

Report To: Human Resources Committee, Board of Health
Submitted by: Dr. Nicola Mercer, Medical Officer of Health & CEO
Subject: 2017 HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY REPORT

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- (a) That the Human Resources Committee makes recommendation to the Board of Health to receive this Report for information.

BACKGROUND:

The Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards (OPHOS) outlines in section 6.14 the requirements that:

The board of health shall ensure that the administration establishes a human resources strategy, based on a workforce assessment which considers the competencies, composition and size of the workforce, as well as community composition, and includes initiatives for the recruitment, retention, professional development and leadership development of the public health unit workforce. ¹

In 2017, WDGPH refined the Human Resources Strategy as required by the Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards (OPHOS).

The Agency overall continues to enhance the human resources process and effectiveness to achieve and maintain a healthy and productive workplace.

In addition, in 2017, the Human Resources Team continued to enhance and streamline HR Processes, Policies and Procedures to enhance internal client service levels.

The Human Resources Strategy Report (Appendix A) outlines the work completed in 2017 regarding progress towards the achievement of this strategy.

Appendix ‘A’ outlines the Agency’s workforce demographics of full-time, part-time, temporary and casual employees as well as key 2017 activities which include:

- New employee orientation and training activities;
- Job standards and position descriptions;
- Professional qualifications;
- Employee personnel files;
- Occupational Health and Safety;

- Recruitment and retention;
- Code of conduct;
- Compensation policy;
- Reporting Relationships;
- Discipline and labour/employee relations;
- Performance management and evaluation; and
- Succession planning and staff development.

Continuous improvement of HR policies, procedures and practice activities.

Appendix ‘B’ outlines the Agency’s total compensation for a permanent full-time employee. This includes:

- Compensation;
- Benefits;
- Training and development opportunities;
- Work lifestyle; and
- Employee recognition.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND/OR FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

N/A.

REFERENCES:

1. Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards. [Online]. [cited 2017 3 21]. Available from: <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/orgstandards/>

APPENDICES:

Appendix ‘A’ – 2017 Human Resources Strategy Report
 Appendix ‘B’ – Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Total Rewards Overview

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**Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health
2017 Human Resources Strategy Report**

Contents

Introduction	3
The WDGPH Workforce	3
Orientation of Public Health Unit Staff	3
Job standards and Position Descriptions	4
Ensuring Qualifications for Occupational Positions	4
Personnel File Management	5
Occupational Health and Safety	5
Recruitment and Retention Strategies	5
Code of Conduct	6
Compensation Policy.....	6
Reporting Relationships	7
Discipline and Labour/Employee Relations	7
Staff Performance Evaluation	9
Succession Planning and Staff Development	9
Continuous Improvement of Human Resources Policies, Procedures and Practices	11
Conclusion.....	11

Introduction

Human resource management continues to develop in today's changing and ever evolving workforce. Some of the challenges Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) face are common across the Public Service, while others are unique to WDGPH. Significant challenges over the next few years include changing client needs, changes to regulations such as the introduction of Bill 148 and the modernized public health standards. In addition, increasing accountability factors, significant number of staff eligible for retirement, ongoing effective labour and employee relations and evolving learning needs. To ensure that WDGPH meets these challenges and to strengthen its human resource management, the agency is working to ensure strategies are in place for ongoing success.

In 2017, The Agency refined the Human Resources Strategy as required by the Ontario Public Health Organizational Standards (OPHOS). In addition, in 2017 the Human Resources Team continued to enhance and streamline HR Processes, Policies and Procedures to enhance internal client service levels. The policy and procedure enhancements and revisions are valuable training aids for both employees and management when completing infrequent human resources tasks. This report outlines the work completed in 2017 regarding progress towards the achievement of this strategy.

The WDGPH Workforce

As of December 31, 2017 the Agency had a total of 235 employees which was composed of full-time, part-time, temporary, and casual (as needed) employees. Of these 235 employees, 83 were nurses, 75 were professional staff, 56 were administrative staff and 21 were management staff. These 235 employees equated to 169.8 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employees. One (1) FTE equates to 1820 work hours per annum.

