

Health Award Nomination – Lose a Tonne Challenge

Evolution Mining Limited

The Problem

Overweight and obesity rates are continuing to rise in Australia. Excess weight, especially obesity, is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes; musculoskeletal conditions such as osteoarthritis and back pain; sleep apnoea and some cancers. As the level of excess weight increases, so does the risk of developing these conditions. Being overweight can hamper the ability to control or manage chronic disorders.

Based on data from the 2011 – 12 Australian Bureau of Statistics Health Survey

- Almost 2 in 3 Australian adults are overweight or obese (63%)
- 10% more adults are overweight or obese than in 1995
- 15% more people living in outer regional and remote areas are overweight or obese than people living in major cities
- Overweight and obesity is the second highest contributor to burden of disease after dietary risks.

Obesity isn't necessarily a permanent condition. Diet, exercise, medications and even surgery can lead to weight loss. Yet it is much, much harder to lose weight than it is to gain it. Prevention of obesity, beginning at an early age and extending across a lifespan could vastly improve individual and public health, reduce suffering, and save millions of dollars each year in unplanned organisational expenses. The goal of the lose a tonne challenge was to have an impact that along with the Health and Wellbeing program will sustain the weight loss and the associated changes and improvements that we saw.

Mine site workers face a number of challenges making it easier for workers to have unhealthy routines. Long shifts can leave workers too tired to exercise and living in remote camps workers have access to fully prepared meals with no structured portion control.

The Solution

To target the problem the OHS team, agreed to add a new voluntary health initiative titled 'The Lose a Tonne Challenge'. The Evolution Management team supported the initiative which became a feature on the Company Business plan. The target was 1000 kilograms weight loss across the company.

Evolution Mining has four mine sites in Queensland, two of these with onsite camps. Health professionals are onsite weekly at all operations and provide a range of health services including health promotion, assessments and advice.

The OHS Teams rolled out the program with support from our Health partners Healthy Business who provided measurement, monitoring and coaching to participants.

The challenge ran for 12 weeks commencing on the 14th of September 2014 and concluded on the 14th of December 2014. The challenge was promoted across the company at pre start meetings and promotional material was displayed on notice boards. 435 staff signed up for the program. Teams were formed at each of the sites to encourage friendly competition.

All personal information collected through the challenge was maintained in strict confidence by our Health provider, total weight loss information was combined and did not identify individuals. Acknowledgement of personal improvements was not shared without express consent of the individual involved.

All participants were recommended to seek professional Health advice on their personal circumstances before undertaking weight loss and onsite health providers were able to conduct reviews as required.

Participants were weighed at the start and the end of the challenge and at least once throughout the challenge and were able to attend coaching sessions throughout for one on one assistance / advice

as required. Health topics were regularly presented at toolbox sessions. A variety of weekly group exercise activities were held at sites to help motivate and encourage participants.

Health information fact sheets were provided to sites on a regular basis for displaying on notice boards, discussions at pre-starts.

The following acknowledgements were announced at the conclusion of the challenge

- Best Site – Most weight lost across the EVN group
- Best Site – Best percentage weight loss across the EVN group
- Best Team Improvement – Best percentage weight loss by a Team (one per site)
- Best Site Work team – Most weight lost by a team for each site
- Best individual improvement – Most weight lost by an individual (one per site)
- Best individual improvement – Best percentage weight loss by an individual (one per site)

Benefits/Effects

Target – 1000 kilograms across the company

Company results –

435 staff participated.

The initial total weight of all participants was 41,639kgs.

At the completion of the challenge the target was achieved with an amazing weight loss of 1,155kgs.

This amounted to a 2.8% weight loss and an average weight loss per person of 2.6 kgs.

Queensland Site results (excluding WA and Corporate) –

	Initial total weight	Weight loss	% weight loss	Average weight loss per person
Cracow	9982.2	301.1	3.0	2.9
Mt Rawdon	9674.3	234	2.4	2.4
Mt Carlton	7624.1	164	2.2	2.1
Pajingo	5238.2	144.5	2.8	2.6

Queensland individual results -

	Initial weight	Weight loss	% weight loss
MRO	121	19.3	16.0
MCO	121.3	19.1	15.7
CRO	105.5	16.5	15.6
PJO	111.9	13.4	12.0

Along with the overall reductions there was also some positive indicators across the participants in other health indicators including

- Body Mass Index (BMI)- before 30.4 and after 29.13
- 17% reduction in people reporting (DASS survey) moderate to severe depression
- 12% reduction in people reporting (DASS) moderate to severe anxiety
- 16% reduction in self-reported cigarettes smoked per day
- 22% increase in self-reported exercise time per day
- 12% reduction in members who were in the intermediate to high risk category for Diabetes
- 16% reduction in members who were in the intermediate to high risk category for Heart Disease
- Average Blood pressure - before 130/85 & after 127 / 82
- Waist measurement before 98.54 & after 96.4
- Total Cholesterol before 5.3 and after 4.95

The change in BMI is significant with studies indicating that a BMI of over 30 raised risks markedly and also in an indicator of likelihood to have 6 extra days off per year of unplanned absenteeism.

In a meta-analysis of 26 observational studies that included 390,000 men and women, several racial and ethnic groups, and samples, obesity was significantly associated with death from CAD and cardiovascular disease. Women with BMIs of 30 or higher had a 62 percent greater risk of dying early from CAD and also had a 53 percent higher risk of dying early from any type of cardiovascular disease, compared with women who had BMIs in the normal range (18.5 to 24.9). Men with BMIs of 30 or higher had similarly elevated risks.

The large participation rate and 12 week focus resulted in ongoing motivation and encouragement at sites. The timing of the challenge provided some participants with the motivation to lose weight prior to Christmas / summer. The formation of teams at each of the sites provided friendly competition between work teams.

Transferability

This initiative is transferable to other organisations. The challenge could be modified where in house health services are not available. Sensitivity / privacy around weigh in results is important to ensure individuals are not identified. A wide range of health promotion material is available through reputable websites. Ensuring staff seek medical health advice before commencing is important.

Approximate Cost

Trophies - \$326

Vouchers for individual winners - \$1200 (\$200 per individual)

Onsite Health provider costs – challenge incorporated into existing wellness program

Attachments - Photo

So what does 1000kgs look like in the one spot? PFD foods in Sydney kindly allowed Simon Delander (General Manager HSE and Risk) to take a photo of 1000kgs of butter to help illustrate just what a fantastic outcome has been achieved by our lose a tonne challengers.