



Medical
Wellness
Association

Medical WELLNESS

INTEGRATING HEALTH PRACTICES

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WELCOME FROM THE PRESIDENT

The demand for wellness programs continues to expand as we provide new online forums, services and strategic networks for all health, medical and wellness professionals. In this issue we interview Bill Baun and Herb Lipsman with the Houston Wellness Association and feature Health Participation for Wellness Outcomes with George Pfeiffer, Founder of the WorkCare Group. We support the inaugural Exercise is Medicine™ month in May as outlined on page 7 with the American Medical Association & ACSM.

*We are pleased to host the **Medical Wellness Forum 2008 in Las Vegas** in September. The **Medical Wellness Association** sponsors the Forum in partnership with **IHRSA**, International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association. Together we partner to by providing ongoing research, best practices, professional networking and continuing education. The **Medical Wellness Forum** is open for all our MWA members, partners and guests. The Forum Program is provided on page four. There is great excitement in meeting and networking with international medical wellness practitioners. The **2008 Forum** will be at the **RIO Hotel -Casino Resort in Las Vegas, September 9th, 10th & 11th** for outstanding workshops, networking, exhibits and trade show. Register for discounts and plan now to participate in the exciting new medical wellness transformation. We look forward to meeting with you at the **Medical Wellness Forum**. Register online at www.medicalwellnessassociation.com*

Christopher Breuleux

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THE OFFICAL JOURNAL OF THE MEDICAL WELLNESS ASSOCIATION

ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEW WITH BILL BAUN AND HERB LIPSMAN

**Bill Baun & Herb Lipsman
Chairman & Founding Members,
Mayor's Wellness Council and The
Houston Wellness Association(HWA)**

Recently in San Diego, I met with Bill Baun and Herb Lipsman to discuss our wellness associations, future programs, and what the future holds for MWA and the Houston Wellness associations.

MWA: What is your personal vision for the wellness movement?

Herb: Wellness is not a program; it is a lifestyle choice. Modern medicine and new technology will keep us alive longer. What will the quality of our lives be during this extended lifetime? Wellness cultures need to be developed and directly linked with the fitness and preventive medicine markets.

MWA: How did the Houston Wellness Association get started?

Herb: In 2005, I was appointed to lead the Mayor's Wellness Council. The HWA was later developed to create a private sector wellness initiative to address the healthcare crisis. The HWA was formed for the purpose of supporting the growth of the private wellness industry for the area.

MWA: As a leader with the HWA, you partner and are involved with many organizations. What is the status of the business and corporate wellness community?

Herb: We strategically form alliances with business organizations and associations like MWA. The value and benefit of employee worksite health has driven the interest in wellness. One of our goals is to raise the number of individuals and organizations involved in wellness programs at the local level. HWA and MWA are driven to help bring both people and companies together to help partner and provide training and ongoing networking events. Companies need to develop a "Wellness Culture". Wellness

is an essential bottom line strategic decision. This corporate shift is opening new doors for us and the growing medical wellness industry.

MWA: How can the Medical Wellness Association & HWA work together to support education and networking?

Herb: New opportunities for partnering with wellness affiliates are unlimited. We are excited and believe that there are many opportunities to exchange ideas and information, seek out new product and service ideas and develop joint ventures to work together to grow the wellness marketplace. For me, one of the key benefits of partnering are the networking and training events as well as the broad professional membership base. We all have so much to gain when we choose to support and share information with each other. HWA will continue strengthening alliances with organizations & professional associations to support current wellness and medical initiatives.

MWA: As the new Chairman, what are your goals for HWA/Wellness Council?

Bill: In just three years the Mayor's Wellness Council has moved Houston from being the #1 obese city to #10. We are very excited about the momentum that this has created. The Mayor's Wellness Council new vision is to promote Houston as a healthy place to work, live and raise a family. Our two core goals are to support the new City Employee Wellness program and implement a pilot childhood obesity project. As a group of wellness professionals dedicated to the health and wellness, we are eager to hear what neighborhoods and communities need to begin to spread a wellness culture. We have begun to set up "wellness community meetings" where we are doing more listening than talking. Our vision is that wellness spreads from the inside out and we are beginning to challenge community groups-associations and families to form Neighborhood Wellness Teams to take on small wellness projects.

