

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Harcourts' employees set to stretch and strengthen at work

Harcourts' employees are set to increase their physical activity levels with help from Active Launceston.

The Active Workplace program will provide free physical activity sessions for the three organisations who successfully applied for the program - Harcourts, B&E Personal Banking and SIMS Metal Management - over the next nine weeks.

The program also involves a workplace audit to see how supportive both management and their environment are towards staff health and wellbeing.

Kate Littlejohn of Harcourts said: "Harcourts Launceston decided to apply for the Active Workplace program as we are in the process of implementing a Health and Wellbeing program for the office and we felt that the Active Workplaces program tied in with the plan nicely.

"We have a training room in our building that enables us to provide activities and exercises for staff within work hours. We felt that it was really important to help people trying to achieve a work/life balance to allow them some 'out' time during their workday to focus on their health and wellbeing," she said.

"Our staff members have contributed to the type of program and activities that they would like to see Active Launceston facilitate for us and we are really excited to be able to have a mix of low impact (uniform-friendly) and higher intensity options of exercise and activity for our staff.

"We look forward to the next nine weeks of the program and seeing what the outcomes will be at the end."

The third annual Active Workplace program aims to support employers to set up a workplace health and wellbeing program for their staff.

A Medibank Private document titled *The Health of Australian Workforce (2005)* states: "The healthiest Australian employees are almost three times more productive than their unhealthy colleagues".

Previously Active Launceston has worked with St Lukes Health, Hotel Grand Chancellor, Rural Youth of Tasmania, Bapcare, Family Based Care and McDonalds as part of the Active Workplace program.

Lucy Byrne, Active Launceston Manager, said: “We had an overwhelming response and applications for the Active Workplaces this year, which clearly shows the importance Launceston businesses are placing on their employee’s health and wellbeing.

“Increasing physical activity levels in the workplace can contribute to less sick leave and a decrease in pre-absenteeism, as well as a boost in staff morale and a reduction in stress levels,” Mrs Byrne said.

“We are looking forward to seeing the impact the program has on each of the very different workplaces.”

Active Launceston is a community-driven project aimed to improve the health and wellbeing of the Launceston community through increased participation in physical activity. Please visit the website on www.activelaunceston.com.au or contact them on (03) 6324 4027.

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