



Process Evaluation of *HealthStart*: Findings From a Survey of *HealthStart* Participants

Submitted by:
Queensland University of Technology

Submission: 10th of October 2012

Project Coordinators:
QPS Reference Group:
Research Assistant

Dr Tracy Washington and Dr Kristiann Heesch, QUT
Freya Greensill, Felicity Hibbins, Andrew Martin
Jerome Rachele

Dr Tracy Washington
Faculty of Health
School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences
Victoria Park Road
Kelvin Grove, QLD 4059

Dr Kristiann Heesch
Faculty of Health
School of Public Health and Social Work
Victoria Park Road
Kelvin Grove, QLD 4059

Background

The *HealthStart* (HS) program is an organisationally based health promotion intervention designed to address the Queensland Police Service (QPS) Stress Management Working Party Recommendations (SMWPR, 2002) No: 14 – provision of a Health Screening Program. The recommendations identified a range of strategies to improve the management of occupational stress, in order to enhance the health of all members of the QPS. As a result, the *HS* workplace program was implemented, with the aim of creating a work environment more conducive to psychological well-being and positive job attitudes. The overall aims of *HS* is to provide QPS employees a) with awareness of their psychological health (SF36) and physical health (physical measurements and blood tests) and b) with available services/strategies to encourage them to become more responsible for enhancing and managing their own health. *HS* is being conducted throughout the State in three consecutive cycles (2007-2008, 2009-2010, 2011-2012).

Methodology

This report describes findings of a process evaluation. This evaluation allowed for expansion upon earlier evaluations conducted of *HS*. The primary aim of the process evaluation was to assess employee awareness and perceptions of the HS program. This aim was addressed through a quick process evaluation with current *HS* participants.

Quick Process Evaluation

From 8 May, all participants that participate in a Fitness Assessment (FA) as part of *HS* are asked by their health coach to answer quick evaluation questions during the health coaching session. Coaches record responses on a data collection sheet.

Questions were designed by the QUT researchers to inform future marketing of the program, and response options were developed and revised in consultation with the health coaches. Evaluation is on-going with revisions to the questions made as needed, to best inform marketing efforts.

From 8 May – 22 July, 2012, 302 QPS employees participated in the process evaluation. All questions were asked by the health coach without prompting participants of possible responses. If a participant provided an answer that was not listed as a possible choice, the health coach transcribed the participant's words verbatim into the 'other' category.

The data gathered from the survey were entered by QPS staff into an online spreadsheet developed by the QUT researchers, and data from the 302 QPS employees were analysed by the QUT researchers. Basic descriptive statistics (frequencies) were computed for the quantitative questions. Open-ended responses were qualitatively analysed, and new categories were created based on the open-ended responses.

The evaluation survey was revised after an initial testing with 98 participants. The revised survey (see Appendix) was administered to 204 participants. For this report, responses from those completing the initial or revised survey are included. We note with an asterisk (*) in the results section below where questions were only asked on the revised survey.

Results

In total, 302 *HS* participants completed the survey during their fitness assessment. Responses to each question are detailed in Table 1 (end of results section) with new categories that were created based on open-ended responses displayed in red font. Highlights of the findings are discussed below.

The vast majority of participants learned about the *HS* fitness assessment session via email (89%). Some (8%) learned about the session through QPS staff or word of mouth. Just a few (2%) learned through the officer in charge or manager; signage about the session; or a 'HS academy check.'

Half the participants came to the session because they wanted a general check-up. Other notable reasons were interest in comparing last year's results (17%) and wanting the blood tests (12%).

Most participants (62%) had participated in *HS* previously. Only 8% were new employees, and thus, this was their first time to participate. Of the total sample, most (40%) reported participating in the last cycle (2009-2010). Another 12% reported last participating in the 2007-2008 cycle, and 8% reported last participating in an earlier cycle (before 2007). The remaining 2% could not be sure when they last participated.

Awareness of programs provided by *HS* was very low. Of the 203 participants asked this question for the revised survey, 88% were unaware of any additional programming outside of the *HS* fitness assessments. Only one participant was aware of more than one other program (aware of both *Skin Cancer Action Week* and *10000 Steps Challenge*). Interestingly, two people considered the online information provided to *HS* participants to be a separate program. The programs and promotions that were most recognised among the 203 participants were *Skin Cancer Action Week* (4%) and *Health Coaching* (3%).

