website. It has also developed some presentations on nutrition in the workplace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Foundation</td>
<td><a href="http://www.heartfoundation.com.au">www.heartfoundation.com.au</a></td>
<td>(03) 6124 2722</td>
<td>Provides healthy catering guidelines for workplace meetings and cafeterias.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietitians Association of Australia (DAA)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.daa.asn.au">www.daa.asn.au</a></td>
<td>(02) 6282 9555</td>
<td>Provides information on how to access an APD (Accredited Practising Dietitian) in your area. An APD can run nutrition sessions for staff or review menus.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## MENTAL HEALTH

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ORGANISATION</th>
<th>WEB ADDRESS</th>
<th>PHONE NUMBER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lifeline</td>
<td><a href="http://www.lifeline.org.au/">www.lifeline.org.au/</a></td>
<td>13 11 14</td>
<td>Offers the community a range of services, including telephone counselling, visiting programs and victims of crime services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Services</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/services/view">www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/services/view</a></td>
<td>(03) 6230 7736</td>
<td>Works with customers, carers and the broader community to treat, support and manage mental disorders – to maximise mental health, wellbeing and quality of life for people with a mental illness.</td>
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</table>

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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<tr>
<th>ORGANISATION</th>
<th>WEB ADDRESS</th>
<th>PHONE NUMBER</th>
<th>SERVICES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Premier’s Physical Activity Council</td>
<td><a href="http://www.getmoving.tas.gov.au">www.getmoving.tas.gov.au</a></td>
<td>1800 252 476</td>
<td>Provides information on physical activity benefits, recommendations and physical activity events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitness Tasmania</td>
<td><a href="http://www.fitness.org.au">www.fitness.org.au</a></td>
<td>1300 211 311</td>
<td>Provides access to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Registered Fitness Professionals (instructors and trainers).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Recognised Fitness Providers (fitness centres, health clubs and gyms).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport and Recreation Tasmania</td>
<td><a href="http://www.development.tas.gov.au/sportrec">www.development.tas.gov.au/sportrec</a></td>
<td>1800 252 476</td>
<td>Provides information on sport and recreation providers and opportunities in your area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Living</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/healthyliving/exercise/">www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/healthyliving/exercise/</a></td>
<td>1300 135 513</td>
<td>A site providing a wealth of information on healthy living in Tasmania, for people of all ages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Health and wellbeing award programs in Tasmania

**Workplace Safe Awards:**

A category for Best Workplace Health and Wellbeing Program is included in these annual awards. The category recognises the positive impact of a newly-implemented health and wellbeing program in a workplace setting. Organisations that have introduced programs are encouraged to enter.

*For further information, please visit:*
www.workcover.tas.gov.au

**Employer of Choice:**

The Department of Economic Development has introduced an Employer of Choice initiative, which recognises employers that adopt modern work practices and promote a work/life balance as part of a strategy to attract and retain workers.

*For further information, please visit:*
www.development.tas.gov.au/employerofchoice/EoC.doc

These awards are a great way for organisations to join with others in competing for best-practice health and wellbeing programs.

3. A sample health and wellbeing mission statement

The following is an example of a mission statement that your organisation could use as part of establishing your health and wellbeing program:

“To create a happy workplace environment where the health and wellbeing of employees is highly valued - an environment sensitive to issues around health and wellbeing that provides both flexibility and opportunity to encourage employees to adopt healthy living practices.”
4. A sample health and wellbeing policy

A workplace policy focused on health and wellbeing provides a clear and positive statement underlining the value the organisation places on the health and wellbeing of its workforce. It serves as a very practical and formal way of making a statement: that the organisation is serious about the health of its employees.

A function of the health and wellbeing committee, if you have one, might be to create a policy that is acknowledged and supported by senior management within the organisation. Once signed, the policy becomes a key element in the foundation of your program. All employees should then be made aware of the policy and its intent.

This policy may become part of your existing occupational health and safety policy manual and the organisation’s induction process.

Your policy might contain:

- A documented declaration of the organisation’s commitment to health and wellbeing
- Clearly defined program objectives that are both realistic and easily measured.

Sample policy objectives

- To raise awareness within the workplace about issues that impact on health and wellbeing, including the health benefits of physical activity and the health risks of physical inactivity.
- To promote and encourage participation in workplace health and wellbeing initiatives within and outside the workplace.
- To educate employees about issues related to health and wellbeing.

