

Healthy work environments: A partnership model to improve outcomes for staff working within the aged care sector.

Working in the aged care industry can be a rewarding and satisfying career choice, but it's not without its hazards. Sprains and strains caused by pushing, pulling, and bending are the greatest contributor to injuries suffered by workers, particularly older women. Furthermore, the pressure of work demands was seen as leading to workers rushing their job tasks and staff shortages meant that staff were working alone rather than alongside co-workers; these additional factors also contributed to work injuries.

The introduction of a healthy work environment framework can provide a systematic approach in reduction of workers injuries in aged care setting. The framework uses the Registered Nurses Association, Ontario: The Best Practice Guidelines (BPG) program which provides a structured, evidence-based methodology for organisations to prepare, implement and evaluate evidence-based practice that is sustainable over time.

The aim of the program is to:

- Empower practice champions to facilitate and embed change.
- Create a sustainable structure to advance evidence-based nursing practice and care.
- Use best practice guidelines to achieve measurable improvements in safety and quality.
- Collaborate to achieve greater clinical, cultural, and financial outcomes in a sustainable manner.

Adoption of the program by facilities will enhance the work environment for staff and see improvements in the following areas:

- Increased staff satisfaction and retention
- A reduction in the incidence and severity of injuries staff experience
- Decreased staff absence / sick leave
- Decreased staff turnover

The program is aimed to build expertise by promoting and supporting knowledge transfer, promotes the use of evidence-based practice, enable staff to develop strategies that are sustainable, and integrate evidence-based practice into quality improvement plans and activities.



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Biography

Adjunct Associate Professor, Jackie Wood, works for the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (South Australian Branch) as the Director, Nursing and Midwifery Practice. Jackie has over 44 years providing strong leadership for nursing, fostering an environment that inspires nursing staff to set direction for and continually improve services. She provides strategic nursing leadership in relation to nursing practice and has extensive experience with large change management projects. Previously she was the Executive Director of Nursing for Central Adelaide Local Health Network, during the commissioning of the New Royal Adelaide Hospital.

Nicola Williams works for the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation (South Australian Branch) as a Professional Officer. Nicola has over 30 years' experience working in Australia and the United Kingdom. Migrating to Adelaide in 2006, she has held a diverse range of clinical and management nursing positions in the acute and sub-acute sectors and the Department of Health. The Best Practice program enables her to share her experience and knowledge to help several South Australian Local Health Networks and Aged Care facilities to implement the program and transfer evidence into practice.

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