Orientation of Public Health Unit Staff

Conducting new hire orientation helps an organization retain new hires, minimize new hire frustration and confusion, and increases new hire productivity. In 2017 WDGPH continued to streamline and refine the New Employee Orientation process through the development and deployment of an updated interactive program based on new hire feedback.

In 2017, a total of 51 individuals participated in the orientation program. Of these 35 individuals, 3 were administrative staff, 31 were professional staff, 1 was in management, and 4 were students (not legally recognized as employees of the Agency).

The new hire orientation process was streamlined and enhanced through the establishment of a centralized new hire resource depot. In addition, checklists and work instructions were simplified to enhance the end user experience. This permitted new hires to quickly and easily get critical new hire information in one central location thereby helping to enhance their initial employment experience and increase productivity. In addition, to continuously improve the new hire experience, a new feedback tool was implemented with new hires so areas could be identified and improved. New Employee Orientation was conducted on Mondays throughout the calendar year as required. This half-day small group interactive session was conducted with an HR staff member to provide an overview of WDGPH and answer any questions individuals had. All individuals were oriented to the mission, vision and values of the Agency, the geographical areas and locations that WDGPH supports, as well as the present services that WDGPH provides. The New Employee Orientation was customized according to the staff

member or student needs. If the person was a staff member, the orientation was tailored on the basis of whether the employee was temporary or permanent, or if they were part time, full time or casual (as needed).

A critical element of new employee orientation is education and familiarization of key policies and procedure. Based on new employee feedback as well as the needs of the Agency, key policies and procedures on the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act (AODA) legislation, as well as Workplace Violence, Harassment and Sexual Harassment were incorporated into the interactive employee orientation.

Job standards and Position Descriptions

WDGPH has 61 defined occupations with formal position descriptions in the Agency's salary band position grid. These occupations can be broken into three main groups: administrative, professional and management. In 2017, the Agency had 20 administrative, 17 professional and 24 management position descriptions. In addition, there are three (3) additional unionized nursing related occupations which are not banded occupations.

In 2017, the Agency commenced a project to identify and utilize a robust, standardized, flexible, and easy-to-use electronic assessment platform to support the developmental needs of existing employees. Additionally the platform has the future capability for potential candidate testing to reinforce objective hiring on the basis of skills and abilities. This developmental software assessment tool captures all general software skills required within the Agency outside of job-specific software systems. The plan is to pilot the developmental assessments and roll out this system in 2018.

It is essential that the work people complete is aligned to the strategic and operational plans of the Agency. One way this is accomplished is the annual review of the position description with the employee as part of the annual performance review process. Throughout 2017, 32.6% of the banded position descriptions, impacting 23 employees, were revised and updated. The job standards outlined in the position description crucially support organizational recruitment as well as assist to establish baseline qualifications required for positions. In addition, standards influence and inform training and development needs for new employees as well as for employees who wish to advance to a different position within the Agency. The information and requirements in the position description also inform the compensation review and job grading process and ensures WDGPH conforms to all equitable compensation standards and requirements. In addition, the formal review of job descriptions has been incorporated into the new Performance Management Process workflow which goes live January 1, 2018.

Ensuring Qualifications for Occupational Positions

2017 was another busy year for recruitment as a total of 66 opportunities were recruited which represented one of the HR team's larger yearly activities in terms of devoted work time. The job requirements for these positions were established based on the job standards from established Agency job descriptions. Applicants for these positions had their knowledge, skills, and abilities assessed based on these requirements through pre-screening questions, comprehensive structured panel interviews, and reference verification. In addition, certain positions also required job related skills based testing, presentation requirements as well as realistic job scenarios as part of the selection process. The Agency ensured that only individuals with the required minimum qualifications and prior experience were

interviewed as outlined by the job standards in the position descriptions. In addition, where applicable, candidates were required to provide proof of qualifications and/or education prior to commencing employment. Ongoing maintenance of qualifications through the Agency's Regulated Health Professionals policy continued in 2017 which required existing employees to provide proof of their professional membership status. This policy was streamlined and simplified in 2017 in order to reinforce and clarify an employee's personal responsibility as well as the Agency's expectations.

