

Document Name	Document Version Number	Review Date
Employee General Health and Wellbeing Policy	1.0.0	December 2015
Date Adopted	Minute Number	Status
17 December 2014	3964	New policy

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to facilitate a workplace environment and culture that develops employee knowledge, awareness and participation in a range of initiatives that supports their general health and wellbeing.

### Scope

All employees of Greater Hume Shire Council.

### Definitions

Nil.

### Policy Content

Greater Hume Shire Council recognises the importance and mutual benefits of supporting improved health and wellbeing for their employees and aims to provide regular initiatives to promote and encourage positive and sustainable health and lifestyle changes.

These initiatives will be modelled around the ESSENCE of Health model, as authored by Dr Craig Hassed, Monash University:

**Education:** the importance of understanding illness, the prognosis, treatments, side-effects, and self-help strategies. It is also important to be educated in how to change our own behaviour and set personal goals.

**Stress Management:** Our mental and emotional state has a profound effect on our physical health. Managing stress includes using strategies like mindfulness-based therapies and other ways of dealing with emotional issues.

**Spirituality:** Feeling like we have meaning and purpose in our life has a major effect upon our mental and emotional health as well as helping us to cope with life-threatening or debilitating illness.

**Exercise:** Regular physical activity has far-reaching and major effects on physical and mental health in terms of preventing and treating illness, as well as improving ability to cope with illness.

**Nutrition:** If the benefits of healthy nutrition could be contained in a pill it would be a very expensive pill! Similar to exercise, the effects of good nutrition are far-reaching.

**Connectedness:** Relationships and feeling like we connect with family and community have subtle and obvious effects on wellbeing at every level. It also impacts on our ability to implement healthy change in our lives.

**Environment:** This is more than the air we breathe and the water we drink. As well as the physical environment, it also includes the impact of the social and emotional environments.

In keeping with the ESSENCE model, Council's initiatives may include (but are not limited to) programs, such as: skin cancer checks, health checks, quit smoking strategies, harmful alcohol consumption awareness, vaccinations, nutrition and healthy eating, weight management, fitness, building resilience, etc.

Employees are encouraged to submit ideas for such initiatives through their WHS Committee, or directly to the Risk & WHS Coordinator for consideration by management.

General health and wellbeing initiatives should not be perceived as a means of penalising employees for any health problems they may have developed, but as an effort to ensure optimum employee health and wellbeing.

### **Links to Policy**

Injury Management Policy  
Risk Management Policy  
Work Health and Safety Policy

### **Links to Procedure**

Nil

### **Links to Forms**

Nil

### **References**

Hassed, C (2008), *The Essence of Health: the seven pillars of wellbeing*. Sydney, Random House.  
NSW Get Healthy at Work: [www.gethealthyatwork.com.au](http://www.gethealthyatwork.com.au)

### **Responsibility**

General Manager

### **Document Author**

Risk & WHS Coordinator

### **Relevant Legislation**

WHS Act 2011  
WHS Regulation 2011

### **Associated Records**

GHSC Employee General Health and Wellbeing Program (InfoXpert Doc ID:156758)