



HealthMatters  
Wellness with Purpose

Inspiring employees.  
Increasing productivity.  
Improving performance.



## Monthly Employer Newsletter April 2009

### This Issue:

Employer Tools regarding Exercise are now available on the *client only* part of our website! If you don't have a login yet, request one from Amanda Moser at [amanda.moser@lmcins.com](mailto:amanda.moser@lmcins.com).

### Wellness News Happenings

How to Build a Purpose Driven Wellness Program: Step 3, Part 1: Collecting Data (See Steps 1 & 2 in our February & March Employer Newsletters)

### Featured this month:

#### West Liberty Foods

- 4 locations-
  - West Liberty, IA
  - Mount Pleasant, IA
  - Tremonton, UT
  - Sigourney, IA

- About 1,650 employees

- Wellness Leaders: Angie Draves-Benefits Manager and Katrina Richmond-Health & Benefits Administrator

## April's Theme: Exercise

This month, on our *client only* portion of our website, you will find the following tools for you to utilize:



#### • Monthly Employee Newsletter:

✓ This month find out why it is impossible to exercise to “spot” reduce areas on your body and learn ways to respect mother earth for “Earth Day” on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Also included: gardening tools to stock up on, long-term care advice, and a recipe for an energizing smoothie.

#### • Monthly Poster:

✓ “Make Time for Fitness”--- encourage employees to squeeze physical activity into their busy day by hanging this poster where everyone can see it.

#### • Monthly Flyer:

✓ “Tips for an Eco-Friendly Workout”---provides tips on how to “go green” with your exercise routine

Only clients of LaMair Mulock Condon Co. are able to access these free monthly resources, as a value-added service. Please contact Amanda Moser at [amanda.moser@lmcins.com](mailto:amanda.moser@lmcins.com) to be set up with a username and password.

## Wellness News Happenings

### Exercise Lowers Breast Cancer Risk

*America's Health Insurance Plans website*

A new study by University of South Carolina researchers indicates acerbically fit women are three times less likely to die of breast cancer than those who seldom exercise.

### Obesity Can Trim 10 Years Off Life

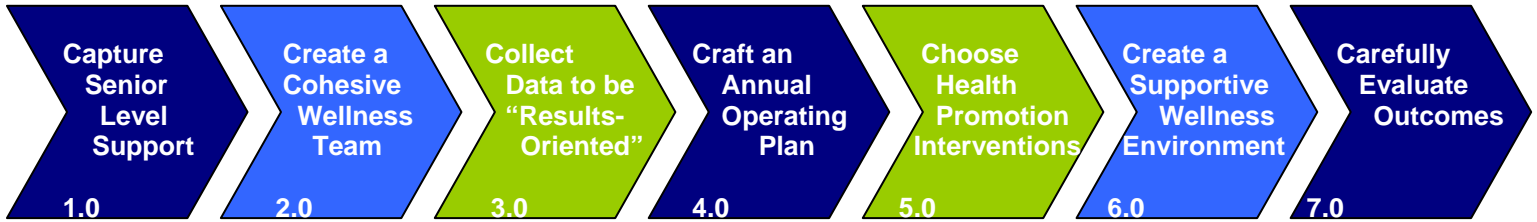
*USA Today*

Weighing too much may take as much as a decade off your life, according a new analysis of studies that involved 900,000 people. Adults who are obese — about 40 or more pounds over a healthy weight — may be cutting about three years off their lives, mostly from heart disease and stroke. Those who are extremely obese, about 100 or more pounds over a healthy weight, could be shortening their lives by as many as 10 years, the study found. Being extremely obese is similar to the effect of lifelong smoking

**For information on wellness news, visit our [HealthMatters website](#) and click on [“Healthy Happenings”](#).**

This Month's How To.....

# Collect Data to be "Results Driven"



Building a health promotion program that impacts the health of the organization is hard work. Recently, the field of health promotion has shifted from 'activity' centered programs to 'results-oriented'.

So what is the difference between an "activity centered program" and a "results-oriented" program? Activity centered programs are those that sound good, look good, and allow people to feel good, but contribute relatively little to the bottom line. On the other hand, *results-oriented* programs are carefully researched, intricately designed, and flawlessly executed. Sound difficult? It's not as complex as it may seem.