Personnel File Management

Human Resources administers and manages a wide array of information including confidential information of record categories such as:

- Attendance records
- Employee records
- Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) information
- Health and safety information
- Compensation administration
- Employee and labour relations
- Recruitment and selection
- Training and development
- Payroll and benefits

A key storage location of employee HR information is their personnel file. Effective document administration also increases efficiency of HR staff and enhances internal client service. The HR team continued to maintain the personnel file management system that was streamlined and refined in 2016. In addition, the policy on personnel file management was also streamlined and simplified in 2017.

Occupational Health and Safety

In compliance with the Occupational Health & Safety Act, monthly JHSC meetings and workplace inspections, safety auditing, and reporting continued.

The Board of Health received two reports which outlined how WDGPH is meeting the Occupational Health and Safety requirements. Details of both reports are listed below:

- BH.05.JUN0816.R06 – Emergency Preparedness Health & Safety Framework
- BH.05.JUN0816.R07 – Health & Safety Update

Recruitment and Retention Strategies

WDGPH historically experiences low levels of total voluntary turnover and 2017 remained consistent with the 2016 turnover rate of 3.8% for full time, part time permanent, and temporary employees. Permanent employee voluntary turnover was 2.1% and temporary employees experienced a voluntary turnover rate of 1.7%.

In addition to full time and part time employees, the Agency utilizes casual employment. These roles are positions that do not have a formal schedule nor have any guarantee for the number of work hours per year. Casual (as needed) employees are required to be available for Agency work when required,

such as during the school immunization program. Voluntary turnover for these casual employees was 2.1% which represented a decrease from 4.26% in 2016. People often take casual employment opportunities while seeking permanent employment. This decrease can partially be explained by the Agency modifying recruitment practices to ensure that applicants are aware that these are not regular positions with regularly scheduled work hours but rather truly casual (as needed) positions with varying work schedules.

While people may voluntarily leave WDGPH for a variety of reasons outside an employer's control such as career growth opportunities, opportunity for permanent employment (vs. temporary employment), regular guaranteed hours of work (in the case of casual (as needed) positions), shorter commutes or change of career focuses, it is in the Agency's best interest to minimize voluntary turnover in order to maintain service levels.

To proactively identify potential trends and factors that pertain to voluntary turnover, the Agency offers optional voluntary exit interviews to employees that resign. There were 9 permanent full time, permanent part time, and temporary employees who voluntarily resigned in 2017 and HR conducted 2 comprehensive confidential exit interviews. For those whom chose not to voluntarily participate in formal exit interview discussions, informal discussions were conducted to understand why they were leaving the employ of the Agency. Two key trends for voluntary turnover identified were lack of career advancement opportunities (i.e. entry level management to senior leadership positions) and people leaving temporary employment to permanent full-time employment with employer benefits. In addition, 1 individual voluntarily resigned due to a decision to return to school.

As previously outlined, there were 66 opportunities posted in 2017. The composition of those postings included 52 paid positions with 35 full time, 4 part time and 4 casual (as needed) positions and 8 un-paid student opportunities. In addition, WDGPH engaged 6 volunteers.

To support recruitment initiatives, the Agency continued to partner with regulated professional associations, external colleges and universities to develop talent pipelines, as well as provided research opportunities for graduate students.

WDGPH continued to attract strong numbers of qualified applicants to posted vacancies. In 2017, the Agency had 32 applicants for a temporary Public Health Inspector job posting and 145 applicants for the Public Health Inspector Practicum Placement. The Agency utilized the practicum placement program to develop a potential pipeline for entry-level applicants for Public Health Inspector opportunities. The Agency also obtained an average of 71 or more applicants for Health Promotion Specialist job postings, and an average of 51 applicants for a Public Health Nurse Job postings.

Code of Conduct

WDGPH has a comprehensive Code of Conduct and Ethics which applies to all employees, students and volunteers that fosters and supports a culture of integrity and accountability. In 2017, there were no violations or concerns brought forth in respect to potential or actual violations of the Code.