Sample policy actions

The organisation will: (identify specific actions your organisation will undertake).

Sample policy communication

All existing employees will be made aware of this policy and its provisions via mediums, such as the organisation’s notice board/intranet/email system.

All new employees will be made aware of this policy as part of the formal induction process.

Sample policy review

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months.
5. A list of simple initiatives to get you started

Introduction
The range of initiatives you might consider for any health and wellbeing program is unlimited. It is always good practice to seek feedback within the workplace to ensure your initiative will meet the particular needs of the workplace, employee interests and available resources.

The following examples are just a few of the types of initiatives you might consider. Don’t restrict yourself to these, but use them as a starting point.

Remember that it is good practice to include education initiatives to support the action initiatives.

Let’s have a look at some examples of health and wellbeing initiatives. You might like to consider these or come up with your own ideas.

### Promoting Physical Activity

- Provide support and encouragement in the establishment of organisational sport or recreation teams.
- Encourage and facilitate active commuting to and from the workplace, such as walking or cycling.
- Subsidise memberships to selected facilities that promote health and wellbeing, such as gyms.
- Provide details or maps of suitable lunch-time walking routes to promote walking/jogging.
- Establish a ‘Walk Challenge’, such as the Launceston City Council and call centre case studies.
- Promote activities, such as walking the stairs instead of taking the lift.
- Target specific groups (sedentary), e.g. fitball for women/martial arts for men.
- Have a central point for activity, where changeover of shifts occur e.g. call centres.
- Support ‘champions’ to lead activity groups.
- Provide incentives to promote physical activity, such as flexible work hours.
Host workplace seminars and activities designed to improve awareness of issues around health and wellbeing, such as smoking, diabetes, prostrate cancer, mental health, fatigue management, hydration, the impact of alcohol consumption, smoking, sleep patterns and nutrition.

Provide educational material and other resource information on health and wellbeing issues.

Host on-site visits from specialist medical, nutritional, fitness and other professionals designed to build awareness and knowledge about health and wellbeing.

Host on-site visits from health related organisations, such as the Heart Foundation.

Establish employee ‘coaching’ sessions around key health issues, such as diabetes, prostate cancer, mental health, breast cancer and fatigue management.

Promote opportunities for participation in health and wellbeing initiatives.

Use promotional and motivational posters encouraging employees to make active choices, such as using the stairs in preference to lifts or escalators.

Liaise with external providers and government departments to access information, resources and expertise.

Establish a physical activity notice board or circulate opportunities to staff via newsletters, pay slips and memos.
Workplace Nutrition and Hydration

- Access information from the Eat Well Tasmania, Eat Well @ Work Resource at www.eatwelltas.com.au
- Develop a nutrition policy for the workplace that might include the use of ‘heart-friendly’ foods.
- Provide access to fresh or filtered water to encourage appropriate hydration.
- Allow water bottles at desks.
- Request food suppliers to provide foods of nutritional value.
- Change canteen menus, where appropriate.
- If you have vending machines, stock them with healthier food and drink items.
- Encourage staff catering for meetings to meet healthy catering guidelines.
- Provide a fresh fruit bowl in the meeting or lunchroom (free or at cost price).
- Provide an alternative to fundraising chocolates. Ask the charity or staff member who brings the chocolates in to consider using a healthier fundraiser. If the chocolate box doesn’t disappear, then have the fresh fruit bowl standing right beside it.
- Consider providing free or at-cost alternatives to tea/coffee (such as herbal teas).
- Collaborate with nearby cafes, takeaways and other food vendors to offer healthy foods and promote nutritious specials, at reasonable prices.
- Provide a dedicated eating area that is inviting to encourage staff not to eat at their desks. Make sure this has a refrigerator, a microwave, toasted sandwich maker and other key items identified by staff.
- If you have a staff cafeteria, get an Accredited Practising Dietician (APD) or use the healthy catering guidelines to review your menu, and advise on how to provide and promote healthy food and drink choices for staff.
- If you have employees who do a lot of travel within the state, consider marking out cafes and takeaways that provide healthier options and provide employees with information on making healthier food choices when eating out.
- Promote healthy eating for staff using the Dietary Guidelines for Australians and Australian Guide to Healthy Eating.
- Put up posters of delicious, fresh produce or motivational posters about eating more vegetables, being more physically active, or distribute this information in staff newsletters or on bulletin boards.
- Offer coupons for fruits and vegetables as rewards.
Workplace Flexibility

- Provide a flexible work environment that is designed to facilitate health and wellbeing activities, particularly physical activity.