Given that awareness of *HS* was very low, only seven of the 203 participants reported that they may participate in *HS* the upcoming year; however, these participants were unable to identify any programs of specific interest except for one participant who indicated an interest in attending *Skin Cancer Week*.

Last, participants were asked about their knowledge of health coaching. Half (51%) reported, "where you get a gym program or nutritional advice"; and another 26% reported, "an ongoing relationship to help reach health related goals". Eighteen percent reported *no idea*. Other response categories each received very few mentions.

Table 1 Responses to survey by QPS employees participating to *HealthStart*.

Question and response options	n	%
Q1 How did you find out about today's <i>HealthStart</i> (HS) session?		
Email from HS	270	89.4
Word of mouth/other QPS staff	14	4.6
<i>Saw or spoke with HS staff at station</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>3.7</i>
Officer in Charge/Manager	3	1.0
<i>Signage</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0.6</i>
<i>'HS academy check'</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0.3</i>
Q2 What made you come see us today?		
General checkup	150	49.7
To compare to last year's results	52	17.2
Blood test	36	11.9
I was encouraged by a colleague, supervise, partner	<i>14</i>	<i>4.6</i>
Weight loss	11	3.6
<i>HS present at station</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>1.7</i>
<i>Interested in health/specific health concern</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>7.0</i>
<i>Free (cost)</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1.3</i>
<i>HS staff spoke with me</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>1.7</i>
<i>Spur of the moment; 'it can't hurt me'</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1.0</i>
Friend or colleague developed a health problem	1	0.3

Q3 In the past have you participated in HS?

No, because I am a new employee	25	8.3
No, for any other reason	90	29.9
Yes	186	61.8

One response missing

Q4 For the 186 who reported 'yes' in Q3: what was the last year in which you participated in HS? Percentages are the percentage of responses out of the 301 who responded to Q3.

Last cycle (2009-2010)	121	40.2
Prior cycle (2007-2008)	35	11.6
Earlier cycle (before 2007)	25	8.3
Not sure	5	1.7

Q5 Are you aware of any other HS programs or promotions besides the physical and blood test? Percentages are the percentage of responses out of the 203 completers of the revised survey. *

No	179	88.2
Yes	24	11.8

One response missing

Q6 For the 24 who reported 'yes' in Q5: Other than the physical and blood tests, please list the programs and promotions that you are aware of (responses not read to participant). Percentages are the percentage of responses out of the 203 completers of the revised survey. *

Skin Cancer Action Week	8	3.9
Health Coaching	5	2.5
Other (Gym training programs, dietician, physical activity challenge, QPHRA Gym grants)	4	2.0
10000 Steps Challenge	2	1.0
Online Information	2	1.0
Healthy Weight Week	1	0.5
Heart Week	0	0.0
World No Tobacco Day	0	0.0
International Men's Health Week	0	0.0
Drug Action Week	0	0.0
Diabetes Awareness Week	0	0.0
Walk to Work Day	0	0.0
Movember	0	0.0
Bridge to Brisbane Training	0	0.0

Two responses missing

Q7 For the 24 who reported 'yes' in Q5: Are you planning on participating in any other HS programs this year? Percentages are the percentage of responses out of the 20 who completed this question. *

No	13	65.0
Yes	0	0.0
Maybe	7	35.0

Four responses missing

Q8 For the 24 who reported 'yes' in Q5: If yes or maybe, which programs or promotions are you planning on participating in over the next year? (responses not read to participant). Percentages are the percentages of responses out of the 203 completers of the revised survey.*

Skin Cancer Action Week	1	0.5
10000 Steps Challenge	0	0.0
Bridge to Brisbane Training	0	0.0
Diabetes Awareness Week	0	0.0
Drug Action Week	0	0.0
Healthy Weight Week	0	0.0
Heart Week	0	0.0
International Men's Health Week	0	0.0
Movember	0	0.0
World No Tobacco Day	0	0.0
Walk to Work Day	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0

Q9 As you may know, we offer Health Coaching (HC) after this session. What do you understand HC to be?

