

EOWA EMPLOYER OF CHOICE FOR WOMEN - INITIATIVES

The Spastic Centre has a range of EO programs and initiatives which are directly benefiting employees, particularly women. These include:

GREAT EMPLOYER PROGRAM

The Great Employer Program (GEP) was developed to review current employee benefits and conditions with a view to ensuring that The Spastic Centre's employment offer remains competitive.

A number of initiatives have arisen as a result of GEP – in 2007 there was a review of the paid parental leave, which led to a decision to improve the benefits for employees seeking either paid maternity, adoption of paternity leave. Three new initiatives were also implemented this year:

1. Global Corporate Challenge

Last year, The Spastic Centre offered staff the opportunity to be involved in the Global Corporate Challenge (GCC). The GCC is a team walking program developed specifically for the workplace that increases fitness, promotes teamwork and generally encourages health and wellbeing whilst having fun in a supportive environment. The event started on 22 May 2008 and ended on 23 September 2008 (total of 125 days).

The Centre supported 124 entrants (paying \$99 per entrant) to complete the challenge. Staff recorded their daily walking activity levels from their GCC pedometer and every step moved them further along a virtual walk around the world. With a target of 10,000 steps every day, each team member logs on to the GCC website and enters their step count, contributing to their team's total step count.

The Centre provided regular updates on team and individual progress along the way to motivate employees.

2. Wellness Program

The Spastic Centre, in partnership with PEAK Health Management, offered staff the opportunity to take part in the 2008/09 Wellness Program. The aim of this program is to offer staff the opportunity to become inspired to improve their health and wellbeing. Staff were invited to review the choices on offer and make suggestions as to which should be implemented. The Wellness Program took a holistic approach with staff and management choosing health screenings, educational seminars, massage and passive exercise classes. The entire cost was borne by The Centre. So far, nearly 400 employees have participated in the program.

3. Purchase of additional leave

The Centre has initiated two new developments around supporting staff to maintain work/life balance.

The Centre has implemented an initiative which will allow all full and part time employees, who work more than 15.2 hours per week, and have six (6) months continuous service, to purchase up to two additional weeks leave per year.

This initiative is designed to support employees to maintain their desired work/life balance. This will greatly support working mothers, who wish to take leave during periods of school holidays, without depleting all of their leave reserves.

The second initiative, which is still being finalized, would allow staff either of the following:

- To work for four (4) years at The Spastic Centre for 75% of your salary, so that you could take the fifth year off paid
- To work for three (3) years at The Spastic Centre for 83% of your salary, so that you could take six months off in the fourth year

The Centre firmly believes that both of these initiatives will both financially and emotionally support women to undertake a number of options, such as - full time study, child care, travel, caring for elderly relatives etc, without negatively impacting their career.

DIVERSITY WORKING PARTY

The organisation, through its strategic initiatives for Greater Participation of Aboriginal Communities and Greater Participation of CALD communities is being led by women to progressively work towards embracing diversity.

The organisation has sponsored two managers to attend an extensive workshop on diversity by MDAA over a six month period. Both participants were women and following the workshop were supported to address diversity issues at a strategic level. The managers have been given the directive to begin the change processes. For our organisation, this includes engaging women of different cultural backgrounds; women of different sexual persuasions, women of different educational backgrounds.

It is giving women from different regions, positions and backgrounds the opportunity to work together and to help bring about changes in the workforce culture. The aim is to promote our workforce with women of different ethnicity, education levels, and disability backgrounds.

ENDS

MEDIA CONTACTS

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- Cerebral palsy (CP) is a permanent disability that affects movement
 - CP results from damage to the developing brain, usually before birth
 - In Australia, it is estimated that a child is born with CP every 18 hours
 - There is no known cure and, for most, the cause is unknown
 - People with CP may also have seizures, and sensory and intellectual impairments
- For support and information contact the CP Helpline - 1300 30 29 20