

Work & Community: **Building a Community Investment Program at Bristol-Myers Squibb Australia**

A case study

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Introduction

Bristol-Myers Squibb Australia Pty Ltd (BMSA) – the Australian operation of a global pharmaceutical and healthcare business – launched its community investment program, *Work & Community*, in July 2001.

In developing *Work & Community*, the company wanted a program that:

- Reflected the company's mission – simply stated as being 'to extend and enhance human life' – and the Bristol-Myers Squibb Pledge, which outlines a commitment to conscientious citizenship;
- Built upon the generosity and commitment of its employees (approximately 500 at the time of the launch);
- Focussed on the company's expertise and experience.

Driven by the company's Corporate and Government Affairs Department – with assistance from a consultancy specialising in Corporate Social Responsibility (Sydney-based Positive Outcomes) – BMSA developed a program with four components:

- A headline partnership with the Inspire Foundation based around its Reach Out! internet service;
- Support for employee community service;
- Employee directed giving;
- Promotion of health, health education and research.

With the assistance of Positive Outcomes, BMSA completed a review of *Work & Community* in July 2003. Some of the findings of the review are reflected in this case study.

1. Key components of *Work & Community*

1.1 Headline project with Inspire Foundation

The partnership with the Inspire Foundation started in 2002 after BMSA employees identified the high level of youth suicide in Australia as a key issue they wanted to address through *Work & Community*. Through initiatives such as its internet service Reach Out! (www.reachout.com.au), the Inspire Foundation inspires young people to help themselves through tough times.

After extensive dialogue, BMSA entered a partnership with Inspire to provide financial and in-kind support to the Reach Out! Youth Ambassador (YA) program. The Youth Ambassadors (YAs) are a group of young people who support Reach Out! by volunteering their time and expertise to guide its ongoing development, and by building awareness of the service in their own communities.

Both BMSA and Inspire Foundation identified significant synergy between the YA program, which is developing the leadership capacity of a group of young Australians, and Bristol-Myers Squibb's focus on developing leadership at all levels within the corporation.

Prior to the partnership, the YA program was more a concept than an ongoing program. With BMSA support, Inspire Foundation has been able to build a comprehensive YA program and develop the leadership and communication skills of the YAs so that they can more effectively support and promote Reach Out! in their communities.

1.2 Support for employee community service

BMSA launched its employee volunteering program in March 2003. The program supports employees' community involvement and celebrates their achievements. The program also supports and encourages employees who would like to volunteer in the community, but are not sure where to start or how to get involved.

An employee survey (conducted in June 2003) showed that following the introduction of the *Work & Community*, there was a 10 percentage point increase in the number of BMSA employees volunteering, rising from 24 per cent in 2002 to 34 per cent in 2003. (This was comparable with the national volunteering rate of 32 per cent).

Twenty-eight per cent of the employees' volunteering activity was outside of work through their own interests, while six per cent of those employees volunteering were involved in projects organised and supported through BMSA.

1.3 Employee directed giving

A particular goal of *Work & Community* is to provide BMSA employees with opportunities to have greater influence on the company's financial contributions to the community. Three components of *Work & Community* were created for this purpose:

- An annual employee survey to determine employee giving preferences;
- An Employee Giving Committee;
- A Regional Sales Force donations program.

A payroll giving program was also introduced in 2003, providing employees with the opportunity to donate to charities of their own choice while enjoying the taxation advantage of pre-tax payroll deductions.

1.4 Promotion of health, health education and research

BMSA sponsors and supports a range of health education and other health projects in its key business areas of heart disease, cancer, infectious disease, and mental health.

With *Work & Community*, BMSA aimed to:

- Introduce a greater degree of rigour in its decision making around sponsorships and donations;
- Restrict the scope of its spend to its four key business areas;
- Become more targeted by increasing the size of each donation, so that its contribution could have greater impact.

Internal assessments of expenditure in 2001 and 2002 indicated that these procedures and systems had resulted in greater discipline and focus in the BMSA sponsorship and donations spend, with BMSA making more targeted substantial donations (with the Employee Giving Committee filling the role of making smaller donations).

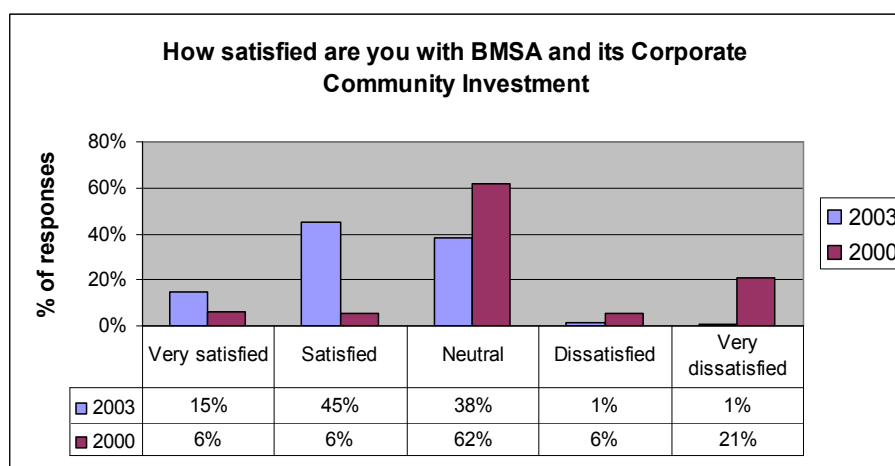
2. *Work & Community* Impact

The overall impact of *Work & Community* on employees, external stakeholders and the broader community was analysed through a survey of employees, stakeholder interviews and dialogue with Inspire Foundation.