- Provide time off for physical activity.

- Establish a time-off-in-lieu arrangement for individual or group physical activity.

Workplace Health and Wellbeing Facilities/Processes/Policies

- Provide continuous review, and improvement of, workplace practices to promote improvements that support health and wellbeing.

- Provide on-site facilities in support of health and wellbeing activities, such as showers and change rooms to encourage greater physical activity.

- Ensure that new or existing workplace practices do not present barriers to health and wellbeing.

- Develop policies that discourage the eating of food while using computers at desks.

- Establish an on-site gym for larger organisations.

- Provide bicycle racks to encourage people to cycle to work.

- Provide employees with a pedometer as a Christmas gift.

- Develop processes that are consistent with the size and resources of the company, which will make participation in health and wellbeing initiatives easier for employees.

General Initiatives

- Encourage participation in external health and wellbeing initiatives through subsidisation of selected events.

- Provide workplace massages.

- Conduct hypertension screening and cholesterol testing.

- Sell the benefits to top and middle management – show the productivity gains.

The list of options could go on! Your choice should be based on the interests and special circumstances of your workplace. Try to cater for all. Think outside the square – add to these options and tailor your program to the needs of your workplace.

Good luck!
6. Employee health and wellbeing survey

It is important your program is designed to address the issues and needs of your employees. A simple staff survey is one way to identify the health and wellbeing issues facing staff.

The information from an employee survey along with an understanding of your workplace environment will help you design a successful program.

Conducting an employee survey every 6 to 12 months is also one way in which you can evaluate the progress of your program.

An on-line version of an employee health and wellbeing survey and supporting information is available at: www.getmoving.tas.gov.au

7. Workplace audit tool

Your existing workplace environment (e.g. infrastructure, policies, procedures) will play a part in the kinds of activities chosen for inclusion in a health and wellbeing program.

Understanding your workplace environment, along with information about staff health and wellbeing issues, will help you design a successful program.

Conducting an audit of your workplace every 6 to 12 months is also one way in which you can evaluate the progress of your program.

An on-line version of a workplace audit tool and supporting information is available at: www.getmoving.tas.gov.au
5. Case studies
Case study: Zinifex, Rosebery Mine

Joint winner of the 2006 Workplace Safe Awards – Best Workplace Health and Wellbeing Program

Organisation detail

Zinifex is located on Tasmania’s west coast. As one of the world’s largest integrated zinc and lead companies the ‘Rosebery’ mine represents just one part of an international infrastructure. The mine employs 255 staff.

Program introduction

Zinifex recognised that in order to remain a world leader in zinc and lead production, they needed to improve performance. In order to do this, the organisation concentrated on lifting workforce productivity levels. The health and wellbeing of their workforce was paramount if they were to remain a world leader.

With a highly experienced, predominantly male, ageing workforce, they were experiencing increased workplace health issues. Compounding the challenge was the realisation that these employees were less likely to consider approaching their health issues in a proactive manner. Absenteeism had become a substantial expense, amounting to 8 to 10 per cent of all labour costs. With musculo-skeletal injuries on-site contributing to 42 per cent of workplace injuries, it was necessary to become proactive in promoting healthy lifestyle choices.

The objective of the health and wellbeing program was to build greater health awareness around work and general quality of life. This objective linked directly to improved business performance and a culture that empowered all levels within the business to take ownership and control of their own health.

As a strategy to encourage participation in their ‘Wellness Program’, the company invited AFL legend, Alistair Lynch, to launch their program. Lynch conducted presentations to all employees on-site about the importance of managing their health, his own personal battle with chronic fatigue and the value of proper health management. To enhance the impact of the program, Lynch also attended the local school and spoke about healthy living, in order to engage the employees’ children.

The involvement of these professionals early in the program gave the company a clear picture of their workforce and provided important initial benchmark information on the general level of health and wellbeing of Zinifex employees. These assessments remain an ongoing element of the program, providing regular opportunities for employees to undertake health assessments on-site, and at no cost.

