



Innovative
WORKPLACE WELLNESS



STARTING AND SUSTAINING A WORKPLACE WELLNESS PROGRAM

Part 1: Developing a Wellness Committee

GETTING STARTED

Congratulations on your decision to implement or improve your existing wellness program.

Innovative Workplace Wellness is here to help you get started. This manual is part one of a “starter kit” and provides an outline of how to create a Wellness Committee 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

As mentioned, this manual is part one of a starter kit. Please reference Part 2 for “Developing a Program”. For the health of your employees and your business, we look forward to assisting you.

Innovative Workplace Wellness
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THE IMPORTANCE OF A WELLNESS COMMITTEE

A wellness committee is one of the most important elements of a successful workplace wellness program. The committee is the wellness liaison between leadership and the workforce. Committee members implement worksite wellness activities and events that help encourage employees to adopt healthy lifestyle behaviors.

Wellness committee members gather feedback from other employees about their interest in new wellness-related programs and their satisfaction with existing programs. They help boost the wellness programs' chances of success by ensuring wellness program goals are aligned with company goals and are blended with company culture and objectives.

Wellness committee members are the voice, the cheerleaders, the champions and the promoters of successful workplace wellness initiatives.



**“ALONE WE CAN DO SO LITTLE,
TOGETHER WE CAN DO SO MUCH.”**

- Helen Keller

YOUR WORKPLACE WELLNESS COMMITTEE CAN HELP BRING ABOUT THREE TYPES OF HEALTHY CHANGES

1 Individual Changes

Your wellness committee can provide education, opportunities for skill building, and engaging activities to help individual employees make healthy changes – such as taking the steps instead of the elevator and choosing healthier food options.

2 Organizational Changes

Your wellness committee can help bring about new organizational policies and practices such as a tobacco-free workplace policy or cafeteria and/or vending policies.

3 Interpersonal (social) Changes

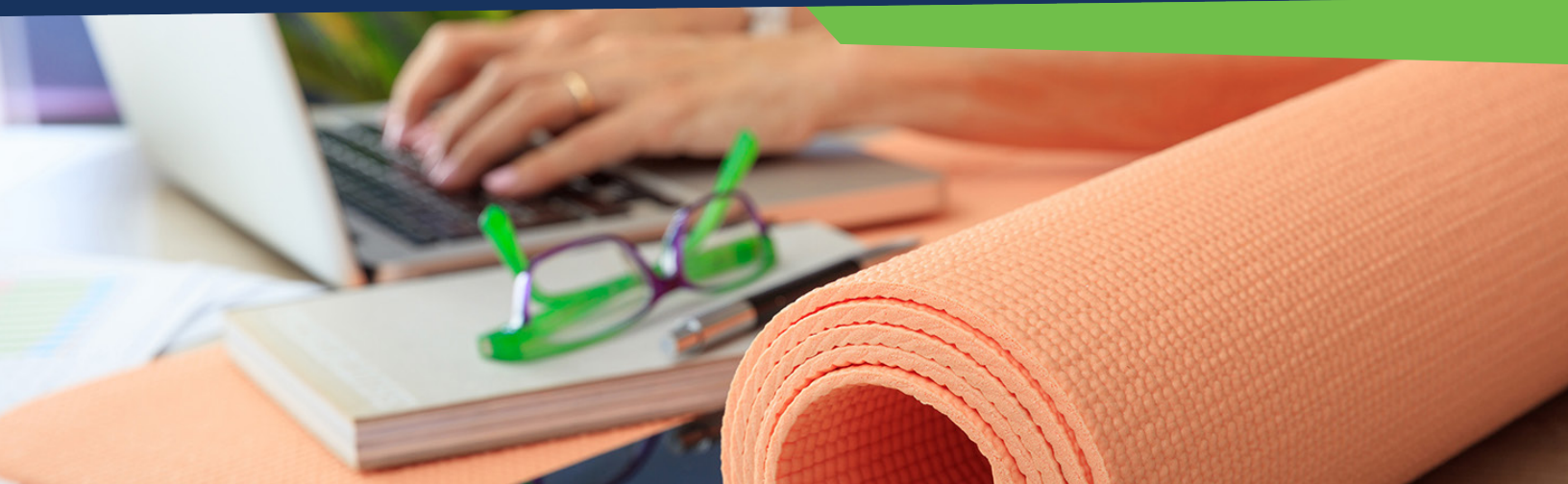
Your wellness committee can help to provide opportunities for groups of employees to support each other in making healthy changes. These changes may include, for example, managing weight as part of a team in a worksite challenge, or joining with fellow employees to walk together during breaks or come together for a cause and raise money for a charitable organization through physical activity events.

