A SAFE AND HEALTHY WORKPLACE

Working Together to STOP VIOLENCE
Mid North Coast Local Health District

Challenge

All of our staff, volunteers and visitors have the right to be safe at work. Domestic and family violence (D&FV) perpetrators can use workplaces to harass or stalk victims which impacts work performance and lowers productivity. This can create emotional distress and can pose a risk to other employees and members of the public. The Mid North Coast Local Health District (MNCLHD) recognised the social, economic and psychological impacts of D&FV and wanted to do something about it. We wanted to create a safer, more respectful workplace and a workforce with a greater understanding of violence prevention.

Solution

The journey to become an accredited White Ribbon Workplace (WRW) was rigorous and sometimes confronting for our workforce. The accreditation process required demonstration of effective leadership, resource allocation, communication, policy development and training. The MNCLHD took an organisational approach to preventing violence against women by engaging and enabling staff to lead this social change. Interactive workshops and training were co-delivered with specialist domestic and family violence services and made available to more than 4,000 staff.

Results

We conducted workforce surveys before and after the WRW project and found improvements in staff knowledge and awareness of: the prevalence and impacts of D&FV; our Human Resources Policy; and referral pathways to support affected employees. We are proud to be the first NSW Local Health District to achieve White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation. We embedded CORE values with a focus on: preventing violence against women; supporting gender equality; and promoting respectful relationships within our workforce.

Acknowledgements

- White Ribbon Australia
- Education Centre Against Violence (ECAV)
- 1800Respect
- Port Macquarie Hastings Domestic and Family Violence Specialist Service
- Lifeline Australia
- Griffith University