ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Amy Towers

Amy Towers is a risk expert with more than 15 years of experience working as a health and safety specialist and consultant. Since receiving her BAppSc in Occupational Health and Safety from RMIT in 2002, she has provided health and safety advice and solutions to clients across a variety of industries, including manufacturing, construction, warehousing, health care, and retail. In 2014, Amy founded Risk Collective, a risk management firm specialising in workplace health and safety. It offers clients exceptional professional service in end-to-end safety management systems that are simple and sustainable.

Steven Booker

Steven Booker is a registered psychologist and employment lawyer with more than 15 years of experience advising employers on workplace mental health issues. His areas of competency include resilience training and coaching, workplace culture assessment and improvement, minimising mental health risks arising from organisational change, designing recruitment systems to select resilient employees, and identifying roles and cultures likely to create mental health risks. Steven consults with a range of Australian and multinational organisations to implement mental health and wellness strategies.

Alistair Salmon

Alistair Salmon, Principal at Mackinnon Finch Workplace Legal & Consulting, has more than 25 years of workplace law experience. Alistair has worked as a legal partner for more than 10 years and has been employed in executive legal roles with the Fair Work Ombudsman and Fair Work Building and Construction. He also has industry experience, having worked with IBM Global Services.

One in six working-age people are living with a mental health condition. So, as an employer or manager, you must care about the mental health of your employees.

Mental illness is one of the leading causes of absence and long-term work incapacity, and costs Australian businesses $10.9 billion each year.

In the past, physical injuries were the foremost concern for businesses but now the rate and effect of mental illness in the workplace outweighs physical injuries. In 2013, mental disorders overtook musculoskeletal problems as the leading cause of long-term work incapacity.

If you provide a mentally healthy work environment for your employees, they are likely to be more engaged and motivated, leading to increased positivity and productivity.

Research has identified that three quarters of Australians say a mentally healthy workplace is important when looking for a job.

Plus, investing in mental health in the workplace can offer a positive return on investment for your business. For every dollar spent on successfully implementing a targeted action to increase mental health in your workplace, there is an average of $2.30 in benefits to be gained.

Conversely, a business that is not proactive about mental health may be at risk of absenteeism, presenteeism, and workers' compensation claims caused by low morale and job stress, as well as other psychosocial hazards that can cause or exacerbate mental illness.

This eBook outlines:

- what mental illness is (see page 1);

- the effects of mental illness on your business (see page 6);

- your legal obligations in relation to mental illness in the workplace (see page 10);

- how to identify mental health risks in your employees (see page 20);

- how to minimise mental health risks at your workplace (see page 23); and

- how to handle mental illness at your workplace (see page 32).

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