

mindz  
WORKPLACE  
MENTAL HEALTH  
FORUM

*“Gaining momentum”*  
in 2017



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# Highlights of 2017

*The title of this report – Gaining Momentum – is from an attendee’s feedback following our last event for 2017, held in early November. It reflects a theme we have heard several times anecdotally, that our members recognise the higher level of achievement and impact of the Forum over the past year.*

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**“What a wonderful platform you are providing for local business and awareness of mental well-being, congratulations!!”**

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*Unsolicited feedback via email*

We continue to receive positive feedback and suggestions, all of which support the constructive evolution of the Forum. The committee’s strategy for 2018 is to consolidate on the achievements and impact of 2017, broadening our reach, and adding to our membership. We particularly want to offer high quality speakers who inspire and inform. We also aim to provide more interactive forums and events where attendees can explore best workplace practices and then apply what they have learnt in their own workplaces.

Building on discussion during the November event, we want to actively reach men in more traditional workplaces including construction, forestry and the farming sector. There are some large businesses with a regular presence at our Forums such as Fonterra, Fulton Hogan and Sealord. Through management buy-in and targeted involvement of Personnel and Health and Safety staff we can reach hundreds and inspire positive change.

**Major milestones for the organisation in 2017 include:**

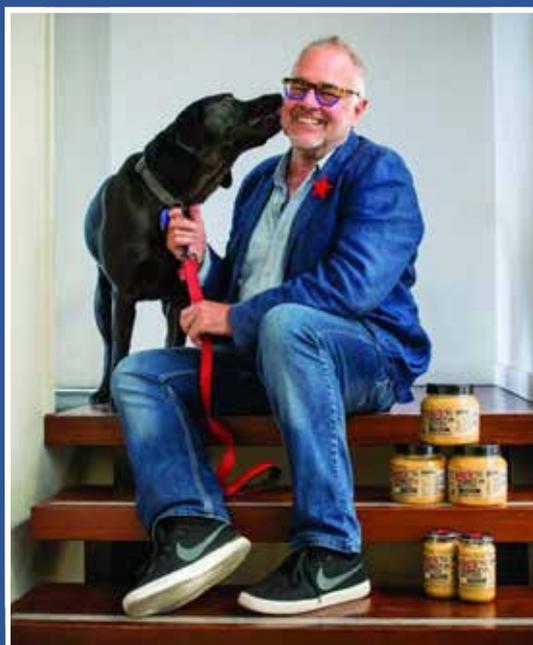
- Two major networking events in July and November that were delivered in collaboration with other organisations – one with the Human Resources Institute of NZ (HRINZ) to increase understanding of mental illness and wellbeing in the workplace, and the second with the local White Ribbon campaign committee and stopping violence network, Te Rito – [www.nelsontasmanterito.org.nz/](http://www.nelsontasmanterito.org.nz/)
- A very well attended forum in September was delivered by Pic from Pic’s Peanut Butter – a local, high-growth business that is a best practice example of excellent owner support for staff wellbeing
- To further reach and impact of the September forum, it was recorded by FreshFM, the local community radio station. The podcast is available online and provides a refresher to those who attended. It also creates another way to reach a wider audience that might not have been able to attend the event. The discussion following Pic’s presentation was inspiring and subsequently received very positive feedback – [mindz.nz/resources-and-information.php](http://mindz.nz/resources-and-information.php)
- Re-branding from the Business Forum on Mental Health to MINDZ, the Workplace Mental Health Forum. This evolution reflected the wider involvement of workplaces from the business sector, and also those beyond, in non-commercial sectors
- Creation of a logo, website and Facebook page to support the organisation’s work, plus complementary resources such as rack cards and a banner

- Re-framing our regular two-monthly sessions as networking forums with high calibre speakers, rather than as ‘meetings’ – average attendances have increased from around 12 to 40 or more per forum over the past 12 months
- After seeking feedback to identify barriers to attending the Business Forum on Mental Health meetings, we moved the forums from a Friday lunchtime to alternating Tuesday/ Thursday mornings to enable more people to easily attend – we also experimented with an early evening session in July with the HRINZ co-hosted event to offer a wider range of convenient times
- The rebrand as MINDZ alongside the modified forum structure was in response to feedback from our members – as a result learning, reflection, discussion and more interaction were consciously structured into the forums
- An involved and active Committee with a core of four, plus the coordinator, under the umbrella of the Health Action Trust, Nelson – committee members have attended outside events such as the Health and Safety Expo in Nelson to promote MINDZ and reach new members
- Building capacity through collaboration and prioritisation has enabled MINDZ to grow and extend its reach to a rapidly growing membership and, through them, to positively influence many hundreds of staff across Nelson, Marlborough and Tasman. Further funding would enable the work and reach to be extended and consolidated
- Ending the year with a celebratory lunch, MINDZ members were invited to attend an informal lunch on 15 December. Although members paid for their own lunch, giveaways that promote our organisation and work added to the spirit of The Holiday Season and used one of the Ways to Well-being (to give).