HOW A WELLNESS COMMITTEE WORKS

A Wellness Committee:

- ✓ Is a group of employees from all levels of the organization who are empowered by senior management to plan activities to support good health and productivity in the workplace for themselves and their co-workers.
- ✓ Communicates information about health risks and opportunities for health improvement to employees.
- ✓ Sets up open lines of communication between the wellness committee and employees.
- ✓ Engages employees in individual and group activities that are fun and rewarding.
- ✓ Supports workplace policies and practices that improve health and productivity.
- ✓ Determines the activities appropriate for the employees and the business.
- ✓ Evaluates feedback from employees on the activities offered.
- ✓ Serves as a workplace wellness champion.
- ✓ Supports senior management and leadership in achieving the organizations wellness goals.
- ✓ Helps to keep wellness program offerings consistent and available to all employees; is aware of business needs, work shifts, job constraints, and individuals with disabilities.

STEPS TO GET STARTED WITH A WELLNESS COMMITTEE



STEP 1: ANNOUNCE THE FORMATION OF A WELLNESS COMMITTEE.

If this is the first time a wellness committee is being introduced, present the purpose of a wellness committee and let employees in your workplace know that a committee is being formed.

If your committee has been in existence for a while, take time annually to reevaluate the individual roles and reintroduce the purpose of the committee as you seek new members to replace those whose terms have ended, or may not be able to continue their role due to other priorities.

STEP 2: CHOOSING WELLNESS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Wellness committee members should include individuals from different areas and levels of the organization. Wellness committee members certainly do not need to be in perfect health. They should, however, be committed to both taking steps to adopt or maintain a healthy lifestyle and encourage others to do the same.

A wellness committee member should be:

- ✓ Personally interested in health.
- ✓ Aware of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.
- ✓ Well respected and trusted by others.
- ✓ Dependable and hard-working.
- ✓ Able to get tasks done on time.
- ✓ A good communicator.
- ✓ Creative.
- ✓ Enthusiastic.
- ✓ Willing to learn about wellness and behavior change.
- ✓ Respectful of the needs, wants, interests, and expectations of others.
- ✓ Sincerely committed to helping others enhance their quality of life.
- ✓ Willing and able to commit the time necessary to achieve the wellness committee goals, without compromise to their position or work for the business.



How Many People Should be on the Wellness Committee?

There is no right or wrong answer to how large your committee should be; however, it is recommended that the wellness team be big enough to represent the entire organization, but small enough to be manageable.

If there are multiple locations in the organization, it is important to include the ideas and input from these sites. If your organization is large you may want to consider a Wellness Steering Committee and sub-committees that represent each site. A Wellness Steering Committee may have a different role and may be tasked with directing the overall program, whereas sub-committees, or local site committees follow the lead of the steering committee and work on implementing and meeting the objectives of the wellness plan.

Identify the Wellness Committee Members

Wellness committee members can be individuals who are pre-selected, recruited, or volunteers. Often a combination of all works best. For best results, consider the following when building a wellness committee:

- ✓ Diversity is key. Members should represent all levels of the company.
- ✓ It is important to have formal representation from core strategic areas:
 - Human Resources and/or employee benefits representation will help the committee to obtain flexibility in scheduling, will ensure that all employees

are represented equally and works directly with your wellness consultant.

- Communications or marketing staff members will know how to get the word out to employees about the program and activities.
 - Safety or security staff members will help to ensure that events are set up correctly and do not interfere with any worksite entrances or present any hazards to employees.
 - Finance staff members will help to keep a budget and ensure that proper handling of funds, funding sources and documentation is kept.
 - Managers (from various areas) will ensure that operations continue to run smoothly for the business and ensure proper coverage of phones and departmental deadlines.
 - Administration and support staff will help ensure that activities and events planned by the committee will have organizational appeal.
- ✓ Obtain approval of all potential committee members supervisors before formally announcing their membership. Being a wellness committee member takes time and effort and it's important that their supervisor supports their efforts, is aware of their work assignments and can be certain that the extra responsibilities do not impact their job performance.
 - ✓ Consider having committee members assigned for a term. Typically, a term is based on the program year. Program years are determined by a number of different factors, but most organizations tie the wellness plan year to the health plan benefit year.

STEP 3: SCHEDULE AND HOST THE FIRST MEETING

Choose a time convenient for all committee members. If possible, allow for 1-1/2 hours for the first meeting.