Compensation Policy

An effective compensation policy includes a balance between internal equity and external competitiveness. A formal structured job evaluation process is used to determine the "value" to

maintain internal equity between different jobs of a position by evaluating a set of 11 objective job related factors. Some examples of the various factors are:

- Required education
- Job related experience
- Level of judgement
- Impact of errors
- HR responsibility
- General working conditions
- Financial responsibility

In 2017, a total of 8 positions were formally evaluated due to fundamental changes in one or more of the above factors by the Agency's Job Evaluation Committee. Positions were formally evaluated if they were new positions or if there were significant changes to the position.

The Agency continues to offer an extensive package of Total Rewards, as outlined in Appendix 'B' – Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Total Rewards Overview, to eligible employees. In addition to base compensation, the Agency also offers excellent benefits, training and development, work lifestyle and staff recognition.

Reporting Relationships

In 2017, The Agency continued to monitor and alter reporting relationships based on strategic business needs. In addition, the number of direct reports was reviewed in several divisions to ensure that the number of employees that a manager was responsible for managing was effective and not excessive.

In 2017, the Agency continued to ensure that leadership was competent to lead the individuals that report to them by ensuring they have the necessary education, qualifications, and credentials required in their program area. The Agency demonstrated its continued commitment to fair and equitable employment-related decisions to preserve employee morale; to provide the highest quality service possible; to ensure equitable opportunities; and to ensure integrity in the recruitment process by continuing to utilize objective behavioural, knowledge, and skill based selection practices.

Discipline and Labour/Employee Relations

Clear expectations, appropriate supervision and feedback on a day-to-day basis are the best ways to avoid the necessity of implementing disciplinary action. In addition, the solicitation of employee feedback to address employee and labour relations matters is an integral component of a positive employment environment. Through continuous improvement, the Agency solicited feedback from management and redeveloped the Progressive Discipline Policy and Procedure in 2017 to clarify the purpose and process of utilizing progressive disciplinary action while utilizing best practices. In 2017, the Agency did not have significant issues of misconduct that required progressive discipline. Most issues that were brought forth were typically addressed through dialogue between the manager and the employee through clarifying Agency expectations.

WDGPH maintains both a Labour Relations Committee for ONA represented nurses and an Employee Relations Committee for non-unionized employees that provide a forum for proactive discussion relating to employee matters. These meetings also assisted with encouraging two-way communication between

APPENDIX "A"

management and employees across the agency as well as to provide a forum for all employees to discuss matters regarding application of policies and procedures across the agency. Feedback from these meetings was utilized to modify and improve Agency practices and clarify policy and procedures as well as to provide feedback and suggestions to the Senior Leadership Team for consideration.

The Agency also continued to endorse and support the work of the Staff Appreciation Events Committee (SAEC). The purpose of this committee is to plan and execute Agency recognized staff appreciation events such as the staff BBQ in June and staff Day in November. This Committee's objective is to create opportunities for staff to celebrate organizational life through Agency sponsored events. These events assist with employee retention as well as enhancing employee communication and morale.

In addition to the SAEC, the Agency continued to conduct Healthy Workplace Committee meetings. This committee exists to guide and support WDGPH's strategic plan. The primary objectives of this committee is:

- To collect data and evaluate:
 - i) Best-practice workplace wellness initiatives,
 - ii) Staff needs and interests, and
 - iii) Success of agency implemented healthy workplace programs/policies.
- To increase staff awareness of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and available community resources and programs.
- To organize healthy workplace programs, events, and initiatives.
- To inform and advocate for healthy workplace policies.
- To champion and role model a healthy workplace philosophy and engage staff members to participate in healthy workplace programs.

The Agency also continued to affirm its commitment and support to Psychological Health & Safety in the Workplace by continuing to host meetings to:

Identify, recommend and support evidence based strategies that contribute to a psychologically healthy and safe workplace in alignment with the Mental Health Commission of Canada's P6 Framework for psychological health and safety. The framework encompasses key areas including:

- i) Policy
- ii) Planning
- iii) Promotion
- iv) Prevention
- v) Process
- vi) Persistence

The key objectives for this committee include:

- Increase knowledge , skills and capacity among employees, students and volunteers about mental well-being
- Advocate for policies and environmental supports that promote mental well-being

APPENDIX "A"

- Champion broad-based initiatives that promote and support a psychologically healthy workplace.
- Work towards creating a culture that reduces stigma and encourages open communication about mental health.
- Enhancing knowledge and skills of the management team to support their staff and their colleagues
- Enhance knowledge and skills of staff to build awareness among staff about resources and community support.
- Advocate for a supportive environment
- Create a yearly work plan to support the committee's objectives

The Agency continues to adapt the voluntary *National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace* (The Standard) with the goal of removing the stigma around mental health issues in the workplace and letting employees know it is okay to speak about it. The Standard supports the Agency's Strategic Plan, Building Healthy Tomorrows Today, through the promotion and support of the psychological health of staff.