## Our Aims

**Workplace mental health has never been so important. The aims of MINDZ, the Workplace Mental Health Forum are:**

- Connecting key decision makers
- Sharing best practice
- Supporting safer, happier, and more productive workplaces for everyone. MINDZ, the Workplace Mental Health Forum, is a successful and dynamic collaboration between a range of agencies and companies working to improve mental health within the community’s workplaces.



**ABOVE:** Pic Picot, from Pic’s Peanut Butter, who spoke to the September forum about the importance of a positive organisational culture

# What we achieved – by the numbers

## THREE FORUMS

We held three new-format forums on Tuesday 7 Mar, Tuesday 2 May, and Thursday 5 September 2017. In total over **80** attended these networking forums, and through them we positively influenced over **50** workplaces that together employed many hundreds of staff.

## TWO EVENTS

MINDZ delivered two collaborative events on Thursday 13 July and Thursday 9 November 2017, the first with the Human Resources Institute of New Zealand (HRINZ) local committee.

Promoted as ‘Demystifying Mental Illness and Mental Wellbeing’ the over **50** participants were evenly split between the two organisations, bringing together a unique combination of workplace influencers. The speakers were Dr Richard Tranter, Consultant Psychiatrist for the Nelson Marlborough DHB, and Sue Bateup, who is the Programme Manager for Wellbeing@Work Oranga Mahi. The Wellbeing@Work Oranga Mahi programme is funded by the Health Promotion Agency, and is an initiative developed and delivered through the Health Action Trust.

We have leveraged considerable value over the year by cross-referring workplaces between Wellbeing@Work Oranga Mahi and MINDZ. The MINDZ programme becomes a follow-up, maintenance and peer support tool for workplaces that have progressed through the Wellbeing@Work Oranga Mahi programme. Likewise, we can promote and provide information about that programme for businesses and organisations that want to take positive steps in building staff wellbeing.

The second event showcased the initiatives lead by local Richmond Warehouse Manager, Geoff Bostock. With an emphasis on reducing family violence, he also covered how their workplace supports staff with mental illness or distress. The session ended

with networking over lunch, which was well attended by most of the **45+** attendees. Just over 94% of attendees who responded to the feedback survey rated the event as Excellent (29.4%) or Very Good (64.7%) overall. As with all our forums and events, anecdotal feedback reinforces the value of providing a networking framework for attendees. MINDZ forums and events are highly valued for the networking opportunities they provide, bringing unique combinations of workplaces together around shared themes.

## INCREASE IN MEMBERSHIP

We now have over **40** regular attendees at our forums and at least **50** attending the larger, higher profile events in collaboration with other organisations. The previous year we had an average of 10-12 attending forums and 100 at the August 2016 event. There are now **94** on our mailing list to receive regular updates on our forums and events, up from 62 in March 2017.

## ONE NEW WEBSITE AT [MINDZ.NZ](http://MINDZ.NZ)

There is a growing body of information, resources and tools for our members to apply in their workplaces. The MINDZ website resources page includes information on common mental illnesses, workplace bullying, how to build happier and more productive workplaces, and much more.

## ONE FACEBOOK GROUP

The Facebook group at ‘[Workplace Mental Health Forum, Nelson NZ](#)’ was also set up this year, launching our social media presence. It enables additional interaction and rapid sharing of information, such as the audio from FreshFM after the September forum. The group already has **49** members.

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

We also held **10** monthly committee meetings to plan and organise our forums and events, plus an informal end of year lunch for members.

# The impact of the Forum

## INCREASING REACH AND INFLUENCE

Key staff from large organisations and businesses who attend MINDZ events often generate a positive ripple effect that benefits all staff in their workplaces.

## UNIQUE MIXES OF ATTENDEES

By collaborating with other organisations, we can bring together unique combinations of attendees at networking events. The November 2017 event was noticeable for an almost 50:50 split between community sector organisations and larger corporates and businesses such as Fonterra, Sealord, the Warehouse and Nelson City Council. This led to a very rich discussion that followed the speaker's presentation, and to networking, connections and information sharing between attendees that would not otherwise have happened.

## NETWORKING AND PEER SUPPORT

Anyone is welcome to attend our forums and events, but we particularly target Health and Safety, Personnel, managers and CEOs as primary influencers of workplace wellbeing. We follow up events with prompt email surveys, and attendees tell us they very much value the time to network and meet others in similar positions.

