Is Your Workplace Mentally Healthy?

October 8 2017 marks the start of Queensland's Mental Health Week. To mark the occasion WorkSafe Queensland has launched the Mentally Healthy Workplaces Toolkit, a resource to support employers, mangers and leaders in creating, sustaining and maintaining mentally healthy workplaces.

Why is workplace mental health so important?

With advancements in both employee training and technology, traditional manual handling, physical workplace injuries are declining. However mental health injuries are on the rise due to a wide range of factors. It is now important to ensure your workplace is mentally healthy as well as safe from physical harm. Some benefits of ensuring your workplace is mentally safe include:

- Increased staff productivity and engagement;
- Decreased absenteeism;
- Decreased workers compensation claims;
- Increased job satisfaction;
- Reduced staff turnover;
- Increased attention of talented job seekers;
- The return on investment of a mentally healthy workplace is $2.30 for every $1.00 invested.

What is a mentally healthy workplace?

A psychologically safe workplace is considered to practice the following key principles:

- Promote positive practices that support mental health;
- Seeks out and reduces the risks of psychological harm in the workplace;
- Providing education and learning opportunities to staff in building resilience to allow staff to thrive at work;
- Eliminating stigma and discrimination;
- Providing a supportive workplace environment for injured workers who have sustained physical or psychological injury.

How do I achieve this for my business?

Thankfully the Mentally Healthy Workplaces Toolkit provides not only the principles on what makes a psychology safe workplace, but also examples and methods on how to build these behaviours into your workplace. The toolkit provides a range of education points on supporting leaders in the business portray the importance of mental health, to identifying staff signs of distress and supporting staff with injury.

From planting the seed of psychological safety in your workplace, to actively practicing the principles workplace mental health, the toolkit is valuable resource for all employers of all mental health awareness levels.