



Worksite Wellness in North Dakota

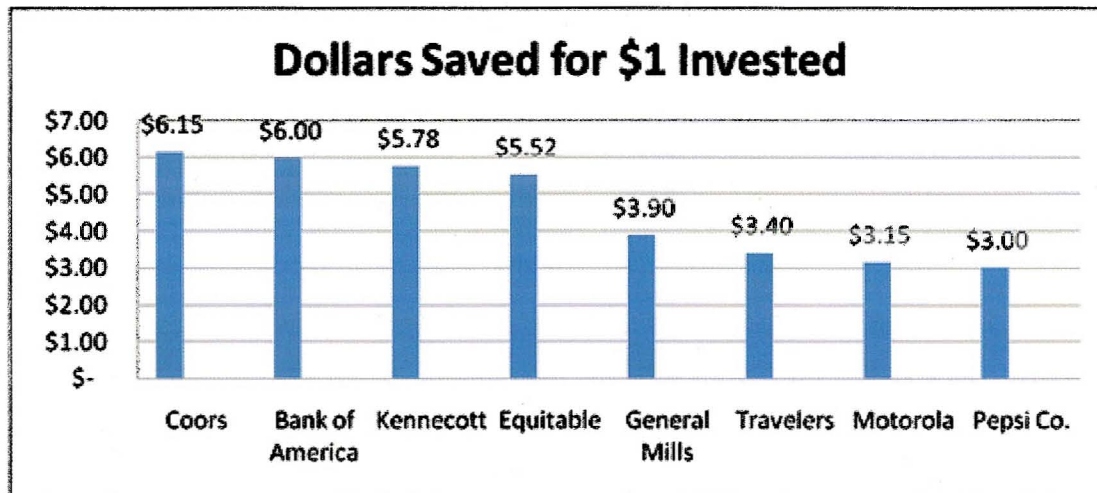
The North Dakota Worksite Wellness initiative was launched in August of 2009 as a collaborative effort between Dakota Medical Foundation, BCBSND Caring Foundation and Healthy North Dakota. The goal is to get more North Dakota businesses and organizations to offer and participate in worksite wellness programs. Current efforts include the hiring of a full time director and conducting a statewide survey in cooperation with the North Dakota Chamber of Commerce to determine the level of active worksite wellness and health promotion activities currently in place. In addition, we are looking for perceived needs in program offerings and resources. A web-based resource and tool kit is also being developed to provide an information sharing tool for North Dakota businesses wanting to start or enhance wellness programs at their worksite. Finally, a statewide summit is being planned for the fall of 2010 to bring together experts in the field and others interested in worksite programs.

Why Worksite Wellness?

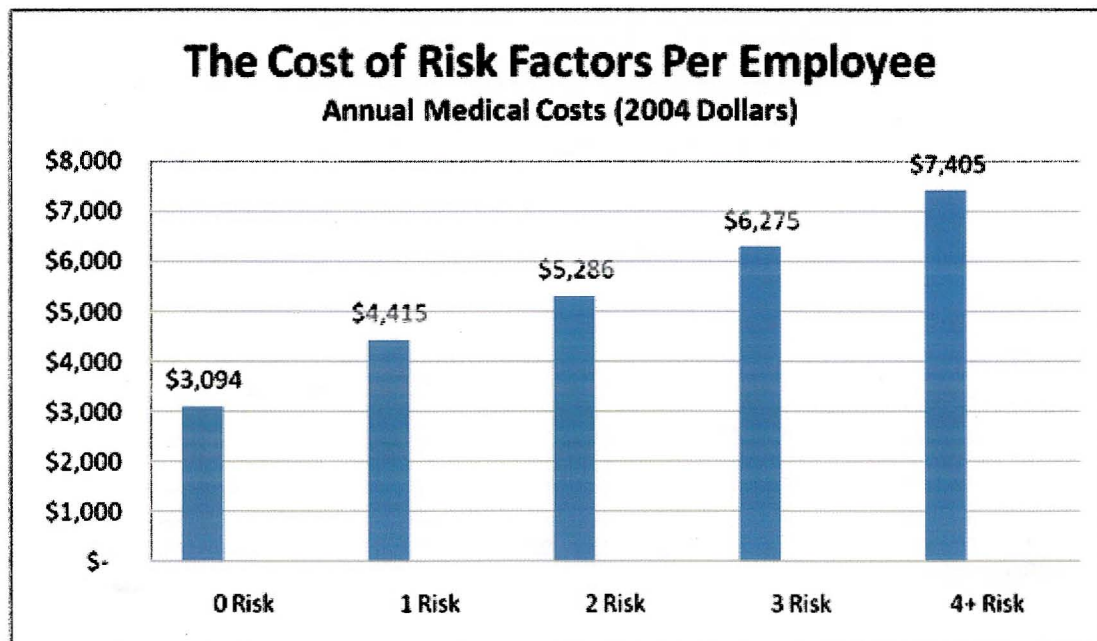
The concern for employee wellness is an increasing trend for businesses across the country as well as North Dakota. With increasing health care costs, rising obesity rates, poor nutrition habits and decreasing physical activity levels, employers are looking for answers to reverse these trends. The average American spends close to 50 hours per week on the job, therefore employers have a huge opportunity to impact the health of their employees by integrating policy changes, offering preventative services, hosting screening programs and creating a culture of wellness at the worksite.