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“Thank you for making this an opportunity within our work places and community.”

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“Keep up the great work of highlighting this important issue.”

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*Feedback following November event*



**ABOVE:** Animated conversations following the November 2017 event.

## RESOURCES

Our tools, links, and resources are freely available online for anyone to use and apply anywhere. We have expanded the media we are using to reach a wider audience than just those who can attend forums. For example, the audio of Pic's presentation on the importance of good organisational culture that was broadcast on FreshFM is now available among the resources on our website.

## RIPPLES FOLLOWING PREVIOUS EVENTS

While we might not be able to track every positive impact from our events, forums and information sharing, we do know that the increase in awareness of MINDZ and the importance of workplace wellbeing has led to some great outcomes.

The August 2016 workplace bullying prevention event received nation-wide coverage through the Stuff.co.nz website as well as the Nelson Mail locally. We subsequently heard that a highly distressed and potentially suicidal worker in Christchurch had seen the article, felt encouraged and contacted the speaker from that event. He sought and received the help he needed, instead of continuing to feel alone, isolated and distressed.

In the months following the media coverage, well into 2017, the MINDZ coordinator was regularly stopped in the street by people seeking further information on the issue of workplace bullying, and how to seek help. These conversations enable more people to find out about the Worksafe NZ Workplace Bullying Guidelines, and more people to address the negative impact of workplaces with unsafe organisational culture.

## THE IMPACT OF MINDZ

With the expanding membership, higher profile, more resources and high calibre speakers, MINDZ is increasing awareness of the importance of mental wellbeing in workplaces. Key staff have become more informed and better connected to their peers, benefiting all staff at their workplaces.

The increasing attendances at our forums and events tells us that there is a real need for information people can use in their workplaces, and that MINDZ is seen as meeting this need for networking and information. Despite limited resources, the very real benefits of the MINDZ organisation is well-recognised and appreciated by our members.

MINDZ' size enables innovation, agility and responsiveness. In combination with well-networked committee members, we were able to respond quickly to an approach by the HRINZ committee. It became evident from the questions before and during the event that some HR professionals do not have in-depth knowledge of mental illness, and how that differs from mental health and wellbeing. The committee was able to recruit excellent speakers who increased the level of understanding for those attending, and provided extensive hardcopy resources for attendees to take away.

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**“Informative, relevant, good opportunity to reconnect with people...”**

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*Feedback from July event*

# About MINDZ – the Workplace Mental Health Forum

MINDZ, the Workplace Mental Health Forum, is a successful and dynamic collaboration between a range of agencies and companies working to improve mental health within the community's workplaces.

Formerly known as the Business Forum on Mental Health, it was established in 2009 to highlight the importance of mentally-healthy workplaces and processes and to provide access to tools and resources to assist businesses, employees and the community to achieve that goal.

Our goals are two-fold: to increase understanding and reduce stigma for anyone suffering mental illness in the workplace, and to ensure every workplace supports mental well-being for all staff. That means increasing mentally healthy practices and eliminating practices that cause harm.

## ABOUT OUR MEMBERS

Our members include health professionals and individuals from those workplaces within the Nelson Tasman region who can positively influence change to improve mental health within the workplace. We meet regularly at networking forums and hold public events to raise awareness of the issues surrounding mental health and wellness in the workplace. Recent topics have included the importance of positive organisational culture, how to support mental wellbeing in staff, including addressing family violence.

Regular attendees at MINDZ forums and events include key staff from:

- Fonterra
- Fulton Hogan
- Nelson City Council
- Kono Ltd.
- The Warehouse
- Nelson College for Girls
- Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology
- Te Ara Mahi
- NZ Police
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing, Nelson Marlborough Health
- Nelson Marlborough DHB, Health Promotion
- Private counsellors
- Workstar
- Pics Peanut Butter
- Volunteer Nelson
- Nelson Pine
- Guard Safety
- Taylor Contracting
- Cawthron Institute
- Barnardos
- Port Nelson Ltd
- Accident Compensation Corporation
- Adult Learning
- Nelson Forests Ltd
- Sealord
- APM Workcare
- Worksafe NZ
- SVS Stopping Violence Services
- Whakatu Womens' Refuge
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Careerforce
- Seadragon Ltd
- Ministry of Social Development.

## Our funders

Our lead funder is the Rata Foundation, contributing \$8,000 in 2017. The bulk of that funding covers wages for a part-time coordinator, averaging 4-5 hours per week, who organises the forums and events and administers the committee meetings. The balance of the funding was spent on a MINDZ banner and website to support the sharing of resources and tools on workplace wellbeing.

