

## Aurecon

The below case study was provided for Consult Australia's [Striving for mentally healthy workplaces](#) report.

### **Case study: Aurecon's Mind Matters Program**

Aurecon's employees not only matter to us but they also matter to someone else. Our health and safety strategy has been created with a strong focus on health, safety and wellness as a way of being, not just something to comply with. To complement our health and safety strategy, we introduced our "because people depend on you" and "#mywhy" to really get to the heart and minds of our people.

Our mental health program, 'Mind Matters' was established as a result of both our people and health and safety teams across Australia and New Zealand reporting increased exposure to mental health issues. This was the trigger that led us to reach out to Beyondblue and undertake further research into mental ill health. Given the statistics we researched, it was evident that the vast majority of our employees would be impacted by mental ill health either directly or indirectly at some point during their career with Aurecon.

The overwhelming statistics faced by all of us is something we took notice of and have actively tried to do something about.

#### What did we do?

Aurecon formed a mental health committee in January 2015 and Mind Matters was born. The program's initial objectives were to:

- raise awareness of mental ill health and its impact on the workplace;
- provide mental health first aid; and
- reduce stigma through understanding.

At the heart of our program has been the integration of Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) across our business. We currently have over 90 MHFAs located across Australia and New Zealand with the aim of ensuring we have MHFA's in every office. MHFA teaches the same skills for mental illness as the basic first aid uses for someone experiencing a physical health problem.

We took this approach as we believed having MHFAs on the ground across the business would aid our objective of raising awareness and understanding of mental ill health. Our MHFAs create opportunities to open discussions on mental health, as well as having skills and knowledge to recognise the signs and symptoms of mental illness and to initiate conversations with people who may be experiencing mental ill health.

We have also completed line manager education and awareness sessions, another important initiative given it is highly likely a line manager will supervise an employee with mental illnesses at some point during their career. Our aim was to instil confidence in line managers about having conversations with those that they recognise may be struggling and that those people know where to go to for help.

We are also focusing on the education of all employees in mental health and the recognition of signs and symptoms and again trying to instil confidence to have a discussion and/or know where to go for help.

*What's next?*

For Aurecon, we see the next horizon focusing on the prevention side of mental health. This follows significant investment into generating greater understanding and reducing stigma.

We have also refreshed our Mind Matters Committee to ensure we have representation and reach from across all levels and functions of our business. This not only helps with diversity of thought, but ensures our continued mental health journey is aligned to the needs of our people.