

Philip Moran was the CEO of Merri Community Health Services (MCHS) between 1996 and 2010. In his role as CEO, Philip traditionally spent much of his time sitting in his office, sitting in various meetings, and sitting in traffic getting to and from meetings. Like many people working in an office environment, it was common for him to spend more than 8 hours a day being mostly sedentary.



In 2004, Philip decided to become healthier and more physically active in his daily life. He changed his diet and started exercising more. He wore a pedometer and walked 10,000 steps a day. He then decided to combine walking with some of his meetings as well.

Noticing that he could become more physically active at work, Philip began to take other managers and staff for a wander during supervision meetings and catch-up discussions. Walking meetings were best suited to internal, one-on-one or small group meetings. These half hour wanders became a welcome opportunity to get some fresh air and exercise, and a chance to have real and open conversations. Philip found that meetings with staff in the office tended to be more formal and focused on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and targets; whereas walking meetings tended to be what business analyst and consultant Colin Pidd describes as ‘below the line’ discussions - allowing for a genuine conversation about ‘what’s really going on’ for the person and the organisation.

In addition, “going out for a walk is a really good way for us to remain connected to the local neighbourhood and to be in contact with what’s happening around us”. A stroll to the nearby park, local streets and shops is a chance to explore the suburb beyond the boundaries of the office. Given that prevention is a strong focus of MCHS’ work, walking at work is consistent with the values of the organisation.

“It is easy to do. All you need is a pair of good shoes and a bit of conscious planning”. Walking meetings boost morale, help staff feel more connected to the organisation as well as to the local neighbourhood, and it gives your body a great workout at work.