MWA: How can a smaller community or worksite successfully develop a wellness initiative and work with associations-organizations?

Bill: Wellness is about relationships, so we want to start a positive relationship. A good example is what we are doing around our Childhood obesity pilot. Working to establish a relationship with the City Police and Schools to ensure the parks in our communities are safe for children to play and remain active. We want to better mobilize and coordinate community programs that support what are schools are working hard to give your children. Small communities and worksites need to look for networking opportunities to reach out and meet with others that are working on health and wellness challenges within their environments or like environments. Wellness is about sharing best practices and ideas that raise the health consciousness and health practices..

MWA: As a member, the Medical Wellness Association is seeking to support the HWA. Do your members seek new business opportunities in wellness?

HWA: Definitely. The growing number of wellness providers and health club owners understand that the consumers and members drive wellness programming. The upcoming Medical Wellness Forum hosted by MWA and the HWA meetings contribute to the ongoing professional training and development efforts. We look forward to meeting with you and other HWA members at the Medical Wellness Forum in Las Vegas and Houston.

Herb Lipsman, is past Chairman & Bill Baun is the current Chairman of the Houston Mayor's Wellness Council, and both are Founding Board Members of the Houston Wellness Association.



Defining Wellness for the Consumer

Before a new association develops standards, it should have a clear vision and conceptual definition of goals and purpose. The Medical Wellness Association was created as a professional membership based advocate for the development and integration of the medical and wellness disciplines. It was initially formed to support the growing wellness movement by clearly defining appropriate guidelines and standards. There is broad agreement among respected analysts that future wellness and healthcare and policy decisions will be driven by the direct consumer and family much more than in the past. We strive to be the leaders in promoting the integration of and defining the standards for medical wellness professionals and services.

Due to improved medical practices, average life expectancy has increased significantly. However, the biggest health problem in our society stems from not maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Today's changing healthcare environment requires an integrative approach to medical care. Increasing medical costs threaten the economic vitality of healthcare options and limit the choices for both providers and patients. Individual consumers who are striving for optimal health and wellness realize that medical science can prolong their lives, but they also want to live well and be healthy throughout their entire lives. Physicians, therapists, health professionals, or wellness practitioners could utilize medical wellness programs to provide real solutions for today's changing healthcare environment. Many organizations have been successful at reducing health and medical costs by helping their

members or employees become wellness consumers and live a healthier lifestyle.

Many wellness practices are considered to be outside the traditional realm of conventional medicine. Wellness, complementary, integrative and alternative medicine are often viewed as a group of health care practices that is not always considered to be part of traditional or mainstream medicine. The demand for wellness programs and therapies has increased, and progress toward reducing the barriers with conventional medicine continues. The Medical Wellness Association provides some key terms and definitions used in the field of medical wellness, allied health and related medical disciplines.

Definition of Wellness

The World Health Organization has defined health as a state of optimal well-being, not merely the absence of disease and infirmity. There have been many terms used to define and describe wellness. These include optimal health, health promotion, and total health and wellness. Optimal well-being requires the balancing of lifestyle and various dimensions of the whole person. These dimensions of health include physical, mental, emotional, environmental, spiritual and social components. This broader wellness approach to health demands the integration of all dimensions of wellness. These dimensions are often interrelated as one wellness dimension can affect the others. The developing field of wellness is serving the need of helping individuals improve their health through the process of wellness practices, lifestyle and medical

care. We define medical wellness is the practice of health and medical care relating to wellness outcomes. The more specific definition of medical wellness is an approach to delivering care that considers multiple influences on a person's health and consequently multiple modalities for treating and preventing disease as well as promoting optimal well-being. Medical wellness integrates and brings together the stakeholders in healthcare: medical and wellness practitioners, and other allied health providers.

