



Construction Work Health Initiative Pilot 2008-09 and BERT 'Your Health, Your Future' Program 2009-10

From 2008-2009, Workplace Health and Safety Queensland (WHSQ), along with the Building Employee's Redundancy Trust (BERT) launched the pilot program, 'Construction Work Health Initiative', across 7 construction sites in South East Queensland. The comprehensive study gained health results from over 1000 construction workers and caught a snapshot of the health of the construction industry. The findings of the study also alerted the Queensland Government of the need to provide funding to health and wellbeing programs for outdoor workers. Following the results of the pilot initiative, BERT, building unions and Baulderstone, began an intervention program in 2009 at the Gatton Correctional Centre site, with the aim to improve health risk factors of a small group of construction workers in the 'Your Health, Your Future' program.

Tailored Design

For the Construction Work Health Initiative Pilot, Corporate Bodies International (CBI) consulted with WHSQ, BERT, construction unions (BLFQ, CFMEU, The Plumbers Union and AWU) and construction groups (Major Contractors Association of Australia and Master Builders Association) to create a program to gather pertinent health information from over 1000 workers. To engage individuals to share their health information CBI provided promotional toolbox talks, and health assessments including consultation with a dietitian.

Targeted Interventions

Following on from the Construction Work Health Initiative Pilot, the 'Your Health, Your Future' program was implemented. CBI consulted with BERT, construction unions, major contractors and subcontractors to successfully deliver a 7 month intervention program.

The program aimed to design a health and wellbeing solution specific for construction workers who had the typical profile:

- Male.
- Aged 25-40 years.
- Various trades or technical specialties.
- Low tertiary education levels.
- Various literacy skills.
- Long travel times to and from work.
- Early morning shifts.
- Time conscious due to construction operation timelines.

The 'Your Health, Your Future' Program included the following interventions:

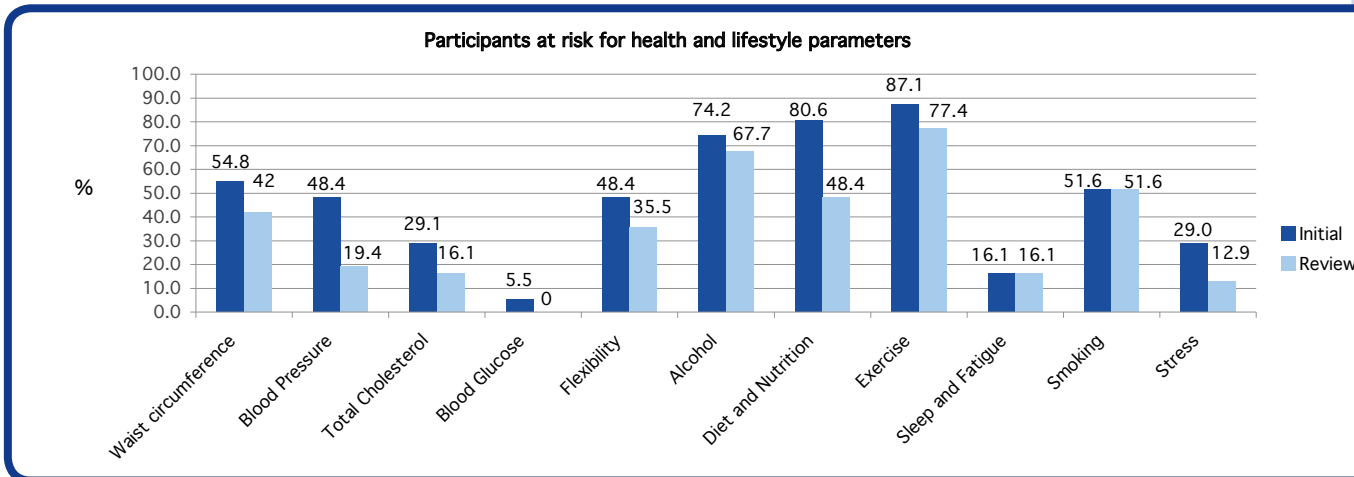
- Promotional toolbox talks.
- Advanced health assessments- initial and review.
- Health result presentations to the participants.
- Monthly seminars.
- Promotion of other health initiatives onsite - e.g. 'Fat Free Friday' (free healthy meals at the onsite canteen).





“ Our fund contracted Corporate Bodies International to undertake health assessments and intervention of Building Workers. We found their expertise to be professional, friendly and compassionate. We have no hesitation in providing this reference and look forward to a relationship in the future ”

Bill Wallace
General Manager | BERT Fund



Positive Outcomes

Construction Work Health Initiative Pilot

- 1094 workers participated; exceeding the goal of 1000 participants.
- Received a Highly Commended Award under the 2009 Premier’s Awards for Public Service category. Provided the catalyst for the Queensland Government to form an Outdoor Workers Taskforce to help create future initiatives to reduce the health risk of outdoor workers including those in the construction industry.

The BERT/ Boulderstone, ‘Your Health, Your Future’ Program

- 38 workers participated in initial and review health assessments, which provided results that were used to effectively identify key trends in employee health and lifestyle practices.
- Incorporated monthly health and wellbeing workshops. Topics included, The Inside Story (nutrition and core food groups), The Hidden Truth (nutrition, shopping and eating healthily to reduce your risk of chronic disease), Body Moving (physical activity and health), Your Health, Take Control (chronic disease and minimising your risk with lifestyle habits) and Stretch Yourself (flexibility and injury prevention).
- Risk reduction was evident across a range of health and lifestyle indicators assessed in the 6 month review group. This included:
 - 5-15% overall reduction for waist circumference, total cholesterol, blood glucose, physical activity levels and alcohol consumption.
 - 25-35% overall reduction for blood pressure and nutrition scores.
 - the 6 month review group achieved a total weight loss of 111.90kg with an average loss of 3.6kg.

Sustainable Impact

The pilot ‘Construction WorkHealth Initiative’ and the “Your Health, Your Future’ Program have demonstrated that through tailored program design and effective employee engagement, positive change can be made in workplace health and wellbeing culture. The success of these programs has been a catalyst for further health and wellbeing initiatives in the construction industry. Such programs include, The BUSSQ “BUSSta Gut Program” and the Services Trade Industry Fund Pilot Study for Small to Medium-Size Business.