



**GOVERNOR'S LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION  
THINK-TANK  
IN COLLABORATION WITH SA HEALTH**

**October 2010**

For any enquiries, please contact Sarah Rhead

Director of Program Development

[sarah.rhead@lisa.com.au](mailto:sarah.rhead@lisa.com.au)

## **THE LEADERS INSTITUTE OF SA AND THE GOVERNOR'S LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION PROGRAM**

The Leaders Institute of South Australia is a not-for-profit organisation that enjoys immense support and respect from business, government and the broader community in South Australia. It is renowned for its work in innovative leadership development that creates positive and sustainable change for individuals, organisations and society.

The Governor's Leadership Foundation (GLF) is the eminent flagship program of the Leaders Institute of South Australia. It is SA's premier program for the development of emerging and established leaders and is at the cutting edge of leadership development in Australia. The program participants are aged 26-56 and all hold positions of leadership either in their work or community. The program builds strategic foresight capacity, enhances knowledge of complex issues in society, develops self-awareness and wisdom, broadens networks and strengthens leadership potential and skills. Participants are selected on merit and must be prepared to commit to a challenging, exciting and action-packed ten months, participating in a structured program of weekly experiential seminar sessions that stretch them intellectually and personally (including sessions in an indigenous community, in a prison, on farms, in homeless centres and State lunches with our Governor and visiting dignitaries) plus three or four weekends away. Each program session requires pre-reading and other preparation, and participants also undertake community work and personal development. On completion, successful participants are awarded a Fellowship by the Governor of South Australia. Together graduates use their improved knowledge and skills to creatively influence positive outcomes for Australia. The GLF program is currently in its 11<sup>th</sup> year and we will have almost 400 graduates in our alumni network at the end of this year. Please see the Appendix for a list of GLF graduates and Honorary and Foundation Members.

In 2008 the Leaders Institute piloted the first GLF Think Tank initiative with the Department for Families and Communities. This was then followed up with a Think Tank Initiative in 2009 for the Department of Water Land and Biodiversity. The general concept for the Think Tank is that groups of GLF graduates come together to work on specific issues where various government departments require some 'out of the box' ideas and fresh thinking. Government will then take these innovative ideas and utilise them to enhance policy-making and/or to establish new initiatives. Ultimately, the findings may be implemented either directly through government, or government may support GLF Fellows to implement the ideas. The Think Tank offers GLF Fellows a practical and structured way to utilise the broad knowledge and skills developed in the GLF program for the good of the broader community.

### **THINK TANK PROJECT FOR SA HEALTH**

#### **Context of the proposed project**

The impacts of poor health and wellbeing will have far reaching effects on South Australia and its community. SA Health is faced with having to fundamentally reform its programs and approaches to address the impacts of declining health and wellbeing. As a community we cannot afford to be complacent. Chronic diseases including respiratory, cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes are a leading cause of death and disability around the world, despite the fact that many of these are preventable through healthier lifestyles.

This is not a marginal issue affecting only a small percentage of the population. Nearly all (96%) working age people report one or more of the following risk factors: smoking, risky alcohol consumption, obesity, physical inactivity, low fruit or vegetable consumption, high blood pressure. Three-quarters (75%) of all working-age Australians reported more than one risk factor, with 44%

reporting three or more. For these people there were significant differences in labour force participation rates compared with those with no risk factors<sup>1</sup>.

At a national level, approximately five million (2004-05) Australian employees are overweight or obese (1.3 million are obese). Obesity was associated with an excess 4.25 million days lost from the workplace in 2001<sup>2</sup>.

An Access Economics report recently estimated the cost of obesity alone was \$4.3 billion for South Australia<sup>3</sup>. This figure is higher than previously estimated and justifies State and Federal Governments' increasing investment in preventive health. Research indicates that sedentary lifestyles can also lead to more work-related illness and prolonged recovery periods as well as increased morbidity and mortality<sup>4</sup>. A similar picture is painted from the data for smoking, alcohol and physical inactivity.

Commencing July 2011 the South Australian Government will receive \$10.5 M in Commonwealth funding over the next four years to undertake initiatives that promote healthy lifestyles in and through workplaces in order to achieve these outcomes. Between 2013 -15 South Australia will also be eligible for a similar amount as "reward" funding if our initiatives are successful.

This new funding provides an exciting opportunity for something "bigger and bolder" reaching many more workplaces across the state. Our GLF Graduates are leaders from diverse workplaces, enabling active testing and promotion of health and wellbeing programs. This proposed project will leverage this influential network of leaders, providing the opportunity, expertise and connections to support South Australian workers to lead healthier lives.

### **Question for the Think Tank**

A study by Medibank Private found "...the healthiest Australian employees are almost three times more productive than their unhealthy colleagues". The South Australian government and wider community has a responsibility to help people make healthier choices and enable them to live, work and play in healthier environments and will ultimately reap the rewards for doing so.

So the question must be asked, how can we create an effective wellness environment in our workplaces given the amount of time people spend at work? What are the barriers to creating this wellness environment and how are these overcome in a small, medium and large enterprise?

### **Proposed approach**

To explore this problem, the Leaders Institute of South Australia proposes a think tank and action learning process.