We gratefully acknowledge the expertise of Angela Mockett who donated her time to review our branding and suggested a design that subsequently became our logo.

Rack cards to assist in promoting MINDZ were funded by the Nelson Marlborough DHB.

We also co-funded events in collaboration with other organisations so we were able to offer two high profile and more significant events in 2017. Previously there was generally only one annual event. Event funding came from the local committee of the HRINZ and the local White Ribbon Campaign committee.

We are very grateful to our funders who enable MINDZ to continue to raise the profile of mental health, wellbeing and discrimination, which would otherwise not happen.

MINDZ is funded as a community organisation with its accountability structure under the Health Action Trust in Nelson. We have chosen not to operate according to a subscription model to ensure the information, resources, tools and networking opportunities are widely available, and to reduce barriers to attendance across all sectors.

## Feedback

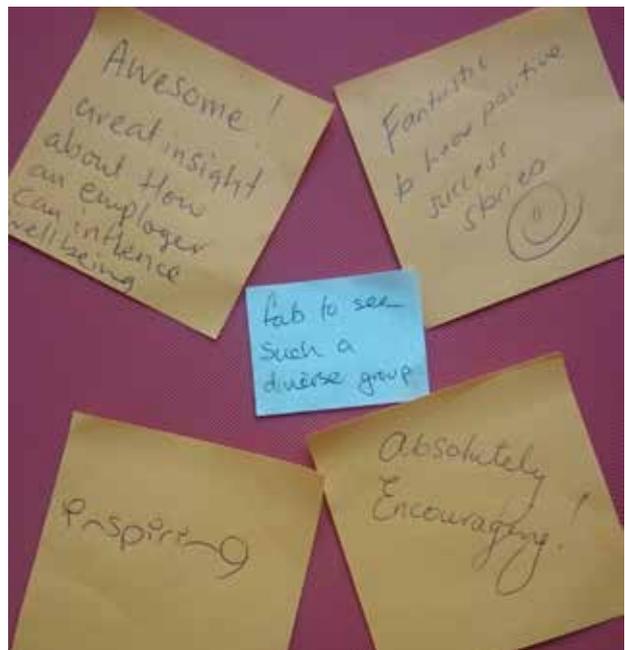
This is a selection of feedback received during 2017.

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**“Really good to see your ‘mental health in real workplaces’ activities going on, and I can report that some of the ‘mental health/better awareness of health and wellbeing generally’ discussions are much more evident in some of the higher-level discussions I have been involved with lately at WorkSafe etc. People are starting to ‘get it’, which is promising and exciting. So, don’t stop yet! I have more than once referred to the great work of organisations such as yours ... in case you wonder why your ears burn sometimes ...”**

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*Unsolicited feedback via email*



*Feedback immediately following the November event*

## What did we learn

Some of our learning over the year has included:

- Through experimenting with a wider range of forum and event times, and seeking feedback from our members, we have discovered that this year's forum timing and format has more than doubled attendances
- We asked not just those people who were already attending the forums, but also people on our mailing list to let us know when the best time would be to make it as easy as possible for them to attend
- Informal networking at events is as valuable as the event content itself
- The synergy of a dedicated coordinator and a re-energised MINDZ committee has improved capacity and enhanced the reputation of MINDZ
- By seeking, analysing and responding to feedback we learned what would motivate existing members to attend events and attract new members.

## Where to from here?

- Funding is required to retain a coordinator for MINDZ. The level of professionalism and mana gained over the last year is largely due to the dedication and skill of the current coordinator. The MINDZ committee is very cognisant of the need to maintain momentum and quality for this pivotal role. Funding is also need to secure quality speakers, hire venues and update resources
- There is a long list of requested topics for forums and events, which we will continue to deliver through 2018, subject to funding – examples include guest speakers on their own experience of mental illness in the workplace, how to manage bullying, and what is available for under-25s in our area
- 2018 will be a year of consolidation to build on the momentum gained throughout 2017
- We will seek to organise further collaborative networking events, based on the success of 2017 events
- We will also look at ways to extend the appeal of forum topics to reach both men and women in greater numbers, and to reach workplaces such as those in rural areas
- If funding allows in the longer term, we could consider increasing the reach beyond central Nelson
- In the medium or longer term, the MINDZ format could be readily adopted throughout the country, becoming a nation-wide network.

## Contact us

**W:** [MINDZ.nz](http://MINDZ.nz) includes resources and information about MINDZ as well as a contact page

**E:** [coordinator@MINDZ.nz](mailto:coordinator@MINDZ.nz)

**f:** Search '[Workplace Mental Health Forum, Nelson NZ](#)'