

# Solve the Unsolvable

## A Corporate Health Dilemma

**R**ecently Dr Toby Ford sat down with five key clients and four corporate health industry heavy weights for a think tank that will end up transforming the way corporate health programs are run. They started with this question. How do we solve the unsolvable?

### The Mission

Make a health risk management system that allowed the tracking of large fragmented workforce's health, support their individual workers health profile to make behavioural changes and then provide relevant de-identified reports back to head office on the health of the workforce.

"We needed to embrace technology but remain mindful that some workers 'don't do internet'; to create a system that didn't restrict the company to one supplier for health assessments and interventions and also allowed individual business units the option to utilise internal staff to deliver the health program or outsource to a local supplier," said Dr Toby Ford. Quite a challenge some would say.

### The Challenge

Each client had between 5,000 and 70,000 plus employees in locations ranging from CBDs to mining sites and from open plan offices to dump trucks. There were clusters of staff numbering one thousand through to isolated single operators across Australia and the world. The employee profile range from 'blue collar worker' to 'white collar executive'. Some locations were fully engaged in health programs and yet others were not looking to fill the void. This profile rendered traditional corporate health ventures inadequate; both financially and logistically, in the battle to service isolated employees.

### The Solution

The answer was seemingly obvious given Dr Ford's expertise with programs using Ford Health propriety technology: release a database that generates immediate

health reports, package up 20 years of intellectual property and enable rights for any supplier to deliver the program, and then offer this to each client as their own health and wellbeing program.

The BFO (blinding flash of the obvious) was that the very components that drive the Ford Health business—its systems, technology and IP—if packaged and protected effectively could answer the clients' challenge and supply a world class Health Risk Management System (HRMS).

At this year's IHPM Congress, Ford Health will share what only a select group of clients have had access to: a HRMS that provides Fortune 500 size companies and large public sector agencies the capability to roll out an effective and manageable organisation-wide corporate health program.

**The new breed HRMS must balance the following objectives:**

1. Identify health risks before they become a problem to the individual and the company.
2. Build a 'health ownership culture' where employees take responsibility for their health.
3. Ensure the program is quantifiable and measurable to enable the evaluation of benefits and results by the individual and aggregate data for senior management.
4. Evidence based to ensure the health program is credible from a medical perspective worldwide.
5. Provide the flexibility for each organisation and their internal departments or business units to customise their program from a

suite of services that they can adopt and own.

6. Branded as a company initiative but designed to allow fulfilment to be provided by internal resources and/or external service providers.

7. Ensure each business unit can create their own unique identity and corresponding ownership of the health care program operating in their location but retain a core structure across the entire company.

8. Leveraged to ensure it is cost effective and that cost controls are provided to each local manager, thereby rendering it more efficient than the random programs currently operating.

9. Structured to cost shift identified health risks away from the business by our unique risk referral report to the workers GP.

Over the last 12 months, Ford Health's HRMS has been rolled out in modules to global mining, engineering and construction companies; Tier 1 and regional banks; and State and Federal government departments.

Ensuring Ford Health clients and their employees received the following components was crucial to the effectiveness of the program.

#### 1. Health Assessment

The health assessment is a collection of health data for each individual. A personal report is created at the time of the assessment and a referral letter to the individual's GP is provided if there are medical health risks requiring further investigation or support.

Upon completion of the data collection and creation of a health record, the employee receives access to the myHealth™ web page. Similar in nature to MySpace or Facebook, the myHealth™ profile provides each employee with electronic access to their records

and allows them to update, change and manage their health record over a 12 month period.

## 2. Health Coaching and Tracking

The myHealth™ record enables the employee to have their health risks identified and listed in priority based on health risk category of '2 day', '2 week' and '2 month' follow-up. A 12 month coaching component is then ranked for coaching based on the individual's willingness to change. Utilising Prochaska's *Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change*, the employee is directed to fact sheets and self directed programs tailored for their health risk/s and customised to their stage of change.

For example, a smoker who was unwilling to change would have access to education programs and online coaching that would differ to the resources provided to someone who was preparing to, or had already made a change.

## 3. Health Interventions

To educate and motivate employees, and to build a healthy work culture, Ford Health packages a variety of health promotion activities. Each can be delivered by internal health professionals currently employed by the organisation or by a range of external suppliers:

- **Health Presentations** – a range of workshop topics including health information and practical tips. These are branded to the organisation and are provided as 45 minute workshops and 20 minute presentations. They include PowerPoint slides,

participant booklets and leader guides.

- **Health e-Learning** – an affordable and easy way to help an organisation support the health of their people. Presented either online or in DVD format, providing credible health information and practical tips on various health issues.
- **Health-e-News** – an email or paper newsletter which is sent every two months to participants who have completed a health assessment. It aims to keep health top-of-mind and to educate and motivate the team on their path to better health.
- **Exercise Challenge** – participants access an online walking/exercise challenge that allows teams of employees to track their walking and other exercises. The ability to customise it to your organisation means you can create an experience whereby staff learn about other locations within the organisation.

### Health Promotion Platform – database, strategy and policy

The power of the HRMS is the flexibility it provides in capturing the health data of employees, tracking the changes in their health risk profile and behaviour and enabling reports on a global, divisional and departmental basis. All of this is done using the evidence based health system that underpins the HRMS.

The health data collected can be applied to the Return on Investment (ROI) model built by Access Economics using Australian data for

the Queensland State Government. This allows any management team to report to their board and shareholders on the ROI for the staff health program.

## The Client's Tick of Approval

### The CEO

- ✓ Medical, economic and academically based
- ✓ Workforce asset management
- ✓ Enhances the cultural fabric
- ✓ Mission critical personnel insurance
- ✓ Cost effective and efficient
- ✓ Improves the environment for productivity gains.

### The HR Director/Manager

- ✓ Puts the 'H' into OHS
- ✓ Provides quality controls and standards for health promotions
- ✓ Regional equity
- ✓ Workcover claims reduction strategy
- ✓ Attraction and retention strategy
- ✓ Proven system that can be customised
- ✓ Strategic company wide health reports.

### The HR Coordinator

- ✓ Ease of implementation
- ✓ Simple to use
- ✓ Integrates existing programs and suppliers
- ✓ 12 month program
- ✓ Library of resources.

### The Employee

- ✓ Personalised health profile
- ✓ Health action plan
- ✓ 12 months of support for change
- ✓ Flexibility of delivery – manual, online, phone or in person.

## Conclusion

Solving the unsolvable was not achieved overnight, but a combination of 20 years of experience, probing of key clients and input from four corporate health heavyweights has allowed the seemingly obvious to be realised.

How long will it take for you to consider whether this system could transform the way your business monitors, manages and supports the health of their biggest asset...your staff?

*Ford Health can provide a more detail overview of the Health Risk Management System to your organisation. Please email [info@fordhealth.com.au](mailto:info@fordhealth.com.au) or visit [www.fordhealth.com.au](http://www.fordhealth.com.au)*