The think-tank will be comprised of up to 25 volunteers who are graduates of the Governor's Leadership Foundation (GLF) program, as well as some of the Institute's Foundation and Honorary members and senior executives in SA Health. It will include a diversity of GLF graduates and Institute members working in business, government and community settings, in small, medium and large

---

<sup>1</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2010. Risk factors and participation in work. Cat. No. PHE 122. Canberra: AIHW

<sup>2</sup> Overweight and Obesity: Implications for Workplace Health and Safety And Workers' Compensation, Australian Safety and Compensation Council, August 2008, p 8-9.

<sup>3</sup> *The Growing Cost of Obesity in 2008: Three Years On*. Reported by Access Economics Pty Ltd to Diabetes Australia, August 2008.

<sup>4</sup> McEachan, R, Lawton, Ret al. 2008 Evidence, Theory and Context: Using intervention mapping to develop a worksite physical activity intervention *BMC Public Health* 2008, 8:326

enterprises. All will have a basic understanding of health and wellbeing issues and the likely impacts on our communities<sup>5</sup>

The think-tank will draw on knowledge about adaptive change from other discipline areas and leadership perspectives (such as Heifetz and Linsky – see footnote 1) and utilise tools such as the Integral Quadrants<sup>6</sup> and Appreciative Inquiry<sup>7</sup> to explore all dimensions of the issues it faces in helping communities respond to our health and wellbeing needs. These dimensions will be practically explored via initiatives to be implemented in the GLF graduates own workplaces as an iterative approach within the think-tank process.

The think-tank will be structured as an action learning process<sup>8</sup>. The group will meet for five facilitated workshops and a final meeting over a six-month period, with group members agreeing to develop and implement healthy lifestyle initiatives in their own workplaces that they will work on in-between workshop meetings and then report back on these at the start of each meeting. A Google Group will be established online for group members to continue discussions, share resources, ask questions and update other group members on progress in-between meetings.

The workshops will run from 12.30pm to 4pm on a Thursday at approximately 4-weekly intervals. They will be structured as follows (with scope to modify the structure and process, if required, as it goes along):

### **Workshop 1 (Thurs 9<sup>th</sup> Dec, 2010) – Appreciative Inquiry and Integral Tools**

Objectives:

Develop basic understanding of the 4 dimensions of experience (Integral quadrant analysis – see footnote 7) and Appreciative Inquiry (see footnote 8).

- Explore the concept of a workplace wellness environment using Appreciative Inquiry
- Brainstorm elements of the 4 dimensions in creative ways that estimate the reality of the situation right now.

In-between this workshop and the following one the participants will:

- Continue to develop and deepen their understanding of the 4 dimensions with additional reading and online discussion
- Add to and clarify the information placed into the dimensions in the workshop online

### **Workshop 2 (Thurs 17<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2010) – Project Scoping**

Objectives:

---

<sup>5</sup> The Leaders Institute has provided increasingly more extensive coverage of health and wellbeing issues in the GLF program years since 2003 – in addition the SA Health and PWC reports will be provided as refresher pre-reading to all participants.

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.formlessmountain.com/quads.htm> for information on the Integral Quadrants

<sup>7</sup> See <http://www.thinbook.com/docs/doc-whatissai.pdf> and <http://www.appreciativeinquiry.net.au> for information about Appreciative Inquiry

<sup>8</sup> Action learning can be defined as a process in which a group of people come together regularly to help each other to learn from their experience. The action learning project will be a process by which change and understanding can be pursued at the one time. It is usually cyclic, with action and critical reflection taking place in turn. The reflection is used to review the previous action and plan the next one.

- Review previous outcomes and add any new insights
- Share ideas and commence scoping their own projects
- Determine the enabling and inhibiting factors that are present that prevent or enhance movement towards the wellness culture vision in their own organisations

In-between this workshop and the following one the participants will:

- Add to and clarify the information added to the dimensions in the workshop online
- Continue scoping their own initiatives online
- Review leadership texts on implementing adaptive change and discuss online.

### **Workshop 3-5 (Thurs 24<sup>th</sup> Mar, 21<sup>st</sup> Apr and 12<sup>th</sup> May, 2011) – Action Learning Projects**

Objectives:

- Review previous outcomes and add any new insights
- Discuss strategies for enhancing the enabling factors and overcoming the inhibiting factors that prevent or enhance movement towards the wellness culture vision in their own organisations
- Review agreed actions of group members Action Learning Projects
- Plan group members next actions for progressing the implementation of their initiatives

In-between these workshops the participants will:

- Write up their projects (three page summary only) for utilization as case studies by SA Health

### **Final meeting (Thurs 23<sup>rd</sup> Jun, 2011)**

In the final meeting participants will bring together all the ideas they have co-created with SA Health and each other and will review the process and outcomes of the think-tank utilising the Appreciative Inquiry process.

### **Anticipated outcomes for SA Health**

This think-tank and action learning process will be a starting point for SA Health to explore and understand the nature of issues it faces in more depth. It will:

- Enable SA Health to develop a vision for the future in which organisations are adopting the desired practices and modifying their workplace environments and expectations to achieve sustainable wellness cultures
- Provide a significant number of 'lighthouse initiatives' and case studies to illustrate a path forward for small, medium and large enterprises.
- Commence the process of developing wellness environments in the GLF Graduates respective organizations.
- Highlight the differences between the current or perceived reality and its vision
- Explore the enabling and inhibiting factors that are present which prevent or enhance movement towards its vision
- Develop ideas for how SA Health can create policy and initiatives to facilitate the conditions for positive change towards its vision within communities
- Provide SA Health with some new and valuable tools and processes for exploring and tackling adaptive community problems and achieving its objectives.