



*beyondblue* : Workplace and Workforce program

“Everyone is entitled to have a [mentally] safe, supportive workplace”

(online forum participant)

Final evaluation report

**Prepared For:**

*beyondblue*

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# Preface

*Given the length of this report, the following preface is provided.*

## Introduction

*beyondblue* has engaged with workplaces to address mental health since 2004. The 'Workplace and Workforce' program was created in 2011 and included multiple activities (engagement and partnerships, National Workplace Program, eLearning resources, Doctors Mental Health Program, specific targeting of small and medium businesses, return to work guidelines, and evidence based research). In 2014, a major evolution to the program was introduced – the Heads Up initiative. Heads Up was developed by *beyondblue* in collaboration with the Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance; a collaboration between business, government and the mental health sector. The program's fundamental objective is to improve the mental health of industries, workplaces and individuals.

This evaluation relates to the most recent time period of the program (2012-2014), and in particular focusses on the Heads Up initiative (2014). The evaluation included extensive qualitative and quantitative research among Australian workplaces and among the Australian working population.

The evaluation seeks to determine the **reach of the W&W program to date, and assess whether it has reduced the impact of depression and anxiety in Australian workplaces.**

## Key program achievements

### 1. Fundamentally, the program's reach has been strong across each of the activities.

- Since 2004, more than **81,000 individuals have participated in the NWP across 1,010 organisations**. This represents a reach of 0.1% of Australian workplaces, and 0.7% of the Australian working population which have undertaken workplace training on mental health.
- Most recently, the **Heads Up initiative** contributed significantly to the broader awareness of mental health in Australian workplaces, and awareness of *beyondblue's* work in raising awareness of the importance of workplace mental health:
  - **16% of the Australian working population were aware of the Heads Up marketing strategy** (extrapolating to 1,852,576 workers).
  - **22% of the Australian working population were aware of the Heads Up website** (extrapolating to 2,547,292 workers) and, there were 97,894 unique visits to the Heads Up website between May-September 2014.
  - The **Heads Up social media strategy generated 1,563 followers and 773 members via LinkedIn**.
- The **stakeholder engagement strategy** delivered 31 Conference presentations, 11 Roadshows / business events, and an Induction presentation with the Chambers of Commerce nationally.
- *beyondblue's* **mental health workplace resources** also contributed significantly to the achieved reach during the period of this evaluation:

- One quarter of Australian workers were aware of *beyondblue's* workplace resources (extrapolating to 2,894,650 workers).
  - There were 16,467 unique downloads of resources between August 2012 and August 2014.
  - 11,000 workplaces were reached by the eLearning resources between the 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 financial years.
- The **partnership strategy** has been inclusive of a range of industries, smaller and larger businesses; highly collaborative, working with industry groups, business organisations and organisations to drive mentally healthy workplaces; and, delivered tangible outcomes.

## 2. This evaluation data suggests strong potential impact of the program on depression and anxiety in Australian workplaces.

- Five per cent of Australian workplaces indicated they had implemented workplace mental health programs or policies in the past few months. Extrapolating this to the total number of Australian businesses, this calculates to **approximately 41,761 Australian businesses (with 1 or more employees) implementing change over the three month evaluation period**. The positive influence of the Heads Up initiative in driving this result is noted here.
- Additionally, the average number of mental health practices, programs and policies in Australian workplaces increased from 3.87 per workplace at benchmark to 4.49 per workplace at evaluation. Extrapolating this to the total number of businesses, this translates to **the addition of 517,836 new practices, programs or policies relating to mental health across Australian workplaces**. Given the timing of the evaluation, and its proximity to the launch of Heads Up, the influence of the Heads Up initiative is again noted in driving this result.
- The focus on workplace mental health (via reach, and awareness raising activities), and additional mental health practices within workplaces has resulted in **a significant improvement in the perceived mental health of workplaces among managers / employees** (from 64% describing their workplace as 'mentally healthy' at benchmark to 73% at evaluation). Extrapolating this to the Australian workplaces, this translates to a **perceived positive movement in mental health within 75,170 workplaces**.