

Healthy Families Manukau, Manurewa-Papakura



A huge portion of our community's time is spent at work. This environment has great potential to influence our health and wellbeing. From having more energy and feeling happier at work, workplaces are an ideal place to support and promote healthy habits and contribute to a healthy community.

Located in the airport district in Mangere, Rinnai is a heating systems industry leader with a mix of office-based, manufacturing and warehouse staff. The staff's workdays are a mixture of sedentary and physical. The company wanted to transform its workplace to enhance overall health and wellbeing.

Supported by Healthy Families Manukau, Manurewa-Papakura, staff identified emphasis should be on increasing physical activity, improving fruit and vegetable consumption and reducing sugar-sweetened beverage consumption. With high staff retention and job satisfaction amongst the team at Rinnai, staff also identified that they would focus more on their health if a programme were introduced into the workplace.

Using Healthy Families Manukau, Manurewa-Papakura nutritional guidelines, Rinnai staff undertook classes to read food labels and understand the nutritional value of foods. A before-work cooking class taught practical and relevant cooking skills, offering healthy-alternatives to family favourite recipes. In these classes staff learned to make simple salads to accompany their monthly workplace BBQ, which traditionally included very few vegetable options. Inspirational speakers also shared their personal health journeys, like Selwyn Tupou who lost 100kg by living a healthier lifestyle. As a result of the newly acquired knowledge and skill, an increase in healthier food alternatives were noticed in the workplace.

With such a positive response from staff, a section of land has now been set aside at the Rinnai premises with a vision to grow vegetables on site and keep urban beehives. Connecting staff

to food gardens in the workplace will see them involved in the growing of vegetables and fruit and give them the ability to consume the fresh produce grown on site. While healthier food options have been adopted at work functions (including wholemeal bread and salads), the team are working to extend this commitment by removing white sugar from the workplace and reviewing their vending machine.

Connecting the workplace with a physical activity community champion from South Auckland sparked the beginning of an in-house fitness programme. Supported by management, with financial support from ProCare Health, a 10-week group fitness session helped promote exercise and movement amongst staff.

Having started with nutrition and physical activity, there are plans to take a more proactive approach to the prevention of serious health conditions amongst staff by working with a local primary health organisation to incorporate regular health checks to the system.

Rinnai is a great example of commitment to workplace wellness and the ongoing, positive effects the work setting has on staff health and lifestyle. Through collaboration with health champions, the establishment of an initiatives committee and implementation of nutrition and physical activity changes, the company is meeting demand for a sustainable health promoting environment. Collaborating with local businesses will see a growth in workplace wellness amongst the wider industrial community, contributing to long-term systems change.



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