- At least 50% of an organization's health care costs are driven by modifiable lifestyle related behaviors such as smoking, poor diet and lack of exercise.
- The average reduction in health plan costs, sick leave, disability costs and workers compensation is 25 percent for a well designed worksite wellness program.
- Worksite wellness programs should address risky behaviors that can help employees eat healthier, increase physical activity levels, reduce stress, lower blood pressure and cholesterol and quit smoking. Wellness programs need to focus on assisting employees to achieve and maintain their optimal health status.

- Comprehensive worksite wellness programs focused on changing lifestyle behavior have been shown to yield a \$3 to \$6 return on investment for each dollar invested. It typically takes about three to five years after the initial program to realize these savings. Examples of some corporations ROI are listed below.



- The following chart demonstrates the estimated costs associated with lifestyle risk factors incurred by employees. Obviously, offering programs and services to reduce an individual's risk factors can make a significant impact to an organization's bottom line on health care costs alone. Risk factors include; smoking, poor diet, high blood pressure and obesity.



What Does This Mean For North Dakota?

North Dakota has an opportunity to position itself as a leader in worksite wellness programming by educating businesses and organizations across the state on the benefits of implementing worksite wellness and health promotion programs.

Some information specific to North Dakota includes:

- According to a 2002 ND Department of Health survey, over 80% of North Dakota employers believe in the benefits of worksite wellness programs but want more support and guidance on worksite wellness.
- A 2008 statewide consumer interest survey indicated 75% of North Dakotans believe preventative services save money in the long run
- Broad review of comprehensive worksite wellness programs by the American Journal of Health Promotion showed that implementing worksite wellness program resulted in :
 - 27% improvement in sick leave and absenteeism
 - 26% improvement in healthcare costs
 - 32% improvement in worker's compensation and disability claim
- The Milken Foundation estimates there is a \$2.1 billion loss in ND due to lost workdays and decreased productivity
- Modifiable lifestyle choices cost ND over \$550 million annually in medical expenditures.
- Physically active people in ND can save up to \$500 per year in medical costs
- According to an East Carolina University health calculation tool, the results of physical inactivity alone in North Dakota are staggering...
 - Physical inactivity is costing ND \$980,448,191
 - Medical care costs \$136,902,191
 - Workers comp costs \$2,128,435
 - Lost productivity \$841,418,191
 - If 5% of ND became more physically active it could save an estimated \$49,022,441

For further information about worksite wellness programs in North Dakota please contact:

Pete Seljevold, MS
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Essential Steps to Start a Successful Worksite Wellness Program

Interested in starting a wellness program at your worksite? Many businesses are, but are not sure where to begin. Although every worksite is different and program offerings may vary, there are a few steps that are essential to starting and sustaining a successful program.

1 Acquire Management and Senior Level Support –

Acquiring management support is critical to the overall success of any program. Not only is support critical, but getting the CEO and upper management actively involved in the program goes along way in setting the tone and modeling healthy behavior to all employees to create a culture of wellness.