Data collection may very well be the most important of all of the benchmarks and let us start by stating some of the top reasons why:

## Top Reasons Why Collecting Data is Important to a Wellness Program:

- ✓ Provides a snapshot of the overall health and well-being of your workforce at any give point in time
- ✓ Ensures Senior Level executives are kept in the loop as to what's happening in the arena of employee health & well-being
- ✓ Provides Accountability
- ✓ Informs your workforce of the overall health and wellbeing of the company as a whole
- ✓ Having data to show you are a healthy and productive company acts as an excellent recruitment vehicle for new employees
- ✓ Allows you to benchmark against others
- ✓ Allows you to definitively measure change
- ✓ Allows you to demonstrate value to shareholders

Now that you know the reasons that collecting data is important, let's move on to what kinds of data you should be collecting.

## 4 Steps to Collecting Data to Drive a Results-Oriented Wellness Initiative

There are 4 subsections of this benchmark regarding what types of data you should be collecting:

- ✓ **Organizational Data**--includes things such as modifiable health care claims and demographics
- ✓ **Employee health data**--health risk appraisal information and health screening data
- ✓ **Physical environment data**--includes workstation ergonomics, cafeteria set up, and heating/ventilation
- ✓ **Employee protection and productivity data**--includes things absenteeism, disability, and workers' compensation data

In this issue, we will take a closer look at Organizational Data and Employee Health Data Collection Efforts

### Organizational Data Collection Efforts:

For those of you who in charge of creating a results-oriented wellness program, it is essential to collect health promotion data as it relates to the organization. By collecting this important information, an entirely new and objective perspective will be gained as to how "healthy" the company really is.

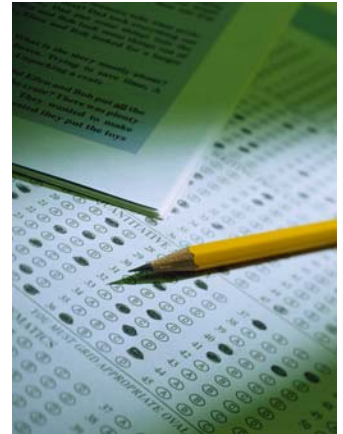
There are 4 different types of organizational data that should be collected every 12 to 24 months.

1. **Review of the organization's demographics**--in fact, much can be learned by simply analyzing the population demographics of the workforce.
2. **Modifiable Claim Analysis**—this allows the amount of “preventable” health care dollars an organization is spending each year to be pinpointed.
3. **Corporate Health Culture Audit**—this will allow for a better perspective as to what the health norms and values are within the organization.
4. **Examination of employee productivity/presenteeism/engagement**—this analysis will allow for a better understanding of how much the organization is losing in terms of poor productivity or unhappy people.

An excellent example of a company that routinely collects this type of data is Union Pacific Railroad located in Omaha, NE. This organization, consisting of more than 45,000 employees, makes it a point to gather and analyze this type of data. As a result of these practices, Union Pacific Railroad has perhaps the most data driven program in the country.

### Employee Data Collection Efforts:

The second component of successful wellness data collection pertains to the employee population. When combined with organizational data, information on the health practices, knowledge, interests, and status of the employee population can be very powerful. By collecting this type of data, an organization will have gathered the information necessary to allow for the surveillance of health trends within the employee population. With respect to the employee population, there are four types of data that should be collected.



1. **Health interest survey**--this survey can be a simple, one-paged instrument that allows for a better gauge of what types of programs employees are interested in.

*Here are a couple of samples of what a basic employee interest survey might look like for your company:*

[Basic Employee Needs and Interest Survey](#)  
[Comprehensive Employee Needs and Interest Survey](#)

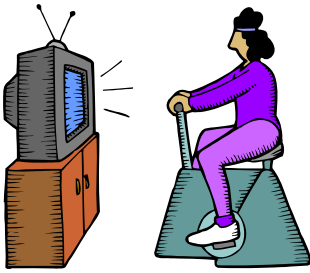
2. **Health risk appraisal**--by offering an HRA, population health data can be gathered and employees are provided with information on their health status.
3. **Health screening information** (e.g. blood pressure, cholesterol, etc.)—this data can be gathered at employee health fairs or onsite health screenings. This data is a great supplement to your HRA. Note: if you find that holding a health screening to screen for everything every year is too expensive – you may want to gather this information every 2 years, rather than annually.
4. **Health knowledge**--this can be very useful as it allows for a better understanding of how much the employee population knows about their well being.

