



MEDIA RELEASE
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icare USES RESEARCH TO HELP BALLINA BUSINESSES CREATE HEALTHY WORKPLACES

Social connection between staff is one of the key factors influencing the overall health of a workplace, according to research undertaken by [icare NSW](#), the NSW Government insurance and care provider. icare will be meeting Ballina employers on Wednesday 8 August to share the research and tools they've developed to build social cohesion at work.

Dr Caroline Howe, [icare's](#) Manager of Research and Design, said social disconnection resulted in significant social and financial costs to businesses.

"There is international evidence that shows that workplaces with poor social connections experience higher rates of staff turnover, increased injuries, high absenteeism and reduced productivity – leading to significant social and financial costs for employers," Dr Howe said.

"We all know about the benefits of social connection, but it's our relationships with friends and families that spring to mind first. But, given that we spend over one-third of our adult life at work, we need to consider the significant role our work colleagues play in our feelings of social connectedness and self-esteem.

"icare has been conducting research for over two years to understand the drivers of social connection. We've also built up a stockpile of tools to help employers to improve social connections and create a healthier workplace for their employees.

"We're inviting Ballina employers to come along to this 'Research to Practice' forum where they can share their own experiences and learn more about these tools.

"We'll be bringing fresh perspectives, new tools and practical tips to get your work team socially connected. We'll help you identify areas where your own workplace could apply this research.

"As employees feel more supported, communicate better and have greater cohesion there should be increased productivity and the flow-on of social and financial benefits. If our tools enable the number of physical and psychological workplace injuries to decrease we hope to see a reduction in workers compensation premiums," she said.

The forum in Ballina is the first of five being held across NSW by icare. This body of work forms part of icare's contribution to the \$55 million '[Mentally Healthy Workplaces 2018-2022](#)' strategy, a joint initiative of icare, SafeWork NSW and the State Insurance Regulatory Authority (SIRA), [announced by the NSW Government last month](#).

Local employers interested in attending the event can register their interest at:
<https://bit.ly/2KpojTf>

WHEN: 8-10.30 am, Monday 13 August
WHERE: Ramada Hotel and Suites, 2 Martin Street, Ballina

For further information, contact: hace@icare.nsw.gov.au

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About icare: icare (Insurance & Care NSW) is the insurance and care provider for NSW. We insure 3.7 million workers, motorists and builders and 296,000 employers. For more information, visit: www.icare.nsw.gov.au