2.1 Impact on employees

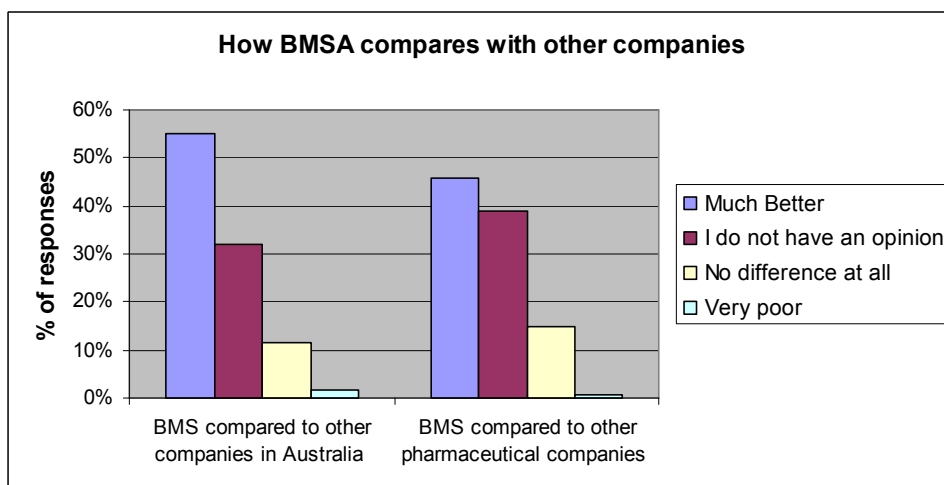
The June 2003 employee survey showed that in its first two years, *Work & Community* had a positive impact on employees. Of the 27 per cent of employees who responded to the survey, 60 per cent indicated they were either very satisfied or satisfied with BMSA and its community investment, compared with only 12 per cent in 2000 (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Change in levels of Employee satisfaction with BMSA Corporate Community Investment, 2000 and 2003 compared



Thirty-eight per cent rated *Work & Community* as ‘a good program that reaches the right groups’, with 23 per cent indicating it was ‘a good start, but needs to improve’. Further, 46 per cent of employees thought BMSA was much better in terms of community investment than other pharmaceutical companies (see Figure 2).

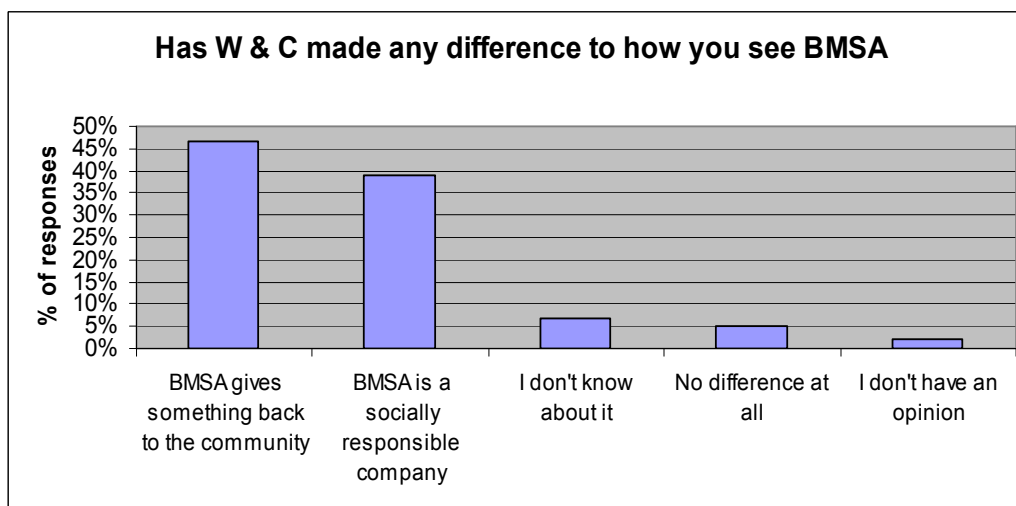
Figure 2: Employee rating of BMSA Corporate Community Investment compared with other companies



Work & Community impacted positively on how employees felt about BMSA, with 27 per cent of employees indicating that the program had made a difference to their work at BMSA.

Forty-seven per cent of employees saw BMSA as a company that ‘gives something back to the community’, with 39 per cent seeing BMSA as ‘a socially responsible company’ (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Influence of Work & Community on employee perceptions of BMSA



2.2 Impact on external stakeholders

The 12 stakeholders who were interviewed about their opinion of BMSA’s social performance all indicated that *Work & Community* contributed positively to their opinion of BMSA’s social performance.

While eight stakeholders did not have a detailed knowledge of the program, those who did said that *Work & Community* was a strategic, well-balanced and employee-driven program.

Nine stakeholders saw BMSA as being a leader in social performance, fast becoming a role model for other pharmaceutical companies.

2.3 Impact on the community

The impact of *Work & Community* on the broader community was assessed as including:

- Development of a group of potential young leaders through the partnership with Inspire Foundation;
- An increase in the number of BMSA employees volunteering in their communities;
- Support for over 125 organisations through BMSA's sponsorships and donations program;
- Support for 22 community organisations through the Employee Giving Committee.

3. Conclusion

The July 2003 review of *Work & Community* demonstrated that in its first two years, the program had made a significant impact. There were marked internal benefits, especially in relation to employee perceptions about company. There was also an increased discipline in relation to spending on donations and sponsorships.

The review concluded that *Work & Community* had shown itself to be a dynamic and evolving program, with scope for greater penetration within the company, across the sector and within the community, in the areas that are consistent with BMSA's business focus.