

Business Profile – Village Physiotherapy & Sports Injury Clinic

Village Physiotherapy & Sports Injury Clinic now has another award to add to their growing collection. Recently crowned winner of the Health and Fitness Services Award at the Small Business Champions Awards, the Golden Grove business is proving to be a key player in a very competitive healthcare market.

Opening its doors in the shopping centre just four years ago, the Village Physiotherapy & Sports Injury Clinic provides high quality professional treatment services to the local community. Their goal is to help relieve pain and assist injury recovery to ultimately enhance their client's health and wellbeing. The core services they offer are physiotherapy, therapeutic massage and acupuncture.

Business owner Mark Johns says that it has always been an ambition to own his own business. In 2004, Mark's business consisted of just one physiotherapist seeing about 70 patients per week, a number that has now increased three fold to approximately 210 consults per week, provided by three physiotherapists and two massage therapists.

Mark believes this increase in clientele can be attributed to excellent customer service mixed with a little marketing; he said; "When I first started out I wrote to all of my contacts and local sporting clubs informing them of the launch of my business. I also took out some advertising and started a website, but I have found that most of our business comes from word of mouth referrals from very satisfied customers. This has been supported by new patient data showing 60% choose our clinic because of service quality reputation."

Village Physiotherapy & Sports Injury Clinic also supports the local community in several ways. They donate gift vouchers for various club raffles and fundraising events, they bulk bill financially disadvantaged clients and take



on work experience placements for young aspiring health professionals.

Mark also believes in investing in his staff and has committed to regular in-house training and paid support for external development courses.

Coming to the end of his current five-year business plan, Mark is looking to the future. "My vision is for the business to continue to achieve sustainable business growth, whilst maintaining our delivery of high quality, caring health services. We are also currently undertaking a process of Practice Accreditation which will comprehensively evaluate our business against the highest benchmark standards."

Mark's advice for anyone wanting to start

their own business is don't start one on a whim; "I would advise all aspiring business owners to do plenty of research and talk to people in the industry. You need to be certain that you are going to enjoy the different aspect of running a business and ensure it has the potential to be profitable.

"I would also strongly advise people to sit down and write a five-year business plan. There is plenty of advice and support available for those who don't know where to start, including local Business Enterprise Centres."

Village Physiotherapy & Sports Injury Clinic has also been a finalist in the Messenger Small Business Awards for the past four years and won in 2006 and 2007.

Thinking of running your business from home? Check with Council first

It's no secret that running your own business from home is a convenient and cost effective way of operating a small business, particularly when you are just starting out. Recent figures have shown that here in the City of Tea Tree Gully every seventh household has a registered business name and out of the 5000 registered businesses in the area 3000 of them are home based.

Home based businesses are vital to the local economy and community. They generate jobs, provide local services or products to the area and are themselves consumers of goods.

However, on some occasions operating a home based business may result in a change in land use or have the potential to impact your neighbours and existing local services. For these reasons, if you are planning on starting a home-based business you should check with Council first.

What is defined as a Home Activity?

A Home Activity is defined in the regulations as;
Use of a site by a resident:

- a) That does not negatively effect the amenity or any part of the locality
- b) That does not require or involve:
 - assistance by more than one person who is not a resident in the dwelling
 - use (whether temporarily or permanently) of a floor area exceeding 30 square metres
 - the imposition on the services provided by any public utility organisation of any demand or load greater than which is ordinarily imposed by other users of the services in the locality
 - the display of goods in the window or about the dwelling or its surrounds
 - does not involve signage advertising the business

What sort of activity can cause a problem?

Any sort of business that involves heavy or constant traffic, manufacturing or the production of something that has the potential to cause problems because of the very nature of the operations, processes and tools used.

Councils often receive complaints from neighbours and others about business activities which:

- create repeated, prolonged or loud noise
- interfere with TV or radio reception
- produce smoke, smells, fumes, dust and the like
- increase traffic in the street or lead to congestion brought about by visitor parking and general movement
- are carried on at times outside normal working hours

In any case you need to be mindful at all times to operate within the limits imposed by the home activity criteria and not cause any nuisance to neighbours or create conditions which may cause complaints.

Also, if the business involves the handling of food or personal services such as hairdressing, there may be health requirements under other legislation that need to be met.

It is also advisable to check with other authorities for any non-council related licenses, registrations or additional requirements that those authorities may have an interest in and/or need to grant.

If you would like more information on the guidelines of operating a home-based business, please telephone Council on 8397 7444.