

Australian Health Benefits of Good Work Signatory Steering Group

Making it Happen

Harnessing the health benefits of good work

There is compelling evidence for organisations to embed integrated approaches for health and wellbeing into their businesses. Such integration has been shown to improve the health, participation and productivity of their employees with additional flow on benefits to the business.

How can we work together to maximise the HBGW?

The Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) has launched the HBGW Consensus Statement which is our call to action. The consensus statement unites a wide range of stakeholders affirming the importance of good work as a determinant of health and productivity. Signatories to the statement are called upon to deliver approaches within their organisations and through the services they provide, to bring the HBGW to life.

Over 200 leading Australian organisations are signatories to the consensus statement and many proudly display the Charter of Principles at their workplaces.

Government departments, employment service providers, rehabilitation providers, employers, unions, insurers, reinsurers, peak industry associations, superannuation funds, tertiary institutions, healthcare service providers, insurance regulators, medico-legal providers and consulting firms have signed up to work together to be part of the conversation and help frame the solution to drive the HBGW campaign.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

People in good work tend to enjoy happier and healthier lives than those not in work. Our physical and mental health generally improves through involvement in good work – we recover from sickness quicker and are at less risk of long term illness and incapacity.

Because of these recognised health benefits, ill or injured people and those with disability are encouraged to return to, or remain in, work as part of their recovery, if their health condition permits it.

The Australasian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (AFOEM) of the RACP has been actively building a greater understanding of the health benefits of good work. AFOEM has collated the body of evidence and it is convincing – participating in the workforce has a positive impact on your health and wellbeing.



BUSINESS BENEFITS

Companies' sustainable success derives from achieving financial outcomes while seeking key social outcomes aligned to the company's vision, mission and key performance indicators. A primary driver of these outcomes is the company's workforce. Ensuring employees have access to the HBGW provides many benefits to businesses including:

- productivity benefits gained through improved employee participation, engagement and motivation
- financial benefits through reduced absenteeism, turn over, injury rates and workers' compensation costs.

This approach/philosophy contributes to employers being seen as employers of choice.

Shifting the focus to sustainable return to health and work, regardless of work-relatedness of the injury or illness, can greatly improve the prospects of successful, long-term outcomes. Evidence strongly supports the view that engaged employees are more likely to adapt to changing business needs. Employers offering good work will achieve positive returns on their investment.

The World Health Organization describes this relationship between work health and productivity as a virtuous cycle where 'improved conditions at work will lead to a healthier work force, which will lead to improved productivity, and hence the opportunity to create a still healthier, more productive workplace'.

For more information on the research and actual case studies, see *Improving Workforce Health and Workplace Productivity* – a virtuous circle published by the RACP.

Benefits of becoming a Signatory

LEAD	Be seen as an employer of choice – a leader in promoting healthy workplaces from within your organisation and across your sector.
GROW	Be successful into the future – organisations will need to move beyond legislative requirements and embrace inclusive employment practices. More than ever, employers have greater social influence and responsibility.
RESEARCH	Benefit from access to the latest evidence, current practices and innovation from researchers and employer groups as well as expertise of other HBGW signatories across Australia and New Zealand.
NETWORK	Be part of a network of like-minded representatives of organisations with whom you can share information, challenges and experience.

The Australian HBGW Signatory Steering Group (SSG)

The SSG is the industry arm of the HBGW Campaign. It consists of passionate people representing signatory organisations and sectors who explore opportunities to collaborate with government and industry leaders to influence public policy and workplace practices. It strives to maximise people's access to the health and business benefits of good work and to advocate for the health benefits of good work.

Since early 2015 the HBGW SSG has engaged with key stakeholders, researchers, unions and employer groups to grow the signatory base and collectively address the next few years of employment and challenges ahead. The SSG presents opportunities for informed dialogue whilst enjoying the benefits that flow from collaboration. Employers are investing in workplace initiatives to promote health and wellbeing but often remain uncertain about the business case supporting such investment. The SSG endeavours to provide the business case, underpinned by research and continuous improvement.

Become a signatory

To apply to become a signatory, learn more about the SSG and be an active participant in driving the HBGW campaign for better business health and productivity go to:

racp.edu.au/advocacy/division-faculty-and-chapter-priorities/faculty-of-occupational-environmental-medicine/health-benefits-of-good-work

