

Project Title	The effects of a peer-led walking program on physical activity, health, well-being, and work outcomes in physically inactive employees
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Research description	<p>Regular physical activity, such as walking, helps prevent cancer (particularly prostate, breast and endometrial cancers), and leads to improvements in physical and mental health. It is also well-established that physical activity is beneficial for cancer survivors. However, most Australians are inactive and those who do initiate regular exercise do not keep it up. Therefore, it is critical to identify physical activity programs that individuals can initiate and sustain long term.</p> <p>The workplace has been identified as a suitable setting to promote physical activity, as many employees are physically inactive, and this increases their cancer risk. Our previous research has shown that our workplace walking program attracts physically inactive employees, and that those who take part sustain their walking regime over the long term.</p> <p>The purpose of this project is to expand upon our previous research and determine whether our workplace peer-led walking program is effective in promoting sufficient and sustained walking which will improve the health, well-being and work performance of employees. We will compare two groups. Group 1 will be given a step counter (pedometer), a daily step count target, and information about suggested walking routes. Group 2 will be given the same as Group 1 but will also take part in peer-led group walks, led by peer leaders who will receive motivation training to motivate physically inactive colleagues to increase levels of walking. The participants themselves will also receive motivation training directly (e.g., regarding how to make effective plans). We will compare changes in amount of walking, health, well-being and work outcomes between the two groups at the end of the program (6 months).</p> <p>This research can be used for future health promotion in the workplace. It can also contribute to research and policy on preventive cancer strategies, as well as on ways to increase physical activity to improve the quality of life of cancer survivors.</p>
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