Strategic Spotlight: Containing Healthcare Costs
Proven Strategies for Success in the Public Sector

Strategy: Wellness Programs

What are Wellness Programs?
Proactive programs that educate employees about healthy behaviors in hopes of improving overall employee health. Examples include self-help educational material, online information portals, individual counseling sessions with health experts, and other programs at the workplace that encourage a healthier lifestyle.

Promoting Wellness
77% of Respondents are Promoting Wellness

Of those promoting wellness, how many would recommend it to others?
- 65% Very likely
- 25% Somewhat likely
- 10% Neutral
- 0% Unlikely

Of those promoting wellness, how important is this technique to their overall cost management efforts?
- 24% Essential
- 24% Very Important
- 24% Important
- 21% Somewhat
- 7% Not Important

Comments on Promoting Wellness
It Works “Our wellness program reduces health costs” “Programs have proven to reduce healthcare claims”

Low Cost “Easy strategy to lower healthcare costs” “These can usually be handled at little or no cost”

Improves Work Environment “It is a great culture improvement with financial benefits” “Promoting healthy behaviors makes employees aware and empowered”

Future Benefits “Decreases long-term medical costs and reduces sick time/absenteeism” “If only one stroke is avoided the small cost will be worth it”
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Of those Not Promoting Wellness, Why have you Not Used this Technique?

23% Not Using this Technique

Some top reasons why not using:
- 43% Not enough staff and/or time to implement
- 17% Potential benefits do not outweigh the costs
- 9% Not enough information to determine potential benefits

Comments on Not Promoting Wellness

Employee Engagement “These are popular to implement but difficult to keep the momentum and interest”

Incentives “There has to be a monetary penalty or gain in order for employees to jump aboard”

Measurement “These are fairly low cost and probably do some good, but it is difficult to quantify”

Planning Stage “In the process of getting information” “We are looking at doing that for the upcoming year”

Patience “Early implementation stage” “Have not noticed benefits to this program yet”

Summary & Key Points

• Promoting healthy behavior at the workplace is a widely used technique to improve employee health and ultimately save money on healthcare costs.

• Assess your employee population to understand where to focus your activities and promotions. Sources such as biometric evaluations, claims analysis, and employee surveys are all helpful in this regard.

• Continuous workplace education and communication are required to ensure momentum and keep the programs top-of-mind with employees.

• Incentives are a popular way to encourage healthy behavior. Common incentives include cash payments, vacation days, or reduced insurance premiums. Non-monetary incentives such as rewards, public recognition, and inter-departmental competitions can also be used.

• In order to effectively track the success of your efforts you should know the metrics you will monitor before you commence with any program.

To learn more about this study and to download the full report visit: www.gfoaconsulting.org/researchreports

Other Strategic Spotlight Topics Available
Dependent Verification | Increase Deductibles | Increase Co-pays | Self-Funded Benefits | Promote Wellness | Voluntary Benefits | Right-Sourcing Enrollment | Shift Benefits Communication Expense | Promote Section 125 Plans | Benefit Waiver Program | Preventive Treatment | Health Plan Redesign | Cooperative Purchasing |