



**Innovative**  
WORKPLACE WELLNESS



# **STARTING AND SUSTAINING A WORKPLACE WELLNESS PROGRAM**

## **Part 2: Developing a Program**

# GETTING STARTED

Congratulations on your decision to continue to improve your existing wellness program.

Innovative Workplace Wellness is here to help you. This manual is part two of a “starter kit” and provides an outline of how to create a wellness program and build a culture of health and well-being for your organization. If you’re just starting out in wellness or have been providing a wellness program for several years, this guide will explain all the components of a wellness program and provide you with free resources to help you run your program.

At Innovative, we provide you with more than 30 years of experience implementing successful wellness programs. Our in-house team of professionals will work hand-in-hand with your organization to design and implement customized wellness programs that will improve your population’s health and ultimately lower claims costs. We believe that a workplace wellness program is more than keeping your team physically healthy. It’s about empowering employees to be their best. It’s about creating a fully engaged staff and making them advocates of their own health.

Innovative Workplace Wellness offers the following services:

- ✓ Annual Health Fairs
- ✓ Biometric Screenings
- ✓ Chronic Condition Coaching
- ✓ Customized Wellness Websites
- ✓ Financial Wellness
- ✓ Health Education Seminars
- ✓ Lifestyle Coaching
- ✓ Population Health Management Software
- ✓ Results-Based Plan Design
- ✓ Readiness Assessments
- ✓ Targeted Outreach Program
- ✓ Tobacco Cessation Coaching
- ✓ Vendor Selection and Management
- ✓ Wellness Challenges

For the health of your employees and your business, we look forward to assisting you.

Innovative Workplace Wellness  
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# DEVELOPING A WELLNESS PROGRAM

Wellness programs are made up of a variety of different components and will look different for every organization. The wellness committee can help to determine what kind of components would benefit the organization the most and what employees are looking for.

## Conduct A Needs Assessment

A critical first step of any wellness program is knowing the needs of the workplace. There are several important sources of data that must be considered:

- ✓ Demographics of the employee population (See example).
- ✓ Biometric Screening Results (see page 4).
- ✓ Health Risk Assessment (see page 5).
- ✓ Employee Interest Survey (see example).
- ✓ Focus Groups.
- ✓ Medical and behavioral health care claims.
- ✓ Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Utilization.
- ✓ Turnover/retention rates.
- ✓ Accident/safety records.

The task of gathering and analyzing this data can seem overwhelming. Understanding where to focus your financial investment in the wellness program will require some analysis of the data. **Innovative Worksite Wellness will help to guide you in understanding the importance of these statistics and how to focus your efforts.**

*IMPORTANT: All data collected must be held to HIPAA standards and workplace wellness federal regulations. All information is viewed in aggregate form and may not be readily available to all members of the committee. Information may only be available based on the size of the organization and a minimum number of participants of 40 or more individuals. The committee must take all necessary measures to ensure that any data collected is kept 100% confidential.*

## Understanding the Employee Demographics

Understanding the characteristics of your workforce as defined by demographics such as average age, gender or ethnicity can be key to the success of your program and what you offer. For example, if the average age of your workforce is of the baby boomer generation, they may want to focus on health care consumerism, getting ready for retirement or self-care. Gen X'ers may find themselves caring for aging parents while raising their families and may have college-bound dependents. Millennials may need help with balancing their work/life commitments, raising young families and delivering healthy babies. Gen Z's grew up in a digital world and are just beginning their careers. They are burdened with student loan debt.

In addition to understanding age, cultural differences and ethnicity can help you understand why certain individuals may or may not participate. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services cites the importance of recognizing and addressing cultural differences, such as those that exist among health beliefs, practices, cultural and linguistic needs, a wellness program can be better tailored to meet the needs of a diverse population and ultimately produce positive health outcomes.<sup>3</sup>

## Employee Interest Surveys

Employee interest surveys can help serve as a roadmap. What do employees really want to accomplish? How do they feel about having a worksite wellness program? Do they feel they would be more likely to take care of their health if programs were offered during the workday? How do they want to receive the information?

Asking these questions, finding out what captures their attention and what your employees are thinking is a good place to start developing your program strategy.

Some health plan carriers offer wellness interest surveys, work with your wellness consultant on obtaining this.

