

Wellness programs make business cents

“You get what you pay for” is often a true statement. But when it comes to employers investing in the wellness of their employees, they get more than they pay for. It is estimated that for every \$1 an employer commits to a company wellness program, a savings of \$3 is realized.

A wellness program is rated by 60 percent of employers as a recruiting incentive, and for good reason. Healthy employees feel better, are more productive and sense that their employer cares about them. Company wellness programs result in 50 percent less in medical costs, 46 percent less in absenteeism and 26 percent less in disability costs.



Studies have documented other benefits of a wellness program:

- **Stress:** Between 50-80 percent of all reported diseases are stress-related in origin. A study by the *American Journal of Health Promotion* documented that worksite stress management programs decrease blood pressure and anxiety and increase job satisfaction.
- **Weight Control:** Obese employees are more than twice as likely to experience high-level absenteeism—14 or more absences per year due to illnesses (*American Journal of Health Promotion*).
- **Depression:** Depression costs U.S. employers more than \$44 million per year, mostly in absenteeism and lost productivity (*Morning Edition, National Public Radio*). People experiencing a major depressive disorder are 27 times more likely than others to have a work disability.
- **Nutrition:** Employees with total cholesterol of more than 200 have 16 percent more hospital days and 24 percent more claims in excess of \$5,000. Wellness/nutrition education helps people choose healthier eating.
- **Exercise:** Fitness center participants stay in hospitals an average of 2.1 days less than non-participants (*American Journal of Health Promotion*). **A regular program of low-to-moderate exercise reduces heart attack risk by 35-55 percent** (*The Wellness Letter*). Harvard Medical School reported doing exercise five times a week decreases Type II diabetes by 42 percent.

Welshimer Wheels and Lifetime Fitness, LLC, is ideally suited to help employers develop a successful and FUN wellness program. I recognize that diets/WORKouts rarely have positive outcomes. After years as an educator, I became convinced that for a wellness program to be successful – long term – it had to be simple, inexpensive, convenient and most important – FUN. From \$4 exercise bands that can be used at your desk to knowledge of proper nutrition to hobby development, good health can happen.

For more information, contact me via email (norba@clearwire.net) or call me (466-1818, 899-9398).

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