

## **Working Health – a unique self-funded hospital based work site health promotion program**

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The importance of the workplace partnerships in health promotion was recognised in 1998 by the World Health Organisation. Over the past 7 years Working Health, Royal Adelaide Hospital Health Promotion has created partnerships with a variety of departments within the hospital and with outside providers to provide information and access to health promoting services for organisations in the community and their employees.

Outside organisations interested in providing health education / health promotion for employees within their work place contact the Working Health Co-ordinator at Royal Adelaide Hospital (RAH) Health Promotion. Services requested include health screenings, back care / manual handling sessions and health education, such as healthy eating, stress management and men's health. Flu vaccinations are also available during the early part of each year.

Several Royal Adelaide Hospital (RAH) departments have become involved with Working Health over the last few years, including Physiotherapy, Audiology and the Women's Health Centre as well as Registered Nurses specialising in areas such as dermatology and men's health. Experts are recruited from outside the hospital to provide additional services. Many of these providers come from community based groups such as WEA (Workers Education Association), COPE (Centre of Personal Encounters) or work as private practitioners, for example physiotherapists and counsellors. The University of Adelaide have also been involved with Working Health programs.

Participants, employees of the organisations, are asked for feedback immediately after sessions. Approximately 60% state they have learned some new information with the other 40% having current information reinforced. About 80% of participants report they intend making some changes to lifestyle behaviour. A summary report of the feedback is provided to the organisation.

Working Health operates on a fee for service basis. The program is successful and supports 1 FTE Working Health Co-ordinator and all provider fees. Hence this unique hospital based service provides valuable preventive health services to employees of organisations in the community without impacting on the hospital budget and public funds. It is a self-supporting program. Due to its unique location within a large teaching hospital, Working Health has access to a broad range of reputable health expertise. Working Health offers RAH a unique way to provide primary health care services in the community. It assists the hospital in its goal to maintain excellence as a major health care provider to the people of Adelaide and South Australia. This presentation will outline the development and outcomes of the program, including the support of the hospital.