Getting a gym program or nutritional advice	151	50.8
No idea	77	25.9
An ongoing relationship to help me reach my health related goals	54	18.2
General health and well-being advice	7	2.4
A follow up phone call	5	1.7
Understand current health conditions	2	0.6
Other (no description provided)	1	0.3

Five responses missing

Note: Red indicates participants' responses that were added to the list of categories but were initially coded as 'other'.

*Only asked of participants who completed the revised survey (n=203).

Conclusions

Overall these findings indicate that awareness of the variety of *HS* programming is very low among employees who attend the fitness assessment (FA). Current participants who are not new to QPS tended to have participated previously but only in the FA component of *HS* programming. They learn about *HS* through email, and their main motivation for participation in the FA is for a general check-up. Most of them understand the purpose of health coaching, but a concerning number are unaware of health coaching's purpose.

Based on these findings, we suggest that more regular communication with employees about *HS* is required to increase awareness and participation. For example, participants who attend FA could be informed verbally and with written materials at that session, about the full range of *HS* offerings, particularly about health coaching. Investigation into the reasons why participating employees are not more involved in *HS* and why non-participating employees are not involved in *HS* may also be warranted, if expansion of the program is desired.

For further evaluation of *HS* using the survey developed for this evaluation, expansion of the list of categories to include those responses currently coded as 'other' but that were revealed in this study to be ones mentioned by participants (see red font in Table 1) could help with highlighting issues with awareness and perceptions in larger samples of *HS* participants. As this evaluation only included data collected over a short time period, confirming these findings with data collected over a longer period as more data are available is suggested .

Appendix. Revised survey currently being used by QPS.

Instructions: Ask each question without providing responses. Based on how the client responds, circle the corresponding number. If the client provides an answer that is not listed, circle “other” and provide the answer using the client’s words.

Date _____

Q1. How did you find out about today’s HealthStart (HS) session?

- 1 Officer in Charge/Manager
- 2 Word of mouth/other QPS staff
- 3 Email from HS
- 4 Other _____

Q2. What made you come see us today?

- 1 General checkup
- 2 Blood test
- 3 Weight loss
- 4 To compare to last year’s results
- 5 Friend or colleague developed a health problem
- 6 I was peer pressured by a colleague
- 7 Other _____

Q3. In the past have you participated in HS?

- 0 No, because I am a new employee
- 1 No, for any other reason
- 2 Yes

-
- Q4. If yes, what was the last year in which you participated in HS?
- 1 Last cycle (2009-2010)
 - 2 Prior cycle (2007-2008)
 - 3 Earlier cycle (before 2007)
 - 4 Not sure
- Q5. Are you aware of any other HS programs or promotions besides the physical and blood test?
- 0 No, if no go to question **Q9**.
 - 1 Yes, if yes then go to question **Q6**.
- Q6. Other than the physical and blood tests please list the programs and promotions that you are aware of:
- 1 Healthy Weight Week
 - 2 Heart Week
 - 3 World No Tobacco Day
 - 4 International Men's Health Week
 - 5 Drug Action Week
 - 6 Diabetes Awareness Week
 - 7 Walk to Work Day
 - 8 Movember
 - 9 Skin Cancer Action Week
 - 10 10000 Steps Challenge
 - 11 Bridge to Brisbane Training
- Q7. Are you planning on participating in any other HS programs this year?
- 0 No, if no go to question **Q9**.
 - 1 Yes, if yes go to question **Q8**.

Q8. Which programs or promotions will are you planning on participating in over the next year?

- 1 Healthy Weight Week
- 2 Heart Week
- 3 World No Tobacco Day
- 4 International Men's Health Week
- 5 Drug Action Week
- 6 Diabetes Awareness Week
- 7 Walk to Work Day
- 8 Movember
- 9 Skin Cancer Action Week
- 10 10000 Steps Challenge
- 11 Bridge to Brisbane Training

Q9. As you may know, we offer Health Coaching (HC) after this session. What do you understand HC to be?

- 1 No idea
 - 2 A follow up phone call
 - 3 An ongoing relationship to help me reach my health related goals
 - 4 Getting a gym program or nutritional advice
 - 5 Other _____
-