As part of getting started, the company invited, during normal working hours, medical practitioners to conduct employee health assessments. These were complimented with visits by occupational physicians and exercise physiologists.
The strategies used

With a strong focus on injury prevention and management, ongoing health assessments continue to be an important element of the program. These are conducted by external, expert professionals on-site, to help encourage participation.

In addition, Zinifex has undertaken a range of health education presentations, including:

- stress management, sleep pattern and nutrition presentations from outside experts
- coaching sessions relating to diabetes, prostate cancer, mental health, fatigue management, hydration and physical activity have also been a significant element in the overall knowledge building process of the program. Families have been encouraged to attend, as Zinifex recognises that addressing both work and home environments will contribute to the success of their program. Follow-up information and support is provided through hardcopy handouts and electronic media
- the company also provides an on-site gym and fitness aids, such as fit balls, weights, thermo-skins and compression bandages.

A return on investment

“We have already achieved a return on investment—The number of musculo-skeletal injuries has decreased significantly and unplanned absence has halved.” The company has highlighted that the benefits are more than just economic, with a happier and healthier culture now driving the company forward. “The additional benefits of our program have been the improved workforce engagement, increased morale and teamwork.”

A CLOSING WORD

“Take charge of your life” and “Take nothing for granted” have been the key messages conveyed to staff. At Zinifex, they have recognised the need to move beyond the ‘disposable asset’ view of people, “We want to care about them, in and out of work.”

*All quotes are from a senior Zinifex staff member
Case study: **Call Centre**

**Organisation detail**

This call centre reflects a typical call centre environment. Based in Tasmania, the centre represents a national market with international connections and employs in excess of 450 staff.

**Program introduction**

The impetus to establish a health and wellbeing program for this large Tasmanian call centre came from the findings of a study conducted by students at the University of Tasmania. The students completed a comprehensive examination of the exercise, nutrition and general health habits of employees within the call centre. The results of the research identified several worrying health issues.

From this study, the staff within the centre recognised the importance of health and wellbeing and its connection to work performance and overall lifestyle. Many staff had poor dietary habits, many were smokers and a large number did not regularly participate in physical activity. The nature of work within a call centre environment is sedentary, with work tasks repetitive and staff restricted by inflexible work conditions.

Driven initially by staff, in a ‘bottom up’ approach, a health and wellbeing committee was formed to establish a program and to drive it forward. Their mission was to: “motivate staff through education, promotion and provision of health and wellbeing activities within the workplace”.

The program objective was to encourage a more active workforce. The focus was to improve both the mental and physical wellbeing of employees through organised workplace activities. Early involvement of staff ensured a sense of ownership and commitment. The program was publicly supported by management.

**GETTING STARTED**

The program was launched in 2005, with key staff hosting an on-site ‘Toolbox Meeting’. A sub-committee of the existing occupational health and safety committee was established and included representatives from management, the existing committee and employees, ensuring all employee groups were represented.

The results of the University study provided the initial benchmark data. Ongoing questionnaires continue to measure progress and success. Individual meetings with staff have provided additional feedback on various initiatives and generated future ideas.

**The strategies used**

- Asthma Foundation presence
- Heart Foundation presence
- Seated massage
- Hand reflexology
- Foot reflexology
- Naturopathy
- Iridology
- Fresh juices
- Eye tests.

Initial strategies included an on-site Health and Wellbeing Expo. The aim of the expo was to support the program mission by motivating staff through education, promotion and provision of health and wellbeing activities within the workplace. Funding provided by management was used to engage an external provider to coordinate the expo, which included services such as:

- Health check including body mass index, blood pressure and blood glucose checks
Another exciting activity that encouraged an increase in physical activity was a ‘Walk Around The World’ challenge. Staff were encouraged to walk during breaks, and to report this activity to a central source that records progress, as the employees progressed on their journey around the world. Other initiatives have included:

- Participation in events such as City to Casino and Burnie 10 fun runs, paid for by the employer
- Weekend bushwalking groups for employees, families and friends
- Regular visits from a local pharmacy, promoting health products
- Participation in men’s health week and monthly fun days to encourage physical activity during scheduled work breaks
- The installation of bike racks, notice boards for future events and healthy vending machines
- A two-week program hosted by QUIT Tasmania
- Sale of fresh fruit and healthy meal options
- Company-funded influenza vaccinations
- Female health days.