2 Create an Organized Wellness Team –

By gathering a group of wellness “champions” at the worksite your program can become even more effective. Under the direction of a good leader, the power of a group increases your creativity, lightens the workload, enhances communication and demonstrates the diversity of commitment within your organization.

3 Collect Data to Direct a Strategic Wellness Plan --

Data monitoring is a crucial, but often overlooked, component of a successful program. Data collection is important for several reasons including, justifying a program, evaluating changes in productivity and health status, gauging employee interest and participation and insuring sustainability.

4 Design an Effective Annual Worksite Wellness Operating Plan-

The operating plan will become the key document to guide the program. Timelines, budgets, work assignments, marketing, evaluation and overall mission of the program will all be addressed in a well crafted operating plan.

5 Choose Appropriate Health Promotion Interventions-

Identifying appropriate intervention programs is a key component of a successful worksite wellness program. Intervention programs can include things such as weight management classes, smoking cessation programs, blood pressure screenings, education events and physical activity opportunities. Each worksite is unique and selecting which intervention programs to offer will depend on the type of business it is, demographics of the employees, employee interest and the worksite wellness budget.

6 Create a Supportive, Health-Promoting Environment-

Reviewing policies, employee benefits, food options and safety procedures are all examples of opportunities businesses have to create a culture of wellness at the workplace. For example, would it make sense to allow flexible scheduling to allow employees time to exercise during the work day?

7 Evaluate Program for Effectiveness and Health Outcomes-

Evaluating your program periodically is essential to make sure it is doing what you intended it to do and allow you to make changes. Looking at such things as participation, satisfaction levels, behavior changes, biometric changes, productivity and return on investment will help you determine what components are working and what needs attention.

Information adapted from:

WELCOA Absolute Advantage; Volume 6, Number 1 http://www.welcoa.org/www/pdf/aa_6.1_novdec06.pdf
NWWA Comprehensive Worksite Wellness Program Developmental Framework

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Tapping Into Worksite Wellness – (Reprinted from Concordia College eNews January 2010)

Let your employer help with your New Year's health resolutions for 2010. Worksite wellness programs, offered by many companies, can help you get off to a great start with everything from health assessments to reduced rates at health clubs. Look into these offerings to improve your physical and mental health. In other words, get in better shape and reduce your stress – all thanks to work.

Pete Seljevoid '84 is the worksite wellness director for Healthy North Dakota. With nearly 25 years of experience in the health and fitness industry, he now works to encourage more North Dakota businesses and organizations to offer worksite wellness programs.

"The average American now spends upward of 50 hours per week at their job – the majority of their waking hours," Seljevoid says. "Therefore, employers have a huge opportunity to impact the health status of their employees by implementing policy changes and providing services to create a culture of wellness."

Worksite wellness programs can be structured in a variety of ways, based on the needs of employees and employers. Ask at your company about screenings and assessments, wellness education programs, subsidized preventative medical exams and other programs designed to help keep you healthy.

Of course, you'll still have to do the work.

"Although the services can be provided by an employer, a certain amount of personal responsibility must be taken by the employee to take advantage of those services, as well as a willingness to take care of themselves," Seljevoid says.

Seljevoid offers the following tips:

1. Attend an annual health screening and meet regularly with your doctor to track your health status, manage medications and identify disease in its earliest stages.
2. Schedule time in your weekly calendar to make exercise a priority.
3. Watch what you eat. "For most people, even eating just a few calories less per day and increasing fruit and vegetable consumption can have a significant impact on your health status," he says.
4. Get on a quit plan if you smoke.
5. Manage your mental health. "Stress, anxiety and depression are things that can rob us of productivity at work and home and lead to other negative behaviors," he says.
6. Take advantage of your company's worksite wellness program or encourage your organization to start one.

