

Continuing our regular Master Builder column on health-related topics, Ian Wee, director of Perth Integrated health Clinic, looks at...

Dealing with the resource boom – a health and wellness solution

Like many employers in the construction and building sector, you and your staff probably have been dealing with the loss of personnel to the higher paying wages of the resource sector.

Many young apprentices are leaving the security of their current employment to seek short term financial reward in the oil fields, platforms and mining sector for wages and schemes far greater than most other employers can afford to provide.

This reality has resulted not only in the loss of good up-and-coming skilled labour, it also has resulted in the proportional delay in housing project completions and proportional rise in price of goods and services. With the increases of these wages disproportional to normal indices, this is also creating creeping inflation.

The paradox is that a percentage of the building boom has been attributed directly by economists to the upsurge of trans-migrants from over East, who cashed up with the sale of their properties are fuelling the property boom in the West with the purchase and building of new homes.

All these economic and financial realities, however, do not resolve the current woes echoed daily to me by tradespeople and employers in the building game in my treatment-consulting rooms.

There is, however, a solution that many have not considered.

Read on.

What have employers or your employers in the building and construction industry done for the health and welfare of their staff and contractors? If you can answer in the affirmative to the following, then I will assume that you are in a better state than others when it comes to staff retention and loyalty:

- When was the last time you conducted a workshop on health and wellness?
- Have you undertaken any consultation or projects to cater for the ageing population in your workforce?
- Have you undertaken a welfare survey to cater for the needs of your workforce?
- Have you organised health checks and screens for your employees and contractors?
- What have you done to assist in the health and welfare of their families?
- Have you encouraged positive eating habits in your workplace?
- Have you developed strategies to cope with stress and stressors in the workplace?
- Does your workplace promote a balanced lifestyle of work, rest, play and family time?
- Have you done anything to encourage fitness and exercise programs within your work community?
- Are your occupational health and safety programs boring legislation themes or are they hands on programs with practical applications?



Perth Integrated Health Clinic premises in West Perth adjacent to the Master Builders headquarters at Construction House.

What most people and employers fail to realise is that while higher wages might drive short-term satisfaction, ultimately it is care and welfare that breeds loyalty and long term relationships.

Even in the resource sector, employers struggle to compete with the retention of good staff who are driven by the value added services and health and wellness programs that their employers provide them over others who simply cannot see past the provision of wages.

If you require any assistance in making your workplace a positive one and one that cultivates loyalty, long-term relationships and positive welfare services, help is at hand. Whether you are an employer of a few people or any employer of hundreds, there are practical programs that can be established in very cost effective ways to make a difference. After all, it is said that the greatest asset and investment that a company or employer has to make is in their human resource potential.

Are you game enough to make that difference and from there counteract the short-term implications and negative effects of the resource boom? If so, I would like to hear from you.

Ian Wee is director of the Perth Integrated Health Clinic, specialising in the provision of corporate health and corporate wellness programs. Ian is known in the business and corporate community for his no nonsense approach to health and clinical treatment. He is also well regarded as a business coach and mentor to companies and organisations with extensive media exposure in the past 10 years. Ian's clinical expertise as a spinal muscular occupational therapist also sees his clinic provide a wide range of health programs and treatment including podiatry, chiropractic, naturopathy, counselling and ergonomic programs.

For further information on your company's requirements please contact Ian Wee at the Perth Integrated Health Clinic on 9226 1239, Fax 9226 1259 or email ianwee@pihc.com.au.

The Perth Integrated Health Clinic is one of eight health care providers appointed by the Master Builders Association as part of its Master Builders

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