Sample agenda for the first meeting includes the following:

- ✓ Thank you to committee members for agreeing to serve.
- ✓ Introductions of all committee members.
- ✓ Choose a scribe to take meeting minutes.
- ✓ Define committee structure, role and responsibilities for each participant.
 - Chairperson
 - Co-chairperson
 - Marketing/Communications
 - Treasurer
 - Secretary
 - Committee Members (other)
- ✓ Establish the meeting schedule – regularly scheduled monthly or bi-monthly meetings. It is recommended that the committee meet monthly to demonstrate to the organization that wellness is a priority. Agree to the date, time and length of future meetings and schedule them in advance.
- ✓ Review the overall plans for wellness and how the mission of the wellness team will be to align the organization's vision and values with employee wellness.
- ✓ Discuss a name for the committee and possible branding of the wellness initiative.
- ✓ Provide a wellness program strategy and tactical implementation plan.
- ✓ Distribute year-at-a-glance calendar of nationally recognized wellness observances. Discuss ways to incorporate the monthly themes into the wellness program. (See examples of monthly themes in Innovative's Part 2).
- ✓ Develop an appropriate communication plan to promote the wellness program.

Committee Member's Roles and Responsibilities

When a committee divides up the roles and responsibilities the tasks will not seem so overwhelming. Keep in mind you will need each member to commit to their roles as suggested below:

- ✓ Chairperson
 - The chairperson is typically an HR or Benefits representative who has authority to make decisions on behalf of the organization and who is working with your wellness consultant. This individual will ensure that all approvals have been obtained and senior management is informed. This individual will be aware of the funding needed and sources of funding for program offerings. This individual will set the monthly agenda.
 - The Chairperson will have access to aggregate employee screening and benefits utilization data and will guide the direction and planning of the committee based on the needs of the employees.
- ✓ Co-chairperson
 - The co-chairperson can also be a member of the HR and/or Benefits team. This individual can step-in when the Chairperson is not available and can assist with setting agenda for monthly meeting.
- ✓ Marketing/Communications
 - The Marketing/Communications rep will ensure that all email and printed communications are drafted, approved and distributed.
- ✓ Treasurer
 - Maintains and tracks the budget for the wellness initiative.
- ✓ Secretary
 - Records monthly meeting minutes and assists with distribution of communications and agendas.
- ✓ Committee Members (other)
 - All committee members, including those named with specific duties, have an important role and are critical to the success of the program. The committee members should be committed for a minimum of one year. They are aware of the organization's priorities and mission, vision of the wellness program.



Developing a Vision Statement

The wellness vision statement will help you set goals, make decisions, focus on priorities and stay committed. The vision statement should be no more than a one or two sentence summary of what you'd like to accomplish with the worksite wellness program.

Sample Vision Statements

Below are sample statements. You can choose one of these or write your own:

- Our goal is to improve the health and well-being of {Insert company name} employees through health education and activities that support healthy lifestyles; thereby, resulting in improved employee productivity, morale and health care cost savings.
- To help our employees to gradually change habits that will result in increased quality and length of life.
- The vision of the {Insert company name} Wellness Initiative is to become a valuable resource for employees in achieving healthier lifestyles.
- To promote a worksite culture that supports healthy lifestyle choices by valuing individual health and creating a supportive community.

Sample Mission Statements

A wellness mission statement should include the value of the committee's activities to employees and the workplace.

- To improve the health, well-being and quality of the lives of all {Insert company name} employees by empowering to promote and model positive attitudes and behaviors through a lifelong commitment to wellness.
- To encourage employees' personal and professional productivity, and physical and mental well-being, the mission of the {Insert company name} Worksite Wellness Committee shall be to promote a worksite culture that supports employees' desire to make healthy lifestyle choices.



STEP 4: PROMOTE THE WELLNESS COMMITTEE

Once selected, promotion of the wellness team is critical to the success of the program. By promoting the individuals who are selected to participate, it reinforces the company commitment to their efforts. It helps to make these members feel important and their time and efforts are noticed. Additionally, by promoting the wellness team members, it provides employees with knowledge of who is driving the efforts and gives them a “green light” that engaging in the activities is supported by management.

NEXT STEPS

A wellness committee is one of the most important elements of a successful workplace wellness 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. This includes setting up a wellness committee within your organization. If you have questions about any of the steps necessary to form a wellness committee, Innovative is here to assist.

After forming a wellness committee, the next step is designing and building your wellness program. Stayed tuned for our Part Two: “Starting and Sustaining a Workplace Wellness Program: Building a Wellness Program.”

REFERENCES

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