

Going home on time can benefit workers' health

November 18 2014, by David Ellis

Public health researchers at the University of Adelaide say office workers can benefit themselves and their families by going home on time as much as possible, to reduce work-related illness.

Speaking in the lead up to Go Home On Time Day (Wednesday 19 November), the Head of Public Health at the University of Adelaide, Professor Dino Pisaniello, says longer working hours are one of the many [work](#)-related risks for [poor health](#).

"Long working hours combined with [work intensity](#) are a known risk factor for poor health, especially cardiovascular disease, generally poor [physical health](#), and fatigue," Professor Pisaniello says.

"Australians currently rank fourth for long hours worked among 34 OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) nations, and the figures show that one in five Australian men work more than 50 hours a week.

"Studies also show that one in five Australian working men has a 40% increased [cardiovascular disease](#) risk."

Professor Pisaniello says work that is worthwhile and valued is known to be generally good for people's health, but the modern work environment often does not always lend itself to supporting good health.

"Up to 40% of workers report that they work at very high speed for most

of the time, work to tight deadlines for most of the time, and have too much work for one person to do," he says.

"Around one quarter of Australian workers also report that work frequently interferes with their ability to engage in activities outside work, which means they suffer from a poor work-life balance.

"Women consistently have higher work-life interference than men, regardless of whether they work full-time or part-time. Even casual workers have no better work-life outcomes than permanent workers when adjusted for differences in working hours."

Professor Pisaniello says workers who ask for and receive flexibility have a greater work-life balance, which is important for their health.

"In general, our recommendation is that workers take the opportunity to go home on time as much as possible to help reduce work stress and to achieve more life balance. This has the potential to make them healthier and ultimately more productive workers over the longer term," he says.

Provided by University of Adelaide

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