Medical wellness provides a balanced application of wellness to both health and medical outcomes. It is often viewed as the integration of wellness practices and programs within a clinical environment. Medical wellness evolves continually, as practices and treatments that are proven effective merge into conventional medicine and as new approaches to health, well-being and wellness emerge. The foremost goal of medical wellness is to promote an optimal state of health through practicing an active wellness lifestyle and preventing disease and illness. Best practice medical wellness programs should meet universal quality and medical standards of care that can be proven effective. Defining medical wellness and standards will help clarify conflicting and often misleading health and wellness information presented to the consumer by mass media and commercial marketing publications.

Chris Breuleux, Ph D, is President of the Association, Board Advisor for the Medical Wellness Alliance and member of the Advisory Board for the National Health, Wellness and Prevention Congress.

Obesity Management

A man is literally what he thinks, his character being the complete sum of all his thoughts.

James Allen [1864 -1912]

Thoughts lead to behaviors; changing thoughts lead to altered behaviors. Understanding the factors behind change is important when coaching your weight loss client through setbacks and achievements. Cognition is defined as, *the action of knowing*. Cognitive change or restructuring is based on this simple fact – how your clients think has a controlling effect on how they act. Cognitive restructuring is often used when behavior corrections are needed. Cognitive factors play an important role in your client’s behaviors. Common themes of thinking can be identified through direct experiences of your client. Within the context of these cognitive factors, the behaviors of the individual usually make sense. Be sensitive to the fact that your client may not understand that his/her behaviors need to be restructured. It is your job as the teacher to educate your client new paths of successful weight loss. Learning would be exceedingly laborious if your clients had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling. These are learned ways of thinking that are reinforced by experi-

ences of success and self gratification. This is where your role as the weight loss professional comes into play. Understanding the cognitive thought process and assisting your clients in changing thought patterns that reflect as altered behaviors. Cognitive restructuring does not assume that your clients start with any motivation to change. **Creating conscious choice is the heart of motivating change.** Giving your clients choices and acknowledging that they have the potency to make such choices is empowering. It changes the dimensions of the situation, acknowledging potency rather than attempting to control.

If we treat people as they are, we make them worse. If we treat people as they ought to be, we help them become what they are capable of becoming.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe [1749 - 1832]

The understanding of what to change, how to change, and the motivation to change will lead to the ultimate goal of weight reduction and maintenance. Teaching your clients to deal with “setbacks” or “mistakes” by planning ahead, identifying potential roadblocks, and allowing for some failures is necessary to reach goals. Cognitive change is *self-change*. The techniques of cognitive change can be applied by an individual only to his or her own thinking. For this reason, your clients should be

prompted to be goal driven, rather than need driven. It is important that you help your clients reach their goals by guiding mental outlook. Their thoughts, emotions and behaviors are placing barriers to their own goal seeking. If your clients believe they can complete a task, they will. If your clients believe they will fail, they will.

As a professional, if you are seen as helping your clients to reach their goals, resistance and compliance are no longer current. Motivation is self induced. However, you must recognize that you are asking your clients to change a lifetime of habitual thinking. Such thoughts will not disappear overnight. In fact, in crisis, most people will return to long held habits. But if the choice to change is real, the process will help to inoculate the individual against future stress, and each experience will become a learning experience which can be evaluated in light of the new evaluative capacities.

The responsibility for growth and development lies fundamentally with each individual; the responsibility for providing the opportunity for growth and fulfillment lies with society and you as the professional offering your services.

Amy Blansit, Amy is President of the American College of Wellness and a Medical Wellness Advisor.

Health Promotion Participation for Wellness Outcomes

George J. Pfeiffer, MSE, FAWHP

Within worksite health promotion and wellness there is much discussion and movement around the concept of health and productivity management (HPM) and its impact on managing an organization's human capital and bottom line.

A central tenet of HPM is that health and productivity are inextricably linked, and as such, organization's need to look at the total costs associated with health-related lifestyle risks and acute and chronic health conditions.¹ As such, the collection, integration, and interpretation of specific data sets related to the direct (e.g., medical, pharmacy) and indirect (e.g., sick-days, disability, presenteeism) costs of a population are desired best practices. Data management allows organizations to not only benchmark their current health management practices, but identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities within these practices and realize a greater total value for each healthcare dollar invested.

