



Jillian Skinner MP

Minister for Health
Minister for Medical Research

Jai Rowell MP

Assistant Minister for Health
Minister for Mental Health

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday 30 June 2014

NSW GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES *GET HEALTHY AT WORK* PROGRAM

The NSW Government today launched *Get Healthy at Work*, an initiative of NSW Health and WorkCover NSW to prevent lifestyle-related chronic disease in workers by changing their eating practices, weight, smoking habits and alcohol consumption.

Health Minister Jillian Skinner and Assistant Health Minister Jai Rowell launched the program at the Enfield depot of global trucking company TNT Express.

Sixteen companies - including TNT Express, Woolworths distribution centre, James Hardie, Nestle and Australian Financial Services - joined a pilot of the program in the last year. A total of 934 health checks have been conducted during this pilot activity.

NSW Health expects up to 15,000 workplaces will participate in the \$12 million, two-year program, potentially reaching 400,000 workers.

The free services and support available to NSW workplaces under the *Get Healthy at Work* program include:

- a brief health check which is free and confidential. This is delivered by a trained health professional to help a worker understand his/her risk of developing Type 2 diabetes and heart disease. It is also available on-line
- direct referrals to a GP, Get Healthy Information and Coaching Service and Quitline, if required.
- a range of online tools and training packages.
- access to a workplace health promotion professional to help develop a workplace health program to improve the health of workers.

“Through health checks, education and support in the workplace - where we spend so much time - *Get Healthy at Work* will promote healthy eating, physical activity and maintenance of healthy weight,” Mrs Skinner said.

“A healthier workforce equals a higher functioning workforce and better outcomes for both staff and the organisation. Improved health among workers - and the wider community - also reduces the rate of avoidable hospitalisation.”

Get Healthy at Work is a key initiative of the NSW Government’s Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Strategy, which was unveiled in January.

“In 2012, around half the adult population (49.7 per cent) in NSW were overweight or obese,” Mr Rowell said.

“In our modern workplaces, too many workers are sedentary. This often results in weight gain when coupled with unhealthy eating and lifestyle choices.

“*Get Healthy at Work* will initially focus on industries such as construction, manufacturing, transport and storage and agriculture, forestry and fisheries, whose staff display the highest prevalence of lifestyle-related chronic disease”.

Since joining the *Get Healthy at Work* pilot last year, TNT Express Enfield has:

- overhauled its canteen menu boards to offer healthier options.
- placed an informative 'Traffic Light' sticker in each truck to remind drivers of healthy eating choices.
- partnered with local associations, gyms and health insurers to offer better deals for employees.
- created a smoke-free workplace.

“Feedback from staff indicates they are healthier, they tend to be happier and more are making informed food and lifestyle choices,” said Noel Springall of TNT Express.

“The minute you start to take a genuine and sincere interest in your people, in turn they also take a more sincere interest and investment in the company.”

Finance and Services Minister Dominic Perrottet said WorkCover NSW is committed to helping industry develop safe and healthy workplaces.

“As well as improved morale, productivity and motivation, healthy workers are less likely to suffer manual handling injuries,” Mr Perrottet said.

“I encourage businesses to register to participate in *Get Healthy at Work* and take an important step towards a healthier, safer, more productive workplace.”

Businesses can learn more about *Get Healthy at Work* and register to participate at www.gethealthyatwork.com.au.

MEDIA:

Liz Hannan (Minister Skinner) - 0427 232 671

Kathy Rankin (Minister Rowell) - 0413 363 431