



Public health, business, and the shared value of workforce health and wellbeing

From a corporate perspective, the health and wellbeing of the workforce have long been considered a cost instead of an investment. However, progress in public health research has provided evidence that improvements to the health and wellbeing of workers have the potential to improve productivity, corporate performance, and community prosperity.¹⁻⁴ Public health interventions can use the workplace to achieve major health and wellbeing gains among much of the population but, to do so, evidence of effectiveness needs to be shown in the context of a convincing narrative that will persuade business leaders to invest and allocate resources. Creation of such a narrative demands visionary leadership that promotes social objectives to optimise business performance.

To persuade businesses that investment in worker health and wellbeing through partnerships with public health agencies is a sound business strategy, evidence of such efforts should be considered in the context of multisectoral programmes, policies, and practices. Workplace policy proposals should be reviewed

for their potential effects on health, safety, and wellbeing, and policy makers and businesses should set goals to create positive social, physical, and economic environments.⁵ Business and industry need to be actively engaged in shaping the narrative around health equity because they represent important partners in preventing a widening of health disparities. To accomplish these tasks, leadership, partnerships, and resources are necessary. It will take leaders from both public health and business to build partnership models that reflect an alternative way of thinking that is designed to simultaneously benefit society and maximise profit while mobilising resources and activating funding mechanisms from federal and private sources. This approach to creating shared value will generate social value in the interests of public health and allow business to gain long-term competitiveness.⁶

The creation of shared value through research, partnerships, and evidence-based health and wellbeing solutions will elucidate the connections and alignments between business, community, and prosperity. Public health research could generate results that can be placed in context as a convincing narrative to support decision makers in allocating the necessary resources to build cultures of positive health and wellbeing in the

workplace that are connected to the community. Such endeavours have the potential to make visible the value of investments in workplace health and wellbeing that reach far beyond the workplace itself.

I declare no competing interests.

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