These four types of employee health data should be collected every 12 to 24 months. In addition, data can be collected on spouses and retirees as well.

An excellent example of a company that collects this type of employee data is Nebraska Health System. This organization consistently monitors this type of information at regular intervals. For their efforts, NHS has received WELCOA's Platinum award for excellence in health promotion programming.

**IN SUMMARY:** The information on the third benchmark, Collecting Data, is from WELCOA's Seven Benchmarks of building a culture of health at the worksite. The wellness team's first and primary responsibility is not to start offering programs but rather to step back and gather important data. We covered the first two of four types of data that you should be collecting which were Organizational Data and Employee Data collection. Organizational Data that you will want to collect can be done by looking at corporate culture audit and the modifiable claims analysis. Employee Data can be collected by conducting employee interest surveys, health risk assessments, and a health screening.

If you are interested in starting to collect data at your organization but maybe are in need of some help with setting up your employee interest survey, finding a health risk appraisal that is the right fit for your population, or maybe you are just looking to have an onsite health screening but do not know where to start--please contact Susie Roberts at [susie.roberts@lmcins.com](mailto:susie.roberts@lmcins.com) or Amanda Moser at [amanda.moser@lmcins.com](mailto:amanda.moser@lmcins.com) for help on how to get your data collection efforts up and running.



## STAY TUNED:

In April's issue we will look more in depth at gathering Physical Environment Data and in May's issue we will be focusing on Employee Protection and Productivity Data along with addressing the data now that you have it collected and who to tell about your results....and how.

References  
"10 reasons why data collection is an essential step in building a result-oriented wellness program" by David Hunnicutt, PhD  
"A Comprehensive Overview of WELCOA's Seven Benchmarks" by David Hunnicutt, PhD & Brittanie Leffelman, MS

### This month's featured client:

# West Liberty Foods

Interviewees are Angie Draves, Benefits Manager & Katrina Richmond, Health & Benefits Administration

#### West Liberty Foods Dashboard:

**Wellness Program Name:**  
'Wellness for Life'

**Start of Wellness Year:**  
August 2008

**Length of Implementation:**  
4 months

**Eligible participants:**  
Full time team members & spouses

**Total participation:** 539

**Top Risk Areas:**

- ✓ Low Fitness Levels
- ✓ Overweight
- ✓ Cancer Risk

#### How did your company's wellness journey begin?

**Angie:** After several years of slight increases in West Liberty Foods' medical costs, and with the current trend of healthcare in the United States, I decided that it was time to start investigating the wellness concept. I knew that it would not be easy given the diverse population of our team members however it appeared that the rewards would out-weigh the risks.

I began spending time reading various resources and attending conferences and seminars on the subject of wellness. Once I made the decision that it was something that I felt we needed to do, I began compiling information to present to our Director of Human Resources. With the assistance of LMC, I analyzed our healthcare costs over the last several years, including some increases that we had seen in specific disease areas, and then integrated that into what it could look like with the addition of a wellness program. Once the Director of Human Resources was on board, I worked heavily with LMC to present the concept to the West Liberty Food's CFO. After the CFO was committed to the concept, the next step was deciding on a vendor that could meet our needs for such a diverse population (corporate wide, 60% of our team members speak Spanish, plus we have 4 plants, located in 2 states). It was important that the team members were comfortable with the vendor that was selected and that the program would be easy to understand and implement. With help and guidance from LMC's Health Management Services department, the selection process narrowed down the finalists, and, the final decision was to go with SimplyWell (note: this



wellness vendor was featured last month in our March 2009 Newsletter).

#### What were some of your next steps after the vendor selection process?

**Angie:** After the vendor selection process, the next steps were forming a wellness team (with representatives from all locations, and all job classes), developing a mission statement, creating a personalized logo and tagline, and drafting our operating plan for year 1. After that, the team worked on developing a new Health Promotion Reimbursement Policy which allowed reimbursements for fitness memberships, smoking cessation, and weight management programs. We also set up mandatory kick off meetings at each of our plants to introduce our new employee benefit, 'Wellness for Life,' plus, the SimplyWell portion of the program, and of course, our incentives that team members would receive for participating. Lastly, we coordinated onsite health screenings at each of the locations that took place over a four week period.

