



What does it take to protect your employees' wellbeing?

(And why is it so important? And is it really your responsibility?)

For anybody working in a corporate environment, a company Private Health Insurance subsidy or a voluntary discounted offer are often part and parcel of the employee framework. Whether it is a negotiated rate, reduced waiting periods or access to special wellbeing services, these are benefits that come with the corporate territory.

However, is the provision of corporate health insurance benefits enough to keep employees well? And does health insurance truly help in making employees healthier – and therefore more engaged and productive in their roles?

Unfortunately, the answer is perhaps not. Individuals have hospital insurance for the same reason they elect to have car, home and contents or life insurance. While they never want to have to use it, the fact that it can be called upon when required provides invaluable peace of mind. So with all this considered, it is clear that employers need to be doing more to ensure the health of their employees. But what more can they be doing, and why should they invest in it?

Unsurprisingly, the benefits are significant, and they are highly tangible. An overall 'well' employee will deliver 21% more productivity in the workplace, which leads to 22% more profitability for the employer¹. A well employee is also six times more likely to be engaged in their job, and are 41% more likely to stay with their employer² – making those high performer retention targets more attainable.

What's more, employees also see their health as an integral part of their employment. 69% say that health and wellbeing programs make them feel better about their employment, and 74% believe these programs are a good investment for their employer.

With the benefits clear, how can employers begin to take action? The [Aon Hewitt 2015 Health Care Survey](#) found that workplace wellbeing initiatives may be an ideal place to start. Whether it is workplace fitness initiatives, healthy eating support or an overall workplace focus on wellbeing.

We hear that, "In a strong culture of health, I am more likely to do what is good for me." Further,

- 85% respondents said that their family fitness improved as the result of a workplace fitness initiative; and
- 93% of respondents said their family's eating habits improved as the result of a workplace healthy eating initiative.

We are living in a time when there are more resources and information on wellbeing than ever before. However, not all is useful, relevant, or backed by appropriate research. Therefore, navigating the myriad of information available and selecting the right programs is key to an organisation's success.



As a starting point, organisations should select a trusted advisor who can help them on their path of creating a wellbeing culture. Those may include:

1. Collecting data to understand where key risks lie (i.e., workers' compensation claims, health insurance claims, absenteeism data, EAP usage data etc.)
2. Assessing these various data points to seek clear and meaningful insights into key people risks, determining the impact on engagement for these areas of concern, and identifying priorities
3. Developing a Health and Wellbeing plan to address these risks. Key to this is in garnering support from risk insurers to support delivery of the required health initiatives that support health plans
4. Conduct continual measurement of initiatives, to understand the impact they are having on employees, and to determine return on investment.

When these activities begin within an organisation, managers will see a notable, sustainable shift in engagement and culture. With the right support and development of the most effective programs, both employees and their organisations can begin to enjoy the many benefits of being well.

One company that implemented this approach – the Australian office of a global organisation – decided it was time to address the challenges their employees were facing with poor health, stress, substance abuse and mental health challenges. Working with industry leaders, the leadership team began to gradually change their organisation's health culture. Addressing the need for a leadership-led approach, they built a holistic wellbeing plan, and executed this with a lead insurer. As a result, the organisation has seen notable improvements in employee wellbeing, have commercialised their approach, and are engaging with corporate Australia to improve wellbeing in workplaces more holistically.

At Aon, we provide consultancy services to support organisations in conducting these activities. We can benchmark your Health and Wellbeing programs against similar organisations in the market, and we also have close associations with leading health insurers. As a result, we can work alongside you to design and deliver health and wellbeing solutions that are aligned to your company's health insurance plans, to begin delivering tangible benefits to your organisation and your employees. To begin conversations on your organisation's wellbeing culture, please speak to an Aon representative today.

1. Gallup, "State of The American Workplace Employee Engagement Insights for US Business Leaders", 2013
2. Aon Hewitt [Consumer Health Mindset™ Study](#), 2016

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