



## Feeling sleepy? How it can affect productivity and mental health.

HR Update 14/11

☒ Insufficient sleep can create a significant problem at work. If you believe eight hours of sleep per night is necessary, then you may be surprised to learn that 60 to 70 percent of people are not getting enough.

Studies completed in both the US and Australia found lack of sleep was significantly associated with lost work performance due to 'presenteeism' (unlike absenteeism you are present at work physically but maybe not mentally). The Australian study conducted in 2011 estimated that 'lack of sleep' was costing billions annually in healthcare, lost productivity and costs associated both directly and indirectly with workplace accidents.

Insufficient sleep is also associated with a number of health conditions including diabetes, cardiovascular disease and mental health issues and these have an impact on workplace performance. In addition, 'shift work' compounds the problems for those with poor sleeping patterns.

Businesses can provide support to their employees through educational programs about fatigue management and the promotion of good sleep habits as part of your workplace health and wellness program. Given the significant impact of sleep disorders on performance, regular screening programs to identify those at risk of problems such as sleep apnoea, restless legs syndrome and narcolepsy can be worthwhile. Employees at high risk can then be referred for evaluation or treatment to limit the impact on their performance, health and safety.

For more information of workplace health and wellbeing programs and to source information to assist refer to <https://workplacesforwellness.qld.gov.au/> or **contact Lisa Dwyer on 3915 4213.**

*Source: HR Monthly, Janine Mace, May 2014*