#### What are the objectives of your wellness team members?

**Katrina:** The Wellness for Life team's main objectives include:

- ✓ Improving the health status of the participants by providing the appropriate resources and training to adopt and/or maintain a healthy lifestyle. One way we accomplished this was by installing kiosks at each of our facilities' break rooms so that employees could get on the Simply Well website and access their accounts.

(Cont. from p4)

- ✓To recognize and encourage participants--this is where incentives come into place & rewarding team members for their outstanding accomplishments, as well as participation.
- ✓To collaborate with management to embrace preventive strategies throughout our organization, including in our risk management area and employee benefits
- ✓To develop and sustain a culture of health.

**Please describe the various components of your wellness program—such as programming, communications, incentives, events that you have sponsored, etc.**

**Katrina:** At West Liberty Foods, we believe that part of having a successful wellness program is having information available for our employees -- one way that we do that is by sending out a monthly wellness newsletter. This newsletter is a great way to communicate to every employee. The newsletters have a mix of information from ways to improve your health/nutrition, to tips to financial wellness in this tough economic era, plus, upcoming wellness events. Each wellness newsletter also has a set of questions that Wellness for Life participants have the opportunity to answer and qualify for a monthly prize or incentive. Our intent is to keep our incentives centered on that month's topic. As an example, for April's newsletter, the topic is **Exercising Financial Wellness**, so the incentive for April is a calculator. Each incentive that is given out also has the Wellness for Life logo imprinted on it.

Our other incentives for Year 1 include the following:

- \$75 gift card for completing the Health Risk Assessment & Health Screening early by 10/1/2008
- \$150 premium reduction for 2009 for completing the Health Risk Assessment & Health Screening by 1/1/2009
- Gym bag, water bottle, & sports towel for completing 8,000 SimplyWell points by 3/31/2009
- We will also have an incentive for those who achieve 10,000 SimplyWell points by 7/31/2009 but this is yet to be determined.



Picture of gym bag that was given as incentive for completing 8,000 SimplyWell points

We believe that to keep Wellness for Life fresh in everyone's minds that we need to continually present and educate team members on various topics. In the past, we have had activities centered on specific topics such as National Wear Red Day, Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and National Blood Donor Month. This year, we're taking it up a notch! For example, for National Wear Red Day, we asked everyone to wear the color red and for National Breast Cancer Awareness month we asked everyone to wear the color pink on Fridays; then we gave out a different incentive each Friday. January is National Blood Donor month and that was the month that we hosted our blood drive which was a huge success! Each location (3 out of the 4 sites hosted a drive) set a goal for their blood drive, and our West Liberty plant not only reached their goal, they exceeded it! We are proud to say that **228 lives were positively impacted** because of the generosity of the West Liberty Foods team members!

We also have lots of wellness events scheduled for the near future, including: Lunch and Learns, a Wii Tournament (for National Health and Fitness Day at work), and in April (for National Volunteer Month), we have decided to volunteer our time at a local park and pick up trash, put new sand around the play area, and plant trees and flowers.

**What has made your Wellness for Life program a success?**

**Katrina:** I personally think that what has made our wellness program & wellness events such a success is the number of people at West Liberty Foods who are willing to donate their time for a good cause, and who have it in their heart to lend a helping hand to one another and to the community. We couldn't possibly ask for a better group of people! I also believe that the incentives that the wellness program disburses make it hard to say no! I think that we have really communicated well to our employees the BENEFITS of being a part of our Wellness for Life program. We have found that **Education and Communication are the keys!** The wellness team that we have also deserves so much credit for all of the hard work that they do. I think that having strong management support + a great wellness team is by far the core to establishing a great wellness program!

*"I am very impressed. This is truly an awesome program. I have told my family and friends about it....We are very fortunate to have this available to us. Any employee not taking advantage of it is missing the boat. Keep up the good work!"*

**Actual email sent to Angie and Katrina from a "Wellness for Life" participant**