 Central Gippsland Health shift workers will trial new Re-Timer glasses in coming weeks. The glasses emit green-blue light into the eyes to re-establish a healthy sleep schedule. Pictured with the new age specs are Wellington Primary Care executive officer Angie Collins and Wellington Primary Care employee Ros Hunter.

NURSES at Central Gippsland Health will trial state-of-the-art bright light therapy glasses designed to help combat the demands of working a busy night shift.

The trial is part of the Wellington Primary Care Partnership's Working Well in Wellington project which aims to develop and trial a number of strategies to improve the mental wellbeing of shift workers.

Wellington Primary Care Partnership executive officer Angie Collins said the use of the Re-Timer glasses was part of an exciting new strategy that aimed to help nurses who undertook shift work to regulate their sleep patterns.


"Developed by Professor Leon Lack from his extensive research at Adelaide's Flinders University, the glasses shine glowing green-blue wavelength light into the eye of the wearer to beneficially re-time the body's circadian rhythm and melatonin production, as well as increase alertness in the critical early morning hours of the shift when cognitive ability tends to drop off the most," Ms Collins said.

"We are hoping that the glasses will help to delay sleep time in preparation for night shift, help the nurses to improve their ability to cope with fatigue associated with working shift work, improve the quality of sleep during daylight hours and wake up earlier on days off.

"Research has indicated that good sleep is an important part of maintaining mental health and wellbeing.

"Professor Lack himself is interested in the trial and will be providing input to help us".



 Central Gippsland Health recently welcomed an expert panel to discuss mental wellbeing for shift workers. Pictured from left are Central Gippsland Health nurse unit manager Gary McMillan, psychologist Yasmin Schaefer, Monash University's Dr Jade Murray, Latrobe Community Health dietitian Anna Scobie and Wellington Primary Care project worker Linda Hunt.

The Re-Timer glasses were recently used by the Socceroos as part of their World Cup campaign.

Some players wore the glasses on long distance flights to help recover from jet lag and be in peak condition when arriving to games.

Older technologies required the person to sit in front of a light box for an extended period of time.

"This is not very practical for a busy nurse who needs to be able to continue with their personal and professional activities," Ms Collins said.

"The glasses can be worn at any time, except when driving, and each nurse will be given a personalised timetable that matches their roster to give them optimum results.

"The glasses only need to be worn for a maximum of one hour per day."

The Working Well in Wellington Project is supported by WorkSafe's WorkWell Mental Health Improvement Fund.

Workplace Safety Minister Jill Hennessy said the trial was a good example of the practical ways in which recipients of funding from Victoria's WorkSafe WorkWell initiative were able to support workers whose jobs made them more susceptible to mental health challenges.

"We know that getting a good sleep can play a large role in maintaining mental health, but for shift workers this can be difficult," she said.

Ms Hennessy said the government was looking forward to seeing the results of this trial and others to come.

Central Gippsland Health chief executive Frank Evans said CGH was also keen to see the results of the trial.

"We understand that shift work is both physically and mentally demanding," Dr Evans said.

"We hope that the use of the glasses will enable our staff to be in the best possible mental and physical health."