Without a doubt, "You can't manage, what you don't measure" is an important principle for making value-based health management decisions. However, the vast majority of employers have limited access to health data and more importantly, limited resources to analyze and interpret this data. So what can companies do?

Getting Down to Brass Tacks: Participation is Everything

Beyond the fundamental requirement that employee health be a core corporate value which is articulated and supported by all levels of management, a key success factor is broad range participation of the eligible population. Why? Participation rates are a relatively simple "litmus test" that can help program managers, as well as management, benchmark and gauge employee (and dependent) engagement within sponsored programs.

Research conducted by the University of Michigan's Health Management Research Center (HMRC) has shown the correlation between participation in health management activities and health and productivity measures such as reduced medical and pharmacy costs and reduced productivity-related losses due to absenteeism and short-term disability.

Based on this research, the HMRC recommends the following participation benchmarks for comprehensive wellness programs:²

- ✦ 50% of the eligible population should participate in at least one wellness activity such as a health risk appraisal
- ✦ 90% to 100% of the eligible population should participate in at least one wellness activity over a given three-year rolling period
- ✦ 80% of the eligible population should engage in a minimum of two wellness activities within a three to four year period
- ✦ 60% of the eligible population should engage in a minimum of three wellness activities within a five-year period

The bottom line? Motivating your target population to participate in a number of wellness activities within a specific time window is critical to impacting desired outcomes such as risk reduction, risk avoidance, health cost moderation, and improved productivity measures. This relationship is echoed in a study by Serxner and colleagues that showed the following:³

- ✦ Participants in a health risk appraisal (HRA) program cost \$212 less, per year than eligible non-participants.
 - ✦ A greater cost-savings were realized when participation in a health risk appraisal program was sustained. Cost savings of \$83, \$173, and \$543 were realized by completing HRA 1, 2, 3, and more, respectively.
 - ✦ Participants in either a health risk appraisal program or another wellness activity realized cost savings when compared to non-participants
- Participants who engaged in both an HRA and other wellness activities within a specified period of time, had overall greater cost savings, as compared to separate activities or to non-participants

Again, the major take away message is the importance of not only building ones participation base, but to keep that growing base engaged through ongoing programming. In other words, there is a "dose response"³ association between participation and successful program outcomes.

Summing-up

Today, with the growth of health and productivity management and its associated metrics, there are new tools and processes to measure risks and related costs. There is no doubt that these metrics have allowed human capital managers (e.g., employee benefits, medical directors, wellness, employee assistance, health and safety) to make a greater business case to senior management. In addition, these measures have brought a new level of accountability among managers responsible for employee health.

However, within this data management process, participation rates have become a "second-class citizen" for many organizations—based on decision-makers' bias for so-called hard data. In addition, the belief among smaller organizations that "robust" data collection is needed to have a successful employee wellness program may be a major barrier to adoption.

With the emerging research on the value of participation metrics related to program outcomes, decision-makers and wellness professionals alike have a relatively simple way to benchmark program impact. In addition, since sustaining and expanding participation are two primary success factors, organizations may consider reallocating a portion of assessment resources to social marketing initiatives within their target population(s).

References:

- Loeppke R, Hymel PA, Lofland JH, et al. Health-related workplace productivity measurement: general and migraine-specific recommendations from the ACOEM expert panel. *J Occup Environ Med.* 2003;45(4):349-359.
- Health Management Research Center. (2008) *Cost Benefit Analysis and Report 2008*. University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.
- Serxner SA, Gold DB, Grossmeier JJ, et al. The relationship between health promotion program participation and medical costs: a dose response. *J Occup Environ Med.* 2003;45 (11):1196-1200.

George J. Pfeiffer is President and founder of The WorkCare Group, Charlottesville, VA and a Diplomat of the Medical Wellness Association.

