

Getting Northland Workplaces Active



Workplaces benefit from having active employees who are happy, healthy and lead a more balanced lifestyle. It is estimated that individuals can spend up to 60% of their waking hours at work¹, making it a significant setting for improving physical activity and staff wellness.



Sport Northland's Active Workplace Programme supports workplaces to create healthier environments for staff. For over ten years this programme has focused on working with workplaces to support them to develop solutions based on their needs, encouraging long term commitment to physical activity and wellness, and empowering workplaces to learn and participate. The Active Workplaces Programme is available to all workplaces big or small across the Northland region.

The programme engages with workplaces to help inject more physical activity through an interactive 12 month plan and more intensive support over this period. Workplaces choose to address additional key focus areas such as nutrition, mental wellbeing, Smokefree and educational seminars to name a few.

The Active Workplace Programme is designed around each workplace and what they can do to help create a healthier environment for staff. The programme assists workplaces to enhance their physical environment, implement initiatives to help staff and their wellness needs, develop workplace policies and practices, and of course the fun things that help improve staff morale and cohesiveness.

"It's great to see Northland workplaces valuing their staff by looking after their wellness. Workplace wellness can be a simple and inexpensive thing to start, it only takes a few keen people and a bit of leadership to get started" Active Workplace Coordinator Sharon Adams says.

With the support of the Active Workplace Coordinator workplaces work through five key steps:

1. Mutual understanding
2. Building relationships
3. Making it happen
4. Strengthening and supporting
5. Sustainability

The programme is driven by the staff, for the staff and what they have identified as important to them while being supported. Each workplace creates their own 'wellness team' to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the programme in the workplace. The wellness team also determines the purpose and goals of the programme and helps to implement the ideas provided by the staff - they determine what is best for their workplace and represent the interests of staff.

Local health, community and recreation professionals also play a role in the Active Workplaces Programme - promoting the initiative to workplaces and supporting workplaces with implementing their plan around key focus areas such as providing nutrition education sessions.

As part of ongoing sustainability an annual 'Active Workplace Sharing Forum' is held. It's designed to bring together past and present Active Workplaces from the across the region to share ideas, learnings and discussion surrounding workplace wellness.

Feedback from participating businesses state that workplace wellness doesn't have to be time consuming or cost consuming. Initiatives that are based around staff wants/needs create increases in productivity and team building. The personalised programme helps each workplace create their own unique wellness plans over coming barriers and unique challenges.

At the end of the 12 month period workplaces graduate from the Active Workplace programme, celebrating their success and recognising their ongoing commitment to staff wellbeing.



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