### The Benefits Achieved

**Data from the call centre’s original survey conducted in September 2005 has provided a basis for measurement. Results after the first year of the program saw a decrease in undesirable behaviours, such as smoking, and an increase in desirable behaviours, such as general fitness. Other benefits included:**

- 10.5 per cent reduction in smokers, as a direct result of the QUIT campaign, with other staff reducing consumption
- Reports of positive improvement in eating regularity – breakfast consumption increasing from 62.8 per cent to 73.7 per cent, lunch from 84.9 per cent to 90.1 per cent and dinner from 87.5 per cent to 97.4 per cent
- Staff confirming an increase in general regular physical activity, as opposed to a previously sedentary lifestyle
- Increased staff awareness of personal health issues following the expo – some staff are now receiving treatment for high blood pressure and diabetes (previously unknown conditions)
- 92 per cent of those who attended the expo confirmed they found the information and sessions useful and 93 per cent confirmed they were going to use the information to improve their personal health and wellbeing
- Increased participation in health and wellbeing activities, both within the workplace and outside – 33.6 per cent of staff are now attending the gym and 46 per cent are participating in healthy eating programs
- Workplace monthly activities are now accepted as the norm, with good participation from 100 to 120 staff
- Improved staff morale has been identified through program participation.

### A Return on Investment

Support was shown by the organisation allowing time-out for the committee to progress the program, funding the Health and Wellbeing Expo, providing influenza vaccinations for 109 staff and purchasing a bike rack.

The program has been instrumental in reducing ‘lost-time injury-frequency’ by 50 per cent. It was anticipated that personal sick leave would reduce and that overall productivity would increase. This long-term objective is part of the company’s ongoing health and wellbeing program today, with the results highly anticipated by all involved.

### A Closing Word

The program’s success is reflected through its financial independence. A lot of effort has gone into tailoring activities to employee interests and needs. “Our program committee is very active within the workplace and we are continually changing and adapting initiatives based on feedback from staff.”

(Committee chairperson)
Case study: Launceston City Council

Organisation detail
This case study follows a typical Tasmanian council. Councils in Tasmania are achieving good results with health and wellbeing initiatives. The Launceston City Council is one of the biggest, employing approximately 500 staff.

Program introduction
The impetus to establish a health and wellbeing program came from the individual interest of key staff members. Following a conversation with staff from the Premier’s Physical Activity Council, these staff members took on the challenge of being ‘Project Champions’. The role of the champions was critical, particularly during the formative stages of a program, where energy and passion are so important to build momentum.

The program title ‘LCC Live Life’ became the focus, with a broad program objective of establishing improved health and wellbeing throughout the Launceston City Council workforce.

The program gained the support of management and the initial responsibility was delegated to the project champions, ‘the energy source’, in the council’s department of Parks and Recreation. The long-term hope is that the program will be picked up, and driven by, the council’s human resource division.

A workplace audit will support the employee health and wellbeing survey by providing environmental detail

GETTING STARTED

‘LCC Live Life’ was launched with the establishment of an internal committee comprising representatives from human resources, OH&S and Parks and Recreation. The program remains in its formative stages, pending the completion of an electronic workplace health and wellbeing survey and workplace audit. These ‘tools’ will allow initial information to be gathered on both employee characteristics and organisational detail. These survey/audits will be fundamental to the ongoing measurement of the program’s success.

Identifying the existing health and wellbeing levels within the workforce is intended to not only benchmark improvement over time, but also provide clear messages on the potential impact of a variety of strategies. A workplace audit will support the employee health and wellbeing survey by providing environmental detail; highlighting those initiatives most likely to fit within the council’s physical work environment.
The strategies used

To date, Launceston City Council has made modest progress, pending the availability of electronic survey and audit tool results. Notwithstanding, the council has already identified an improved awareness of health and wellbeing within the workplace.

The major intervention so far was entitled the ‘Mt Everest Challenge – 2004, 2005, 2006’. This strategy was initiated as part of ‘Get Walking Tasmania Week’ and was designed to promote the benefits of physical activity, as well as promote divisional and cross-divisional teamwork.