Connection Between In-active Lifestyles and Accelerated Aging

Those who are physically active in their leisure time seem to be younger than those with inactive lifestyles, from a biological perspective. Generally, people who participate in regular exercise already have lower rates of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, cancer, high blood pressure, obesity, and osteoporosis. However, according to a report in the January 28 issue of *Archives of Internal Medicine*, one of the JAMA/Archives journals, there might be more to this than just avoiding these diseases. "A sedentary lifestyle increases the propensity to aging-related disease and premature death," the authors write. "Inactivity may diminish life expectancy by predisposing to aging-related diseases but also because it may influence the aging process itself."

A group of 2,401 twins was studied by Lynn F. Cherkas, Ph.D., and colleagues. The team administered questionnaires related to physical activity level, smoking habits, and social and economic factors. The DNA samples were analyzed for the length of their repeating sequences at each end of the chromosomes. These sequences, called telomeres, may serve as a marker of biological age, as they progressively shorten over time.

As expected, telomere length decreased with age, contributing to an average loss of 21 nucleotides (the basic structural units of DNA) per year. Less physically active men and women displayed shorter leukocyte telomeres than those who were more active in their leisure time. The relationship between leukocyte telomere length and physical activity level remained significant after adjustment for body mass index, smoking, socioeconomic status and physical activity at work. The authors suggest a few mechanisms by which more sedentary lifestyles might contribute to telomere degeneration. One could be damage to cells caused by exposure to oxygen, called oxidative stress. Increased inflammation in sedentary persons may also create this effect. Additionally, telomere length has been linked to perceived stress levels. This psychological stress may be reduced by physical activity, thus lessening its severity on telomeres and the aging

process.

The authors conclude, relating this to daily life. "The U.S. guidelines recommend that 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity at least five days a week can have significant health benefits," state the authors. "Our results underscore the vital importance of these guidelines. They show that adults who partake in regular physical activity are biologically younger than sedentary individuals. This conclusion provides a powerful message that could be used by clinicians to promote the potential anti-aging effect of regular exercise."

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/95975.php>

Assess for Improved Fitness and Wellness Management

Fitness assessment is no longer regarded as a simple measurement tool, but rather as an intricate system in achieving and maintaining physical and mental good health.

There are numerous web based lifestyle management systems designed to attract, motivate, and retain members. Many provide fitness testing, exercise tracking, and medical goals, and nutrition assessments. In addition to the core features there is what we call "Apparent Age", which calculates a person's biological age and aging rate. It also incorporates incentive programs to motivate exercisers, as well as a scheduling program that makes it easy for members to enroll in workshops or classes. Chris Breuleux, PhD, notes, "Although assessment and testing are the focus of medical wellness programs, they are also a powerful communication tool between patient, members and medical staff". He added, "You establish baseline measurements for participants, monitor their progress, document their results, and help them improve their well being and performance."

Doctor-Owned Hospitals Speed -up Specific Medical Procedures

Once nearly extinct, doctor-owned hospitals specializing in specific medical conditions and procedures are now experiencing a rebirth. A 2003 federal funding ban, which had cut specialty hospitals income substantially, was reversed recently by officials at the U.S. Centers for [Medicare and Medicaid Services](#). Numbering about 200 nationwide, doctor-owned hospitals advocate streamlined [medical care](#) and typically specialize in more sophisticated procedures such as cardiac and orthopedic surgeries. Critics claim that the niche hospitals siphon off more profitable patients from the under-funded general hospital system. New regulations require that the hospitals to take emergency patients and provide full financial disclosure statements to investors.

What Does This Mean for You.

Public health and government officials have expressed mixed opinions about the quality of care in doctor-owned hospitals compared with traditional medical centers. It could suggest that some doctor-owned facilities may offer significantly more efficient services and care than other traditional hospital systems.