# WELLNESS PROGRAM COMPONENTS



Now that you have the data, it is time to create a strategy. Wellness programs can range from classes in nutrition, worksite challenges, screenings or monthly wellness newsletters.

A comprehensive wellness program will include some or all of the following:

## Health and Wellness Fair

A great way to kick-off any wellness program is to host an annual wellness fair. Wellness fairs can be focused on a theme i.e. diet and fitness or stress management or can be more general in nature. Health fairs provide access to a variety of local resources that employees may have never been exposed to. Health clubs, massage centers, or smoothie bars may be willing to come on-site to help promote wellness in exchange for handing out their marketing materials. Health Fairs are also a good way to generate participation in the biometric screenings.

## Preventive Health Care Campaign

Focusing on the power of prevention can help educate employees on how to reduce their risk for serious health problems before it's too late. A campaign to promote preventive exams and age-appropriate screenings should be viewed as a priority.

## Yearly Biometric Screenings

According to the CDC, a biometric health screening is defined as the measure of physical characteristics such as height, weight, body mass index, blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose, that can be taken at the worksite and used as part of a workplace health benchmark. Establishing a baseline of employee health will help you evaluate changes in employee health status over time.

- ✓ Often a biometric screening in the workplace is the only time employees are screened.
- ✓ 75% of health care costs are attributed to chronic conditions that are preventable. Early identification of certain risk factors can prevent larger problems down the road.<sup>1</sup>
- ✓ The cost of biometric screenings are often covered by health insurance plans or wellness credits.
- ✓ Innovative Workplace Wellness will help you to work with your health plan to coordinate your event and recommend the right screenings for your employee population.



## Know Your Numbers Campaign

One education campaign of importance is to promote “Know Your Numbers.” Explaining key health numbers and making sure employees understand what their screening numbers mean is important. Depending on the provider of the service and the type of screening (fingerstick versus venipuncture) you may have an option for on-site education at the time of service. Innovative Workplace Wellness offers any employee who completes a biometric screening with a free one-on-one telephonic coaching session to explain the results.

## Health Risk Assessments

Many wellness programs offer employees the opportunity to complete a Health Risk Assessment (HRA). The HRA is a short, simple questionnaire about their current lifestyle and behaviors. Depending on the version used it can include medical history, current health status and lifestyle related questions. An assessment should aim to capture a picture of the many factors that influence employee health including individual lifestyle choices.<sup>3</sup>

## Health Education

Education programs demonstrate the benefits of incorporating new healthy behaviors.<sup>6</sup>

Proper education points out where changes are needed and where the employee needs to take personal action to improve their health.<sup>7</sup>

Educational sessions can be presented in various formats:

- ✓ On-site seminars
- ✓ Webinars
- ✓ Lunch ‘n Learn Sessions

Incorporating education sessions on a regular basis, at least bi-monthly will show employees a commitment to areas of need and interest. Following the Health Observance Calendar (see example on page 8) can help guide topics of general interest without targeting specific audiences.

## Challenges

Many organizations use wellness challenges to generate excitement and is a fun addition that will help increase employee awareness of the wellness initiatives, help cultivate healthy competition amongst employees while encouraging positive lifestyle behaviors. Challenges are successful when a supportive, positive climate of fun and camaraderie helps people to adopt or maintain a healthy way of living.<sup>5</sup>

Challenges should be designed to reward effort and make it possible for as many people to succeed as possible.

Depending on the type of challenge offered, it is important to not overwhelm your employees with too many challenges or implement challenges that are too long or too complex.

Several popular ideas for worksite challenges:

- ✓ Weight Loss Challenge
- ✓ Mindfulness or Positivity Challenge
- ✓ 10,000 Steps a Day Challenge
- ✓ Sleep Challenge



### **Customized Wellness Websites or Portals**

A wellness website is a great way to engage and promote your employees on your workplace wellness initiatives. Innovative can create a personalized branded wellness website which features event notices, wellness challenges, blogs, recipes, meal plans, fitness videos and more.

Wellness portals are used when incentive programs, activity tracking or confidential information is stored. There are an overwhelming number of vendors who provide portals and the Innovative Wellness Team can make recommendations based on the needs and future growth of your program.