In 2017, the Agency contracted with Vancouver Psych Health + Safety Consulting to create, implement and analyze a customized psychosocial survey to evaluate psychosocial strengths and hazards in the workplace. This aligned with the strategic goal of understanding WDGPH staff perceptions of psychological health and safety in their workplace. The results of this survey will inform the Psychological Health and Safety Committee's work plan to develop initiatives that support psychological health and well-being at WDGPH in 2018.

Staff Performance Evaluation

The fundamental goal of performance management is to promote and improve employee and organizational effectiveness. WDGPH initiated an extensive consultation with employees, and management through focus groups to clarify and identify Agency needs and priorities to support the implementation of a best-in-class automated electronic performance management system.

In 2017, Human Resources completed administrator training on the emPerform electronic performance management system and configured the system as established and determined by the Agency. This best-in-class easy-to-use electronic system was developed based on bench-marking other health units and government organizations as well as extensive consultation with employee work groups, managers and directors. The system introduces S.M.A.R.T. goal setting that are linked to strategic Agency objectives as well as competencies which is customized to administrative, professional and management staff. After configuration, software beta testing was completed by management volunteers and, through continuous improvement, the software configuration was tweaked and streamlined to enhance the end user experience. Deployment will commence starting the week of January 1, 2018 for managers and employees.

Succession Planning and Staff Development

The needs of Public Health are constantly changing and evolving. As previously discussed, the Agency experiences low levels of voluntary turnover for permanent and temporary staff. Staff who are currently enrolled in the Agency's pension (known as OMERS) may, however, be eligible to retire prior to

APPENDIX "A"

age 65 as early as age 55. Fortunately individuals that do elect to retire have historically provided extensive advance notice about their intention to retire based on their positive working relationship with their manager as well as their high level of professionalism. This advance notice has enabled the Agency to take an individual contextual approach to analyze if the needs of the Agency have changed to determine what knowledge, skills and abilities are needed for the upcoming potential vacancy (if any). This has resulted in new positions being created (i.e. Director of Information Systems), positions being redesigned and processes/work tasks being re-assigned/re-engineered.

In 2017, the HR team created a potential retiree eligibility report for employees who are eligible to retire in the next 10 years. This report was provided to the senior leadership team to provide increased visibility about the potential roles and positions that could be vacated in the next decade. Given the changing needs of public health, however,

A challenge with a traditional highly structured succession planning process is that a high potential individual may choose to voluntarily leave the employ of the Agency. In addition, the skills being developed and groomed by the Agency in a highly structured succession planning process may not be relevant due to the evolving nature of public health due to changing organizational and client requirements. Another challenge is the fact that Agency has a highly specialized workforce with a large number of specialized positions. As a result, due to the degree of high specialization, not all potential vacancies have qualified staff that could perform the essential requirements of the position in a reasonable amount of time. It's critical to acknowledge that someone excelling in a role, does not by default possess the skills, abilities or desire to lead others to do the same work. Where possible, the Agency has provided interim positions for various administrative, professional and management opportunities in order to enhance internal capacity. In addition, staff across the Agency have been cross-trained and transferred between different programs and functional areas within their position. This assists the Agency to develop a talent pipeline to support critical position redundancy.