Inaugural “Exercise is Medicine Month” May 2008

As President of the Medical Wellness Association, I am committed to lend support and encourage ongoing physical activity for the benefits it provides. As we prepare to observe and support the inaugural Exercise is Medicine™ Month in May, the medical wellness, preventive health and physical activity case is strong:

- Exercise and physical activity are proven and powerful medicine, helping prevent or treat numerous chronic conditions such as hypertension, cardiac disease & diabetes.
- Research shows significant health benefits for those who engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity most days of the week.
- A recent survey by ACSM reveals that, while four out of 10 physicians (41 percent) talk to their patients about the importance of exercise, they do not always offer suggestions on the best ways to be active.
- According to the survey, nearly two-thirds of patients (65%) would be more interested in exercising if advised by their doctor.

If there were a drug that could so powerfully fight America’s obesity epidemic and the health implications it brings, surely every physician would be eager to prescribe it. This is the impetus behind Exercise is Medicine™, a program supported by the American Medical Association. One objective is to encourage physicians to “prescribe” exercise during patient visits. Patients are advised to participate in at least 30 minutes of physical activity & 10 minutes of stretching and light muscle training five days a week.

MWA proudly supports Exercise is Medicine™ by recommending these important steps:

Physicians please talk with every patient about exercise and, as appropriate, refer them to a health or wellness professional. Counseling them on the benefits of physical activity and what it can do for their long-term health and well-being is critical and should be a standard part of your practice.

Patients, ask a few questions about your health status the next time you visit your doctor. Are you at a healthy weight? Taking your current health status into consideration, what types of exercise are best and safest for you? Is there a certified trainer or registered dietician you should visit to improve your health?

We all enjoy a healthy dose of exercise! To learn more about Exercise is Medicine initiative, visit www.exerciseismedicine.org.



Benefits of Internet Wellness Assessments

Internet assessments can benefit worksite employee health:

- Assess health risks
- Help employees and members learn about Internet resources, references and guides
- Develop individual & team health and wellness goals
- Teach the benefits of balancing self, team and work
- Assess wellness, longevity and health-risk levels
- Identify individual lifestyles and behaviors that are high-risk
- Inventory and select successful medical wellness programs
- Customize, support and track wellness and fitness activity programs
- Identify wellness programs to improve health and well-being
- Recognize the importance of exercise and physical activity
- Help individuals learn and practice health-related wellness skills
- Integrate medical wellness and health-risk management
- Assist in tracking and managing multiple worksites
- Provide aggregate health reporting
- Provide strategic employee health and wellness planning

Christopher Breuleux, Ph.D.
www.medicalwellnessassociation.com

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Medical Wellness Forum

Rio Hotel, Las Vegas, September 9, 10 & 11, 2008

September 9

8:30 am Welcome Reception

9:00 am

Trends & Opportunities in Medical Wellness

Dr. Christopher Breuleux & Ed Buda

10:00 am

The Future of Wellness

Dr. John Munson

11:00 am

Exercise is Medicine: How to Profit

Dr. Jason Conviser

12:00 pm

Nutrition Break

1:00 pm

Corporate & Worksite Wellness Programs

George Pfeiffer

2:00 pm

Health and Wellness Coaching

Dr. Donna Mayerson & Sean Slovenski

September 10

8:00 am to 5:00 pm workshop

Online Health Coach Training

Dr. Donna Mayerson

9:00 am

Designing Medical Wellness Facilities

Jim Binger & Dr. Christopher Breuleux

10:00 am

Program Design & Equipment for Wellness

11:00 am

Obesity Management Training

Amy Blansit

12:00 am

Successful Weight Loss Business Model

1:00 pm

Medical Wellness Success in Health Clubs

Mike Alpert & Vaughn Marxhausen

2:00 pm

Medical Nutrition

Eric Durak

September 11

8:00 am to 4:00 pm Workshop

Online Health Coach Training

Dr. Donna Mayerson

8:00 am

Ongoing Wellness Opportunities &
One on One Networking with HPCareer.net
Medical Wellness Therapy Profit Opportunity