Divisions within the council were asked to register a ‘Get Walking’ team and team leader (maximum 10 and minimum three). A list of rules was drawn up and circulated to participants, with an outline of smart tips and prizes. Each team recorded and tallied the number of minutes walked together, as a team, during the month of October 2006.

The challenge was won by a team from the Infrastructure Department, called the ‘infrastrutters’, who were duly presented with a prize and perpetual trophy that will be ‘up for grabs’ again in the next round. Each participant received a certificate of acknowledgement.

The health and safety committee also successfully lobbied the council for bike racks as a strategy to meet the needs of existing bike riders and to encourage others to use this medium as transport to and from work.

The council has also been very active outside their own workplace by building health and wellbeing strategies within the community. ‘Active Launceston’, a program for the community, targeted many different groups and achieved a wide variety of outcomes and benefits.

The benefits achieved

**Still being** in the early stages, it is difficult to assess the overall benefits of **LCC Live Life**. Nevertheless, it is clear that even at this early stage there is a growing awareness of health and wellbeing and the importance of being physically active in the workplace. The ‘Mt Everest Challenge’ provided the opportunity to establish awareness and will serve as a good foundation to develop further initiatives.

During the month of October, council teams tallied a total of 300 hours – a pretty amazing effort. Between them, they walked the equivalent of climbing Mt Everest 8.5 times.

The ‘Mt Everest Challenge’ also provided the opportunity for employees to participate in a fun, social event and to mix with other divisions within the council. The benefits achieved in this instance are difficult to measure, but the social value is clear. This activity contributed to a happier and healthier workforce.

A return on investment

Launceston City Council has contributed funds to the early stages of this program, with an approximate contribution of $2,000 in the first year of the ‘Mt Everest Challenge’ and a further $1,000 in the second year. Time for staff to work on the program has also been made available in an effort to ensure the program’s success. Given the lack of available hard data, pending the results of staff surveys and workplace audits, it is too early to identify a return on investment. Anecdotal information received so far has been positive and the next stage will help kick-start the program completely.

A CLOSING WORD

It is the view of the council that best-practice in establishing a health and wellbeing program is underlined by the research that precedes it. This is particularly the case for larger organisations, where an ‘audit’ tool and employee survey can provide the necessary information to ensure that the health and wellbeing program is tailored to the organisation, its environment and its employees. This research can also serve as a valuable benchmark to measure ongoing success – ‘are we making progress, can we measure this, are we able to identify a return on our investment?’
Case study: Department of Police and Emergency Management

Organisation detail
The Department of Police and Emergency Management (DPEM) is a Tasmanian government department, with a mission “to make Tasmania safe”.

The DPEM consists of the Tasmania Police, the State Emergency Service and Forensic Science Service Tasmania and employs around 1,245 police officers and 473 State Service and State Emergency Service personnel. The Tasmanian Fire Service also reports to the Secretary DPEM; however, was not included in this project.

Program objectives
The nature of the work carried out by DPEM employees exposes them to high stress, infectious and dangerous situations. As a result, the DPEM implemented a health and wellbeing program, recognising that investing in their employees is investing in their most valuable resource. “If you’re not genuinely concerned about the health and wellbeing of your employees and invest energy into the whole person, you may get compliance but not commitment.” (Scott Wilson-Haffenden, Acting Director of Corporate Services)

The DPEM won two National Safety Council Awards in 2001 and 2002. Their challenge was to build further on this success.

The DPEM ‘Healthy Lifestyle Program’ provided the direction that would build on their OH&S program and address employee health and wellbeing in a broader sense. It introduced preventative measures and strategies to improve the lifestyles of employees.

The program’s mission statement is: to provide encouragement, information and opportunities to all employees on the benefits of a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

GETTING STARTED

The initial focus of the program was to establish a clear picture of the existing ‘status’ of the workforce by checking the general health of employees and determining how much physical activity they were involved in.

To do this a Community Business partnership was established with the Menzies Research Institute (MRI) in 2004 to provide expertise in data collection, management and analysis of workplace physical activity promotion. The project was titled Pacing the Police.

From a wide range of DPEM departments, 175 volunteers attended a health check, where MRI staff measured the height, weight, waist and hip girths and blood pressure of participants.

