Making a Case for Worksite Wellness

- Healthy Employees = Healthy Business
  - Healthy employees are critical to the success of a business.

- The worksite is an opportune environment for building positive, healthy individuals.
  1. Our waking hours are spent primarily at work.
  2. Choices we make at work will either enhance or damage our health
  3. Everyone should be concerned about the health of their co-workers.
  4. Establishment of social norms
  5. Policy alignment
  6. Measurement
  7. Incentive provision
Where to begin?

Lay the ground work first.

- The buy-in of the employee population is very important and can only be achieved if programs and practices are sensitive to realities of the employee’s environment at work and at home and fit the interests of the employee population.

One example, a campaign to encourage physical activity, specifically walking can be ineffective or even counterproductive when:

- No opportunities for walking at work
- No free or available recreation programs
- Limited transportation to recreation programs/sites
- Unsafe neighborhoods in most of the areas that employees live
Where to begin?

- Commitment and participation by management and key stakeholders.
- Integration of wellness into organization’s operating plan.
- Gather information
- Employee involvement in the planning and implementation of activities.
- Ensure adequate resources and funding

Building and Implementation

- Involve employees throughout the build and roll-out process.
- Offer programs at a time and place convenient to employees.
- Consider a change in the workplace environment to support healthy lifestyles
- Implementation of activities that address employee needs and wants.
- Offer a variety of programs to meet different employee needs.
- Communicate! Fliers, e-mails, intranet, meetings, water cooler chat.
- Allow time to communicate, but don’t let the momentum pass.
- Reward participants for achieving program goals.
Nutrition Program Ideas
- Fruity Fridays
- On-site gardening
- Local fruits & veggies offered on-site
- Recipe exchanges or company cookbook
- Lower price for healthy foods in vending
- Ensure healthy catering for work meetings and events
- Water, fruit & veggie challenge
- Reduce/eliminate unhealthy food challenge
- Taste testing
- Healthy cook-off challenges
- Offer on-site nutrition classes or counseling

Physical Activity Program Ideas
- Offer flexible hours to allow for physical activity during the day
- Host walk and talk meetings
- Post pictures of easy stretches and exercises ideas at the workstation
- Coordinate a company sports team pay league fees or cost of uniforms
- Assist employees with cost of fitness center membership
- Collaborate with fitness professionals for on-site classes
- Walking challenges
- Provide maps or list of activity options near the workplace
- Create a list/map to healthy restaurants within walking distance
- Sponsor or participate in a community event: March of Dimes, AHA, charity 5k

Mental Health Program Ideas
- Offer an Employee Assistance Program
- Allow flexible time for breaks in the day
- Ensure proper lighting and noise reduction
- Promote or offer yoga/meditation class or instruction
- Offer quiet or stress reduction room(s)
- Offer stress management/reduction classes
- Offer financial education classes or assistance
- Allow flexible scheduling for family events or medical appointments
- Provide supervisor training on mental health issues
- Alcohol and Other Drug Assistance
Assess

Reasons for starting a wellness program were established, now to validate.

Types of Evaluations:
- Participation counts
- Observation counts
- Participant satisfaction
- Changes in participant behaviors or attitudes
- Cultural Surveys/Employee Interest Surveys
- Environmental/policy assessment comparison
- Biometric assessment comparison
- Attendance/Absenteeism
- Benefits - Healthcare Claims, disability, workers’ comp, EAP

Resistance

- Employees were not involved in the development
- The program costs money
- The programs are offered at inconvenient times
- Employees are angry and distrustful of the employer
- The purpose for the program is not clearly explained
- Childcare issues
- The benefits to the company and employee are not explained clearly
- Lower level management cannot or will not convey the advantages of the program to the employees under their authority
- These programs are pushed ahead of fixing unhealthy work conditions
- Employees feel control of their own health risks are being relinquished to the company and their rights are being violated
Case Studies

• Employee Benefit News, November 2012
Global Industrial Company Lafarge North America, Inc., health risks threatened its very foundation and employee base. Company drivers were so obese they were injuring themselves climbing up ladders in the trucks.

2005 – 2007 “Building the Better You” program launched
- Awareness focused, education and benefits communication

2007 – 2010 Fostering behavior change
- Incentives and value-based formulary for chronic conditions
- Sent birthday cards with recommended screenings for age/gender
- On-site health assessments for employees & spouses

2011 – 2012 “The Lafarge Three”
- Reality Show with Dr. Oz

Behind the Scenes: vending machine modifications, healthy marketing, fitness challenge.

Case Studies

• Employee Benefit News, March 2012
The Dow Chemical Company

  Every initiative needs integrity, the health outreach has to be real.
  – Start by building a business case that illustrates the value proposition to the organization. (retention, recruitment, and productivity)
  – A vision of health has to be viewed as critical to the strategy of the organization
  – Engage employees at all levels of the organization to drive a culture of health forward
  – Leadership participation and encourage is integral to implanting a successful culture of health.

How can you help? Provide leaders with specific actions and words for a particular program or activity.

Other Key Elements:
- Comprehensive programming - Support from leaders
- Food philosophy - Persistence
- Tobacco/substance policy - Good metrics

Resources

• WELCOA www.welcoa.org
• SCBCH Tool Chest www.scbch.org/
• LiveWell Greenville www.livewellgreenville.org
• Health Care Site www.HealthCare.gov
• Health Human Services www.hhs.gov
• Centers for Disease Control www.cdc.gov
• American Heart Association – www.heart.org

Local Resources: Hospitals, Fitness Centers, Non-profits, Carriers