



SPECIAL REPORT

WELL *at* WORK

A healthy workplace offers benefits for employees and the businesses that employ them, but to put a workplace wellness program in place you need to understand what your people and your business need.

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Did you know it's estimated that you spend as much as one-third of your time at work? It's therefore not surprising that your job is a major contributing factor in the quality of your health and wellbeing.

This presents an opportunity for employer and employee. It's an avenue through which both together can actively improve the quality of life and wellbeing of all. It's an opportunity that is receiving increased interest from employers — and for good reason: the size of the opportunity is significant.

AN IMPORTANT ROLE FOR PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE

Health statistics on Australians make for sobering reading. The Australian Institute of Health Welfare (AIHW) estimates that two-thirds of Australians are now overweight or obese and about half of all Australians have a chronic disease, with 20 per cent having at least two — think arthritis, asthma, back problems, cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and mental health conditions. AIHW also indicates that mental health and dementia-related health issues are continuing to increase.

Much the same is true for health statistics of New Zealanders. The New Zealand Ministry of Health (NZHM) estimates two-thirds of New Zealanders are also obese or overweight. NZHM indicates that, though New Zealanders overall are living longer in good health, there are those living longer in poorer health, and that 88 per cent of health loss for New Zealanders is related to chronic disease. As in Australia, NZHM confirms that health issues related to mental health and dementia are a growing challenge.

An important theme highlighted by AIHW and NZHM is the invaluable role



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