For More Information on Worksite Wellness Programs in North Dakota, Please Contact:

Pete Seljevoid - Healthy North Dakota Worksite Wellness Director

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WORKSITE WELLNESS 101

Creating Healthy Work Environments in North Dakota

Pete Seljevold MS. MGMT

Healthy North Dakota Worksite Wellness Director



- Four decades of research has established an irrefutable connection between lifestyle and health

- Unhealthy lifestyles lead to chronic disease – smoking, poor nutrition, physical inactivity and alcohol consumption account for 800,000 deaths annually
- About 108 million people in the US have at least one chronic disease such as heart disease, diabetes, asthma, hypertension or osteoarthritis
- 50% of premature deaths in the US are related to modifiable lifestyle choices
- Chronic disease related to lifestyle account for 70% of the nation's medical costs

Courtesy Dr. David Huntcutt, MD, PhD

Lifestyle and Medical Costs

- Typical annual medical costs for a large employer \$8500 annually
 - \$2.4 trillion nationally
- Lifestyle factors may be responsible for as much as \$3,060 annually
 - \$864 billion nationally

Lifestyle and Productivity

- Employees who are overweight, unfit, smoke or stressed out have higher levels of absenteeism and presenteeism

- Employees spend nearly 50 hrs. per week at work
- Therefore employers have a huge opportunity to make a significant impact on the health of their employees by implementing policy changes, and providing services to create a culture of wellness.

- Over 80% of North Dakota employers believe in the benefits of worksite wellness programs but want more support and guidance on worksite wellness.

» ND Dept of Health 2002

- 75% of North Dakotans believe preventative services save money in the long run

» Statewide Consumer Survey 2008

Impact in North Dakota

- \$2.1 billion loss in ND due to lost workdays and decreased productivity
 - » Milken Foundation 2007
- Modifiable lifestyle choices cost North Dakotans over \$550 million annually in medical expenditures
 - » Milken Foundation 2008
- Physically active people can save up to \$500 per year in medical costs
 - » Milken Foundation 2007

Does it Really Work?

- Research indicates that investing in a worksite wellness program can produce a return on investment of \$2 to \$10 for every \$1 invested over time.
- Broad review of comprehensive worksite wellness programs showed:
 - **27%** improvement in sick leave and absenteeism
 - **26%** improvement in healthcare costs
 - **32%** improvement in worker's compensation and disability claim

» American Journal of Health Promotion 2005

What Works

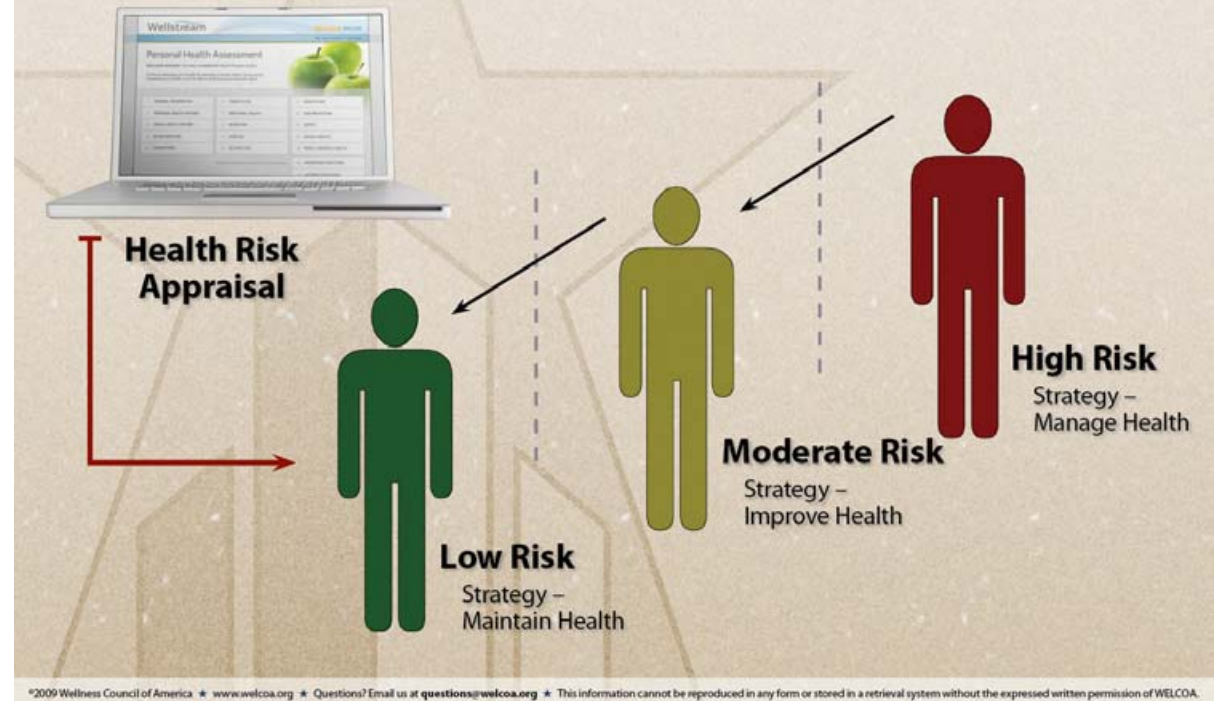
- The best programs measure health conditions and interests, help people set goals, train them in the skills they need to improve health practices and provide opportunities to maintain those behaviors