9:00 am

Online Wellness Marketing

Rick Stollmeyer & Roxanne Banta

10:00 am

Building your Brand Through Networking

Michaela Conley

11:00 am

Sleep Science: The Missing Wellness Piece

Dr. John Spencer Ellis

September 9, 10 & 11

IHRSA Expo and Wellness Exhibits

**3-Day Expo for IHRSA,
Medical Wellness Association,
American Council on Exercise,
American College of Wellness
and
National Fitness Trade Show**

Medical
Wellness
Association


Hummingbird
COACHING SERVICES


AMERICAN
COLLEGE
— OF —
WELLNESS



Medical Wellness Association

Leading the Integration of Medicine and Wellness



Join our network of leading medical, health fitness and wellness professionals that work together to improve the health, productivity and well-being of employees, families and consumers.

Contact 281-313-3040 or info@medicalwellnessassociation.com



MWA presents the
**MEDICAL WELLNESS
FORUM**

SEPTEMBER 9 thru 11 >> LAS VEGAS, NEVADA @the RIO

Read our online journals & magazines or fill out a membership application at

www.medicalwellnessassociation.com

Developing a Worksite Weight Loss Program

The Financial Cost of Obesity

- \$45 billion for U.S. Companies
- 40% of employers have obesity programs and 24% more in 2008

Obesity has risen to epidemic levels. It leads to devastating and costly health problems, reduces life expectancy, and is associated with discrimination. According to the National Institutes on Health, more than 65 percent of U.S. adults are overweight or obese, with nearly 32 percent of adults – over 61 million people – meeting criteria for obesity. If the current trend continues, the escalating rates of obesity will place a burden on the healthcare system and a financial crisis for most employers.

Finding a realistic solution to this growing health problem needs more consideration than simply asking us to eat less. Obesity is a social, environmental, emotional, and physical issue that needs a broad-based plan to establish balanced wellness lifestyles that support improved health behaviors.

Creating a weight loss strategy for your worksite doesn't have to be a daunting task. The first step should take into account the resources available within the organization, community providers, national organizations, and web-based information sources. A multi-dimensional model can be created for a variety of budgets. It is crucial to offer the core components that have been successful in proven weight loss wellness programs.

Employee wellness liaisons or staff can recruit medical professionals or wellness practitioners to share information at their worksite during weekly or monthly brown bag lunches. These wellness talks are easy to set up and enable companies with little or no health promotion programming the opportunity to share valuable health information with their employees. The

wellness based seminars can set up in 30 to 60 minute segments targeting wellness components including: 1) increasing physical activity and lifestyle activity, 2) establishing healthy eating patterns, 3) creating positive social support systems, and 4) understanding the mind/body connection.

In each program the participants can pledge to attend and adapt the wellness activity selected to their daily routine. This could be a nutrition, physical activity, stretching or emotional challenge that they would verbally commit to undertaking for the next week. At the beginning of the wellness program, basic assessments or "check in" survey can be completed by the participants. Simple assessments can be very useful in assisting participants to stay on track and have an accountability factor for each wellness program session.

Daily Activity

Walking activity is encouraged, because most everyone can walk; it takes little equipment other than walking shoes and can be done throughout the year. Participants are encouraged to burn approximately 1500-2000 calories per week with their programs per week. Daily activity focuses on the multiple available possibilities to increase energy expenditure with simple lifestyle changes. Research shows we are expending fewer calories in physical activity than in the past. This relates to the increase in energy saving devices and sedentary activities that have made our lives so comfortable, such as computer games, elevators, remote controls, cordless phones, drive-through windows, and e-mail. Participants can increase lifestyle activity, such as walking the dog, taking the stairs, parking further away, washing the car, carrying groceries, and walking to a coworker's office versus sending an email. Wellness brochures and handouts can be provided to the participants who con-

tributed their ideas for increasing their total calorie expenditure per day through lifestyle activities.

Healthy Eating

This component emphasized a non-dieting approach to weight loss. Healthy food selection, drinking enough water, becoming an educated consumer, limiting/cutting out junk food, planning meals using a variety of foods, developing eating out strategies, and reducing both fat calories and portion sizes were the foundation of the healthy eating segment.