In 2017, WDGPH conducted 2495 hours of staff training. In addition, all Agency employees were provided retraining on workplace harassment, workplace sexual harassment and workplace violence. As part of the ongoing process for the development of our employees and our leadership, training was completed in several key areas including:

- Workplace harassment, workplace sexual harassment, and workplace violence – 234 employees.
- Increasing Indigenous Knowledge – All employees at the 2017 staff day event
- Safety Pendant Emergency Codes Refresher Training – 134 employees
- Nursing Practice Council Professional Development – 53 employees
- Incident Management System Call Centre Training – 42 employees
- Community Health and Wellness Professional Development Training – 38 employees
- New Hire Orientation – 28 employees
- Infection Control Best Practices – 24 employees
- Guelph Sexuality Conference – 20 employees
- D.I.S.C. Professional Development Training – 20 employees

The list identified above is a small example of all the training offered in 2017. In addition to the above, the Agency continued to support employee-initiated continuing education studies by providing tuition assistance support for employees.

Continuous Improvement of Human Resources Policies, Procedures and Practices

Continuous improvement is the ongoing effort to improve the quality as well as maintain or reduce the cost of internal and external services while maintaining excellent service levels. To support this endeavor, HR continued with their comprehensive review of HR Policies, Procedures and Practices.

The key questions that were utilized during this review were:

- How can we make things easier to use and understand for non-HR practitioners?
- What are the needs of our internal clients?
- What is the value of having a policy and procedure? (I.e. regulatory compliance, internal consistency, etc.)
- Is there a more efficient and effective way to provide this information?

Based on this framework in 2017, 11 policies and procedures were simplified, modernized and streamlined based on management feedback and Agency need. The Agency will continue to monitor, solicit employee and manager feedback, and monitor external environmental changes in order to ensure policies and procedures remain up-to-date. In addition, in 2017 HR partnered with the Quality Performance Specialist to begin process mapping key HR functions to begin the process of refining and streamlining HR work practices to improve efficiency and enhance organizational capacity.

The Agency also has an employee handbook which is a reference aid for employees to quickly obtain answers for their general organizational questions on a large number of topics such as bereavement leave, dress code, and compensation-related questions. Through continuous improvement, HR implemented several additional revisions to the employee handbook to simplify, enhance and improve the information contained in this valuable employee reference tool.

Conclusion

As an internal service provider, HR clients are internal agency staff, with the primary purpose of the HR processes developed and maintained to enhance the employee experience and streamline management workload in the area of HR. The HR team at WDGPH continues to drive continuous improvement through HR process delivery as well as HR services. 2018 is anticipated to be challenging due to the evolving role of public health, revised public health standards, and significant changes due to the introduction of Bill 148. The HR team will continue to partner with internal and external clients in order to solicit feedback to help inform HR priorities and enhance HR services.

Appendix 'B'

Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Total Rewards Overview

(Based on a Permanent Full-time status)

Compensation

- Base pay
- Overtime compensation
- Compensation time
- Flex time
- Board of Health Day
- Step Increases
- 12 Statutory Holidays

Recognition

- Service Awards
- Staff BBQ
- Staff Appreciation Day

Benefits

- Extended Health – Green Shield
 - Medical
 - Paramedical
 - Vision
 - Deluxe Travel Plan
 - Change4Life site
- Dental – Green Shield
 - Dental-Basic
 - Comprehensive
 - Major & Orthodontic
- Pension plan – OMERS
- Paid Sick Leave
- Short term disability
- Long term disability
- Return to work program
- Ergonomic assessments
- Basic Life insurance
- Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance
- Pregnancy, parental and adoption leave - Top-up benefits
- Mileage and expenses paid for business travel

Training & Development

- Secondment
- Performance management program
- Workplace Violence and Harassment training
- AODA
- Training opportunities
- Tuition reimbursement
- Professional development
- Professional conference fees reimbursement
- Committees:
 - internal
 - external
- Orientation:
 - Human Resources
 - Program
 - Division
 - Agency

Work Lifestyle

- Employee and family assistance program (EFAP)
- Vacation program (minimum 3 wks start)
- Altered Work Schedule program
- Employee/Labour Relations
- Prepaid Leaves
- On-site library, publications
- Environmentally friendly workplace /workstations
- On-site health services:
 - flu shots
 - travel clinic
- Benefits information sessions:
 - OMERS
 - Green Shield
- Access to resources for diet and nutrition - Eat Right Ontario
- Community involvement
- Free coffee and tea
- Healthy Workplace Initiatives:
 - Health & Safety
 - Healthy Workplace
 - Psychological Health & Safety