### **Financial Wellness Programs**

A financial wellness program is intended to educate and engage employees on their financial well-being. There are many ways to approach this, such as educational programs, 1:1 coaching and wellness portals, but it is considered a very important wellness program offering. Financial wellness can impact an employee's emotional well-being, physical health, stress level, morale, productivity, absenteeism and presenteeism.

### **Lifestyle Coaching**

Lifestyle coaching focuses on topics such as exercise, nutrition, and stress management. Lifestyle coaching combines interview skills and goal-setting strategies to help individuals manage their behaviors.

### **Smoking Cessation Programs**

A smoking cessation program can help to lower the risk of cancer and other serious health problems in employees. A smoking cessation program can include tobacco coaching and nicotine replacement therapy.

### **Chronic Condition Coaching**

Chronic condition coaches help to manage conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, lung disease, arthritis, and many more. Chronic condition coaches help employees to live a healthier life.

### **Offer Incentives**

To encourage participation in wellness programs, many employers will offer incentives to employees who participate in different programs. Some common incentives include:

- ✓ Health plan premium reductions
- ✓ HSA contributions
- ✓ Gift Cards
- ✓ Time Off
- ✓ Merchandise

# TRUSTED RESOURCES

Eating Healthy	Managing Stress
<p><b>USDA ChooseMyPlate.gov</b> Practical information and tips to help Americans build healthier diets. <a href="http://www.Choosemyplate.gov">www.Choosemyplate.gov</a></p> <p><b>American Heart Association</b> Information on heart healthy eating, healthy livings and healthy recipes. <a href="http://www.heart.org">www.heart.org</a></p> <p><b>American Diabetes Association</b> Wide range of diabetes-related topics, meal planning guides and recipes. <a href="http://www.diabetes.org">www.diabetes.org</a></p> <p><b>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention</b> Helpful resources on diet and nutrition. <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition">www.cdc.gov/nutrition</a></p>	<p><b>National Institute of Mental Health</b> Information on stress and other mental health issues. <a href="http://www.nimh.nih.gov">www.nimh.nih.gov</a></p> <p><b>Anxiety and Depression Association of America</b> Information on improving quality of life for those with anxiety, depression and other mental health disorders. <a href="http://www.adaa.org">www.adaa.org</a></p>
Staying Active	Quitting Tobacco
<p><b>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention</b> Physical Activity Basics, worksite walking program guide and resources on exercise. <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity">www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity</a></p> <p><b>National Association for Health and Fitness</b> Resources for promoting physical activity. <a href="http://www.physicalfitness.org/resources">www.physicalfitness.org/resources</a></p>	<p><b>American Lung Association</b> Tools, tips and support for quitting tobacco use. <a href="http://www.lung.org/stop-smoking">www.lung.org/stop-smoking</a></p> <p><b>American Cancer Society</b> Tips and tools for quitting smoking. <a href="http://www.cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco/guide-quitting-smoking.html">www.cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco/guide-quitting-smoking.html</a></p> <p><b>SmokeFree.gov</b> Information and resources for quitting smoking. <a href="http://www.smokefree.gov">www.smokefree.gov</a></p>

# NATIONAL HEALTH OBSERVANCES CALENDAR

Innovative Workplace Wellness recommends following a health observances calendar to raise awareness about health topics and each month will support your wellness program with monthly newsletters and will steer educational seminars, webinars and on-site activities.

## INNOVATIVE BENEFIT PLANNING WELLBEING CALENDAR



<b>January</b> New Year, New You! 	<b>February</b> American Heart Month 	<b>March</b> National Nutrition Month 
<b>April</b> Stress Awareness Month 	<b>May</b> National Physical Fitness and Sports Month 	<b>June</b> National Men's Health Awareness Month 
<b>July</b> UV Safety Month 	<b>August</b> Family Vacation Safety 	<b>September</b> National Preparedness Month 
<b>October</b> National Breast Cancer Awareness Month 	<b>November</b> American Diabetes Month and Great American Smoke out 	<b>December</b> Healthy for the Holidays 

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# WELLNESS ACTIVITIES

The following is a list of suggested activities based on our monthly themes, below is an example how you can create monthly activities around it.