Social Support

Social interaction helps develop healthy interpersonal relationships, and skills for dealing with psychological and emotional barriers to weight loss. Discussion groups were organized and set their own agendas to meet weekly for exercise, recipe sharing and to process daily challenges with their program. Seminars can provide training in how to maintain a support group, develop active listening, and communications.

Mind/Body Connection

This segment provides insight on food issues, body issues, eating behavior, and skills to live a wellness lifestyle. Regular discussions related to barriers to exercise and making healthy food choices, emotional issues around food, and daily challenges. The support groups provided a safe environment where participants discussed their feelings including resistance to weight loss. There are a variety of social and cultural issues that sabotage weight loss and maintenance.

Most obese individuals are not equipped with the skills necessary to modify eating and physical activity habits. Seeking out professional guidance to provide coaching in learning new behavioral skills is essential. Community health and wellness professionals

that can provide support include health coaches and exercise trainers – colleges and universities, wellness and fitness centers, registered dietitians - consider local members of the Wellness Associations and hospitals; along with health and wellness coaches. These providers can share a wealth of information on subjects such as: food preparation, establishing a new eating behavior, creating a physical activity plan, finding the time to exercise and developing the skills to maintain a wellness balance essential for on-going success. We all need encouragement and support to develop the necessary skills and behaviors to

tackle this mounting health care issue. Providing opportunities at the worksite for weight loss programs creates an opportunity for your employee base to share in the commitment towards a healthier workforce that is truly working well.

References: *Weights and Measures*

**Lauve Metcalfe, M.S., FAWHP
and Christopher Breuleux, Ph.D.**



You're invited to be a part of the single largest career network, exclusively for professionals & students in medical wellness. No matter if you're looking for your next career move, have a position for a medical wellness professional to advertise or just want to keep your finger on the pulse of our growing industry, our net-works for you.

“Candidates have a great deal of flexibility to either view career opportunities on line, register to receive them based on their qualifications & preferences or subscribe to receive a weekly review. There is never a cost or any restriction on access for candidates”. Michaela Conley is CEO-Founder of the HPCareer network.

Employers pay a low flat fee \$300, to advertise directly to candidates via email based on the requirements of the opportunity. Ads then remain on line and are propagated throughout the network to ensure rapid response and maximum ROI. Customers report receiving their first responses to their ad in as little 2 to 24 hours. Ads remain live on line for eight weeks.

Visit us from the “Careers” link on the MWA website or
<http://www.mwa.hpcareer.net>.
Contact Michaela:
 (410) 715-2268.

**Hummingbird Coaching and
Medical Wellness Association Present
Online Health Coaching Workshop
September 10-11, 2008**

Coach Training Program: Online Health Coaching

Program Description:
 This program is designed for health and fitness professionals who are interested in learning to provide health coaching in an online environment. The September 10 & 11 session is the third step in Hummingbird Coaching Services Training Program.

- Step 1 – One month participation in health coaching provided by a Hummingbird Master Coach.
- Step 2 – Webinar/Teleclass and online learning module.
- Step 3 – Core Training: hands-on practice with health coaching protocols and application through Hummingbird's online coaching technology.
- Step 4 – Includes a month supervised practicum

Contact Hummingbird Coaching at 1.877.240.4588
 * The Hummingbird Health Coach Training Program is endorsed by the **Medical Wellness Association.**



PROFIT

absenteeism
imbalance
stress
lower productivity
lack of focus
high blood pressure
presenteeism
burnout
exhaustion
higher health costs

ARE HEALTH CARE COSTS EATING AWAY AT YOUR PROFIT?

We can help.

As the leader in online coaching, we can increase your company's productivity and decrease health care costs with our proven tools and technology.

Contact us today!

Let us know how we can help you control your health care costs and ultimately your profits.

www.hummingbirdcoaching.com/employers



Online coaching can decrease your health care costs by 23 percent.

Download "Saving Money on Health Care Costs" to learn more.

Hummingbird Coaching Services, LLC
312 Walnut Street, Suite 1020
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
Toll Free: 1.877.240.4588


Hummingbird
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