Participants completed an international physical activity questionnaire, the Active Australia Survey, and provided demographic information. They were provided with a pedometer and asked to record their steps over 14 days. Pedometer records, along with other data, was considered by MRI and feedback letters were provided to each volunteer outlining their health check results and feedback on physical activity levels. A booklet produced by MRI entitled Steps to Better Health was provided to each participant.

The research undertaken by MRI provided the initial data that would be used to benchmark the progress during the first stage of DPEM’s health and wellbeing project.
The strategies used

Over the following year the DPEM implemented a range of health and wellbeing strategies. These included, ‘step challenges’, hypertension screening, free cholesterol testing and support for employees participating in community physical activity events. Participants were encouraged to continue wearing pedometers to monitor their activity.

Twelve months after the initial testing, participants repeated their health check, with subsequent feedback comparing their progress with the original ‘baseline data’. Participants was also asked to complete a brief questionnaire to provide feedback on the overall program.

A joint partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services’ (DHHS) Population Health unit was also initiated. The objective was to increase knowledge of the factors, barriers and enablers influencing nutrition and other lifestyle behaviours in staff of the DPEM. From this they would be able to develop recommendations for a range of appropriate and evidence-based interventions designed to positively address any of the influencing factors identified.

THE BENEFITS ACHIEVED

The results of Pacing the Police were positive. The results, which compared physical activity, blood pressure and weight suggested that:

- there had been a decrease in smoking rates over the 12 months
- 70 per cent of participants were active compared with 46 per cent of the general population
- sitting and viewing television decreased
- blood pressure decreased
- waist circumference decreased in participants.

The joint partnership with the DHHS delivered a greater understanding of the nutritional benefits received from the program. Some of the benefits identified in the employee audit process were improved physical activity levels of employees, meeting the national physical activity recommendations of 150 minutes of physical activity a week and a low prevalence of smoking, with five per cent of males and nine per cent of females reporting daily cigarette smoking. The tremendous value of this data is that it provides a very clear message for the future direction of the health and wellbeing program, the strategies required and the benchmark data for ongoing measurement. The success of this program has had further benefit for the DPEM, resulting in an ongoing relationship with the DHHS and the establishment of another initiative, entitled: ‘Good Fuel for Police’. Overall, many participants indicated that the program motivated them to be active and influenced changes in other lifestyle behaviours, including eating and smoking.

A return on investment

To date, the DPEM have invested significantly in their ‘Healthy Lifestyle Program’. The program remains in a formative stage and it is expected that the progress made, together with future strategies, will result in a happier and healthier workforce.

A CLOSING WORD

The DPEM has established their program with a strong focus on understanding the existing health and wellbeing characteristics of their workforce. This information has driven strategies and will provide the valuable benchmarking data to measure progress into the future.
Case study: **Department of Economic Development**

**Organisation detail**
The Department of Economic Development is a Tasmanian government department – its role: “to lead economic and industry development in Tasmania”. Employing approximately 250 staff, the department has seven locations across Tasmania operating out of three regional offices in the south, north and north west.

**Program introduction**

**The department’s Health and Wellbeing Program – ‘Great Life Options at Work’ (GLOW)** commenced in 2005. The impetus behind the program came from a strong belief in the value this could contribute to the organisation, from both an economic and cultural perspective. The relationship between healthy employees and productivity was acknowledged by the department and served to generate initial momentum from senior management and staff. “Work is but one part of a complex environment in which each of us lives, and to achieve commitment it is important that we as an employer recognise we can play a role in the overall health and wellbeing of our employees – the benefits are win–win.” (Mark Jones, Assistant Director Human Resources)

The program was branded following an internal competition, which developed awareness among staff and encouraged their involvement early in the establishment of the program.

The ‘GLOW’ program is designed to measure and target employee health risks and deliver strategies to manage overall employee health and wellbeing. The program is tailored to suit the needs of the individual and includes employment policy and practice that are aligned with, and supportive of, the principles of work and lifestyle balance.

**GETTING STARTED**

The administration of the ‘GLOW’ program was taken on by the department’s Human Resources division. This ensured the program was integrated into other department activities, such as the social club.

A key plank in the program has been the development of an on-line workplace health service – fitness2live. This service allows staff to undertake health assessments, develop personalised lifestyle plans and access expert training programs for physical activity events. A newsletter and an extensive library of resources about nutrition, fitness and other health and wellbeing information are also available.