Priority #1

- Health Risk Appraisals
& Health Screening



Programming Paradigm



Courtesy Dr. David Hunnicut WELCOA

- “Research indicates that the current natural progression of things – without health interventions – is that people move from low risk to high risk as they age....”

– Dr Dee Edington

Priority #2

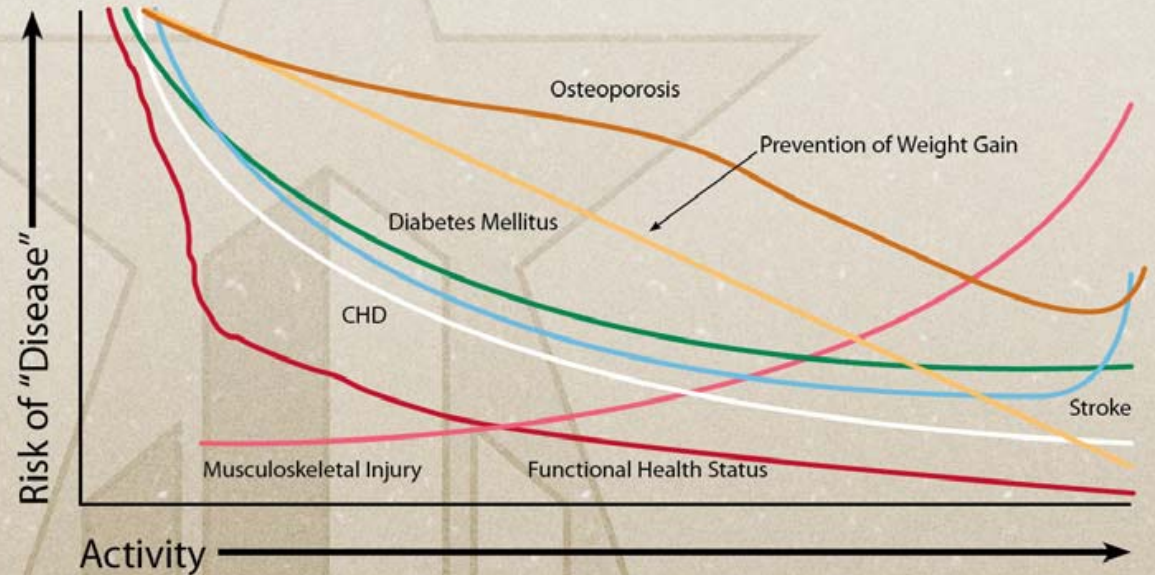
Increase Physical Activity

“By walking 30-45 minutes on most – preferably all – days of the week, you will delay the onset of disability by 10-12 years

Dr Steve Aldana

The culprit & the Cure

Physical Activity & Health



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Courtesy Dr. David Hunnicut WELCOA

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 - Workers comp costs \$2,128,435
 - Lost productivity \$841,418,191
 - If 5% of ND became more physically active could save an estimated \$49,022,441

Priority #3

Eat Fewer Calories

- “Reducing calorie consumption by 100kcal/day was projected to eliminate 71.2 % cases of overweight or obesity and reduce productivity losses by \$45.7 billion per year

– Dall, et al
Journal of Health Promotion - Vol 23

Questions...

Comments...

