Critical Success Factors for an Effective Workplace Wellness Program

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What We Will Share with You Today

- Critical success factors for an effective workplace wellness program
- Overview of City of Markham’s Wellness Program
- The importance of measures - baseline and ongoing data
- Key programming drivers
- Engaging employees and increasing employee participation
- Plans for future continued enhancement
City of Markham

- 1,000 regular full time employees, multi-unionized
  - 300 Firefighters - fire stations
  - 200 outside workers - multi-site
  - 500 office workers - multi-site
- Gender split - 69% male; 31% female
- Average age - 46
- Corporate culture
  - Lean
  - Fiscal accountability
  - Use of Excellence Canada (quality management) framework
Critical Success Factors - Wellness Program

- Executive sponsorship and visible support
- Embedded in organization’s strategic direction and frameworks
- Defined objectives and defined budget
- Engaged committee
- Measurement - baseline and ongoing
- Program alignment with demographic profile, needs and interests of employee population
- Effective partnership with a Wellness provider vendor
- Effective marketing
- Employee accessibility
Overview of City’s Wellness Program

• Wellness Program established in 2000
• Aligned with organization’s quality framework- Excellence Canada- specifically “staff engagement” outcome
• Wellness spend per year is approximately $60,000
• Baseline data established
• Cross organization Wellness Committee
• Healthy workplace policy developed in 2007
• Program deliverables a joint partnership
  • Vendor- annual programming, screenings, clinics, quarterly publications, Lunch and Learns, challenges, annual report
  • City- EAP, fitness membership, onsite programs (yoga, weight management, massage), annual data, Intranet site, training
City’s Wellness Mission

• The City of Markham is committed to providing Wellness programming, services and education to employees (and indirectly to the families of employees) for the purposes of enhancing the overall health and well being of employees as well as positively impacting organization effectiveness and productivity.

• Wellness programming, services and education will address the health concerns of the overall workforce as well as health needs and interests of employees across the organization.
City’s Wellness Program Objectives

• Enhance health and well being of employees
• Address overall health concerns of the organization
• Align with employee interests and needs
• Positively impact upon the organization’s engagement, effectiveness and productivity
• Enhance organizational culture
• Ensure alignment with the organization’s direction
Role of Wellness Committee

- The Committee has cross organization representation
- The Committee plays a number of key roles in moving forward the Wellness Program:
  - Advise
  - Champion
  - Support
  - Communicate to staff
Wellness Return on Investment

• Benefits of Wellness programs are well documented but are often difficult for organizations to measure/prove

• Organizations with health and productivity programs report 11% higher revenue per employee

• Estimate of cost of depression in workforce- $9,920/ee

• Average cost/year of a smoker to an organization is $3,396

• 80% of heart disease, stroke and Type II diabetes can be prevented through healthy lifestyle

• 25% of Canadians have 3 or more metabolic risk factors

• Wellness programs can reduce absenteeism/ee per year (potentially 1.5 to 1.7 days/ee)

Sources: Sun Life Canadian Health Index; Towers Watson Staying @ Work
City Wellness Program Measurement

- City established baseline data from start: drug utilization and costs, extended health care, absenteeism, LTD

- Return on investment based on:
  - City’s absenteeism year over year is less than key benchmarks (2013- 6.5 days per employee versus 12.5 days for public sector Stats Canada)
  - Escalating drug costs versus that of National Drug Expenditure trends (most recent cost differential was 7.6%)
  - LTD usage
  - EAP usage (we view a strong usage rate as preventative)
  - Wellness program participation rates
  - Municipal comparators
City Programming Determinants

- The City aligns its Wellness programming against the health profile of its demographic, employee needs/interests

- **Workforce health risk profile determined by:**
  - Healthcare issues related to City’s gender, age, job composition
  - Utilization rate by prescription categories
  - Reasons for EAP visits
  - Reasons for long term disability
  - Aggregate screening results

- **Employee needs and interests determined by:**
  - Bi-annual survey
  - Feedback from Committee
  - Program participation rates
Focus Areas for City’s Programming

• The results of the analysis of the City’s workforce health risk profile and employee interests/needs has led to a focus on the following Wellness areas:
  • Cardiovascular disease
  • Diabetes
  • Mental health and stress
Employee Engagement and Participation

• Key 2013/14 Wellness objective with our new vendor Centric Health- Increase employee access, engagement and participation
  • Increase employee access to Wellness programming, particularly males
  • Increase participation
Engagement Strategy

• Analyze employee interest survey data
• Use of Centric Health portal and City Intranet
• Development of a consolidated, month at a glance Wellness calendar on Intranet
• Use of mobile Wellness trucks and/or on-site programs at satellite offices to attract Firefighters and outside workers
• Ensure broad employee representation on Committee
• Continued development of programs that reflect interests of employees while also addressing health risk profile of organization
• Ensure programming location, timing and topics meet varied interests of staff
• Leverage Committee in terms of needs assessment and marketing
Results of Employee Interest Survey

• 21% respondent rate (100% increase over previous year)
• 81% of respondents interested in participating in Wellness Program but only 51% have participated
• Employees hear about program through e-news, Intranet, word of mouth, email
• Most popular Centric Health programs- Health and Wellness Fair, blood pressure machine, flu shot clinic, screenings and challenges
• Most popular City programs- subsidized fitness, onsite yoga, onsite massage
• Most listed reasons for not participating- too busy, inconvenient location or time, unaware of programs offered
Successes

- Bringing biometric and health screenings to Fire Stations
- Challenges- fitness, nutrition, stress/work life balance etc.
- Piloting yoga for men and lunch hour badminton- survey
- Increased EAP usage (from 11.4% to 18.3%) as a result of increased marketing and stigma reduction
- Wellness booth at Employee Appreciation Day
- Blood pressure machine
- Flu clinics
- On-site programming- weight management, yoga, massage, subsidized fitness membership
- Seminars targeted to outside worker interests
Less Successful

• Travelling displays
• Challenges based on individuals (versus teams)
• Use of portal (may be an issue of digital literacy, access to computer, workload)
• Not offering programming to multiple sites
Next Steps and Future Planning

- Continue to target specific departments in terms of location and programming
- Continue to monitor use of technology (portal)
- Focus on employee interests and workforce health risk profile
- Continue to focus on team challenges, screenings
- Enhance focus on mental health
- Monitor ROI
- Monitor participation
- Continued joint partnership with our Wellness vendor
Comments & Questions