January	February	March
<p>Announce the plans for the year – what’s in the works!</p> <p>Jump-start the new year with a New Year’s Weight Loss Challenge (8 to 12 weeks)</p> <p>TIP SHEET: How to set realistic goals</p>	<p>Promote Heart Health Month</p> <p>National “Go Red” Day is Friday, February 7 – encourage employees to wear red</p> <p>Host a CPR Class On-site</p> <p>TIP SHEET: Tips for Keeping your heart healthy</p>	<p>Nutrition Education Seminars</p> <p>Vending Machine Make-over</p> <p>Healthy Snack Day</p> <p>TIP SHEET: My Plate – Portion Control</p>
April	May	June
<p>Stress Awareness Seminar – Promote your EAP</p> <p>Plan a Relaxation Day</p> <p>TIP SHEET: Stress Relief</p>	<p>Organize a team and walk/run in a charity event</p> <p>30-Day Spring Walking Challenge</p> <p>TIP SHEET:</p>	<p>Wear Blue Day for Men’s Health Awareness</p> <p>TIP SHEET: Men’s Age Appropriate Screenings</p>
July	August	September
<p>Host a Skin Cancer Awareness Seminar</p> <p>Distribute Sunscreen Samples</p> <p>Keep your pets cool! Summer Health and Safety</p> <p>TIP SHEET: Sun Safety Tips</p>	<p>Family Vacation Safety</p> <p>Raffle Tickets for a Family Day at a local Park (Waterpark or Theme Park)</p> <p>TIP SHEET: Fun Vacation Tips – Secrets for a Fabulous time with your Family.</p>	<p>Host an Emergency Preparedness Seminar</p> <p>Conduct Fire and Safety Drills</p> <p>Back to School Tips</p> <p>TIP SHEET: Important Items to Keep On-Hand in the Event of an Emergency</p>
October	November	December
<p>Go Pink Dress Down Day</p> <p>Get a team together to join a Breast Cancer Awareness Walk</p> <p>Host on-site Flu Shot Clinic</p> <p>TIP SHEET: Women’s Health Screening Recommendations</p>	<p>Host Diabetes Jeopardy Session</p> <p>Great American Smokeout – distribute lollipops or chewing gum – encourage smoking cessation coaching program</p> <p>TIP SHEET: Diabetes Prevention</p>	<p>Healthy for the Holidays</p> <p>Handwashing Demos</p> <p>Free hand sanitizer giveaways</p> <p>TIP SHEET: Preventing Cold and Flu</p>

# NEXT STEPS

A wellness program is one of the most important elements of a successful workplace. Wellness programs provide employees with incentives, tools, social support, and strategies to adopt and maintain healthy lifestyle behaviors. Healthy behaviors can lead to lower health risks which leads to less chronic conditions and lower claim costs. Studies show that employees are more likely to be on the job and performing well when they are in optimal health.

At Innovative, we provide you with more than 30 years of experience implementing successful wellness programs. Our in-house team of professionals will work hand-in-hand with your organization to design and implement customized wellness programs that will improve your population's health and ultimately lower claims costs. If you have questions about any of the steps necessary to implement a wellness program or any of the options, Innovative is here to assist.



# REFERENCES

1. The Art & Science of Building a Results-Oriented Wellness Program – WELCOA’s Seven Benchmarks: Beginner, WELCOA Institute, 2015. [www.WELCOA.org](http://www.WELCOA.org)
2. The 10 Secrets of Successful Worksite Wellness Teams, David Hunnicutt, Phd, WELCOA’s 7 Benchmarks. Benchmark #2: Creating a Cohesive Wellness Team. [www.WELCOA.org](http://www.WELCOA.org)
3. Cultural Competency. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/health\\_ equity/culturalRelevance.html](http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/health_equity/culturalRelevance.html)
4. Workplace Health Promotion Initiatives – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <https://www.cdc.gov/workplacehealthpromotion/initiatives/resource-center/index.html>
5. Workplace Health Model – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <https://www.cdc.gov/workplacehealthpromotion/model/index.html>
6. Corporate Wellness Magazine.com - Workplace Wellness Challenges – Fun, Effective, and Free! <https://www.corporatewellnessmagazine.com/article/workplace-wellness-challenges>
7. The Role of Education in Health and Wellness Programs, Jay B. Rea, CorporateWellnessMagazine.com <https://www.corporatewellnessmagazine.com/article/the-role-of-education-in-health>
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