



Wellness That Works for Your Organization

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Many companies and organizations are hesitant to provide wellness and preventive services for their employees because of the belief that there is very little return on investment (ROI). When many of these programs were first introduced in the workplace it was by executives who wanted to provide “perks” to keep or attract employees and the expense initially seemed to be secondary. In the mid 80’s the movement to increase workplace wellness became a national phenomenon as a new way to affect the “bottom line” by keeping people at work and healthier; thereby increasing productivity and the decreasing use of health benefits.

During this time, a significant number of large businesses adopted wellness programs, built fitness centers and incentivized employees for developing positive lifestyle behaviors. Some of those same employers formed consortiums to share ideas and program development functions. The Wellness Council of America (WELCOA) was one such not-for-profit organization (NPO) that continues to be in operation today. Their core mission provides sound reasoning for the current prevention services programs offered by corporations today.

- **Healthcare costs are an issue of significant concern.**
- **A healthy workforce is essential to America’s continued growth and prosperity.**
- **Much of the illness in the U.S. is directly preventable.**
- **The workplace is an ideal setting to address health and well-being.**
- **Workplace wellness programs can transform corporate culture and change lives.**

The design of a meaningful health promotion and illness prevention program can only be effective if the services provided are applicable to the population of individuals receiving the services. For those services to be of high-value, and worth the cost of providing them, the information gathered must be useful in the pursuit of improved health.

Before embarking on a preventive services program certain information about the organization’s population make-up should be investigated. Parameters such as age and gender, as

well as the physical requirements of the various job descriptions can determine what services would be most cost-effective and beneficial to offer.

For example, a population of workers that are 50 and over might benefit from Type-II Diabetes and heart disease testing. Whereas, a population of workers in their 20s, might be better served by providing a guided exercise program. While a mostly female group may benefit from a group weight loss program if the majority of them are overweight. Male workers with poor eating habits and stressful working conditions would be best served by performing lipid panels and liver enzyme testing.

For programs to be successful they must be targeted to the population, designed to provide the most useful information and be of high-value. In addition, employees receiving these services need to be able to use the results to effect change in their lives. Improved results indicate improved health. 🍏

For more information on corporate wellness programs for your office visit <http://www.welcoa.org/presskit/index.php>