To compliment the launch of the on-line service, the department provided workplace health checks, testing employee’s blood pressure, blood (total) cholesterol and blood glucose levels. Staff were then encouraged to fill in the on-line health record, rating their health out of 100 and signing up to one of the programs available.

**The strategies used**

Commencing in June 2005, the workplace health and wellbeing program was designed to assist in the overall management of employee health and wellbeing and to contribute to the development and promotion of a flexible workplace that addresses the physical, emotional, social and financial wellbeing of staff.

The department conducts an annual ‘GLOW’ survey, asking staff what they want as part of the program. This allows the program to be tailored and designed to meet staff needs and interests. The survey also allows indicative reporting for participation rates and seeks feedback on potential future initiatives.
The department has implemented a range of health and wellbeing initiatives. These include:

- A customised website, providing access for all staff to review information relating to nutrition and diet, fitness and exercise, health and active health programs.
- Free health screens for all staff to measure blood glucose, blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels.
- Free flu vaccinations.
- Free fruit provided to all workplaces as a healthy snack alternative.
- Sponsorship to promote participation in key physical activity events (e.g. Corporate Triathlon and Century Bike Ride).
- Sponsored education and prevention programs, including QUIT.
- Information sessions and lunch-time forums on heart health, financial planning, naturopathy and tai chi.
- Corporate memberships and financial assistance to help promote staff participation in health and wellbeing services.

### THE BENEFITS ACHIEVED

#### The Department Conducts an Annual Pulse Check (Staff Climate) Survey
Since the inception of the ‘GLOW’ program, the percentage of respondents to ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ that the department pays attention to their health and safety has risen by 10 per cent each year.

“In 2004, 63 per cent of the department ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’. We launched the ‘GLOW’ program during the following year and the result in 2005 was 73 per cent. The major growth in the program followed the next year and overall results improved again by a further 10 per cent in 2006, with 83 per cent of respondents to ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’ that the department pays attention to their health and safety.” (Mark Jones, Assistant Director Human Resources)

A spin-off initiative at the department level has been the ability to partner with appropriate social club initiatives, including raising funds for selected charities. The ‘GLOW’ program has also been used as a successful model to implement other programs internally that compliment the ideals of the ‘GLOW’ program (e.g. a sustainable waste management group).

### A return on investment

To date, no specific analysis has been undertaken to determine a return on investment. The ‘GLOW’ program is in its early days and it is recognised that the benefits will increase over time. Key areas where expectations are high reflect the overall culture within the organisation. A strong social culture is evolving and staff are mixing together to participate in external corporate health and wellbeing events.

Already there are positive signs, with internal research indicating improvements in staff satisfaction. It is anticipated these improvements will translate into a reduction in turnover of staff and increased productivity.

### A CLOSING WORD

Improving health and wellbeing in the workplace is not a one-dimensional process. It can take time to change the culture of a workplace, but by involving employees and listening to what they have to say, you will be able to tailor a program to their needs within the capacity of the organisation and the business operating environment.

“Our belief is that by caring about our staff, through initiatives such as health and wellbeing, we will achieve better job satisfaction.” (Mark Jones, Assistant Director Human Resources)

The win-win situation here means that staff become healthy, which, in turn, reduces staff-related costs such as employee turnover, absenteeism, workplace injuries and sick leave for the organisation. Together, the improved job satisfaction and improved health and wellbeing can have a huge impact on productivity and profitability.
Acknowledgements

The Premiers Physical Activity Council acknowledges the contribution of the following organisations and resources in the assembly of this Health and Wellbeing Resource Kit.

Acknowledgement:


Tasmanian organisations (Case Studies):

- Department of Economic Development
- Department of Police and Emergency Management
- Zinifex – Rosebery Mine
- Launceston City Council

Tasmanian organisations who contributed to the development of this kit, include:

- Alcohol and Drug Services
- BaC Consulting Group – Business & Community Pty Ltd
- Department of Economic Development
- Department of Education (Move Well Eat Well)
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Police and Emergency Management
- Eat Well Tasmania
- Fairbrothers Pty Ltd
- Launceston City Council
- Mental Health Services
- Quit Tasmania
- Tasmania Together Health and Wellbeing Cluster Group
- Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Unions Tasmania
- University of Tasmania (Centre for Human Movement)
- WorkCover Tasmania
- Workhorse Design
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