



**HEALTHY
HEARTS
@WORK**

The Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa is eager to reach into your community. Please feel free to publish this information in your company newsletter on your intranet or pin it up on a notice board. All we ask in return is to credit the information as coming from the Heart and Stroke Foundation SA.

Healthy Hearts @ Work Canteen Programme

In a bid to promote health and wellness as well as the prevention of cardiovascular disease in the workplace, the Heart and Stroke Foundation South Africa (HSFSA) is proud to announce the launch of the *Healthy Hearts @ Work* Canteen Programme. The Programme is aimed at helping companies make healthier food choices available to the South African workforce, allowing employees the option of choosing more nutritious foods at work.

Chronic disease is a major global threat, accounting for roughly 75% of healthcare costs each year and 60% of deaths worldwide in 2005. It is also the leading cause of lost work time in the working-age population. By 2030, the total number of productive years lost in emerging economies such as Brazil, South Africa, Russia, China and India is expected to increase by 64% from 20.6 million in 2000 to 33.7 million in 2030 as a result of cardiovascular disease alone!

More and more South Africans consume food that is prepared outside of the home...in restaurants, take-away establishments and canteens. What is of concern is that many of these quick foods are unhealthy and are typically: large portions which are energy dense and often high in saturated fat, trans fats, cholesterol, added sugars and sodium but are low in fibre. As a result many people are faced with the challenge of living and working in environments which promote the development of obesity as well as conditions such as hypertension, diabetes and high cholesterol.

Various studies have shown that Wellness Programmes can assist organisations in reducing these chronic disease of lifestyle, decrease healthcare costs, improve productivity as well as build a sustainable business by helping them to attract and retain healthy employees. Companies have a unique and vital role in improving the wellness, health and physical fitness of their employees. A healthy eating programme can be the first step towards positively influencing the eating habits of staff members by increasing the accessibility of healthy foods.

The *Healthy Hearts @ Work* Canteen Programme offers employers guidance and support on how to change their company's food service establishment (whether it's a canteen, cafeteria or vending machine) into a heart healthy one.

The aim of the Programme is not to change the menu radically but rather to offer nutritious options alongside more traditional foods. This will provide employees with more choice as well as the option of eating healthily.

For more information about the HSFSA's *Healthy Hearts @ Work* Canteen Programme, kindly contact Ruan du Preez on Tel (021) 447 4222, email ruan@heartfoundation.co.za or visit the website at www.heartfoundation.co.za