## Best Practices for Wellness Programs

### Planning and Design

- **Know your audience**: Assess knowledge, attitudes, behaviors and health status using claims data, demographic data, biometric on-site testing, surveys, and/or focus groups.\(^1\)

- **Maximize program relevancy**: Engage fund participants to ensure that the program design is relevant to them and their families.\(^2\)

- **Facilitate and demonstrate respect**: Engage unions, management, workers, and families by working together toward the achievement of common goals.\(^2\)

- **Establish clear operating principles**: Set clear operating principles to help define priorities, direct program design, and facilitate the allocation of resources.\(^2\)

- **Start with achievable targets**: Build the program incrementally, using ongoing evaluation of employee participation, behavior change and organizational support.\(^2\)

- **Adopt consistent policies to support program aims**: Align program activities with the physical and organizational environment, e.g., if you provide tobacco cessation services, support tobacco use prohibitions on worksite premises.\(^1\)

- **Integrate related systems**: Make connections between current programs and policies and integrate them under the umbrella of total health.\(^2,3\)

- **Adopt and maintain a long-term outlook**: A long-term outlook increases the chance of sustainability and brings more value to an initiative.\(^2\)

### Implementation

- **Recruit leadership to champion the program**: Leaders should visibly demonstrate commitment and be active participants.\(^1\)

- **Engage mid-level management**: Mid-level management can respond to the needs/preferences of both workers and upper management, and can promote wellness programs and connect workers to appropriate resources.\(^2\)

- **Communicate**: Deliver clear and consistent messages to all stakeholders. Identify the most feasible and effective methods of communication for each stakeholder group.\(^1,2\)

- **Develop creative ways to stimulate participation**: Use testimonials from successful participants. Use incentives. Recognize members who achieve goals. Account for the work environment—location, type of work, employer policies—when creating ways to engage participants.\(^1,2\)

- **Ensure confidentiality**: Communicate your plans to fund participants to ensure confidentiality and adhere to standards meant to protect confidentiality.\(^2\)
• Track process/implementation data: To improve upon the program and present a snapshot of the program to relevant stakeholders, collect data such as: number of fund participants involved; time; costs; company policies that impact health; and employee/management satisfaction.¹, ²

• Measure and analyze outcome data: Gather data prior to implementation and at various times, post-implementation, to determine whether there were changes in participants’ health status and whether planned objectives were met.¹, ²

• Learn from experience: Make adjustments to the program based on results and feedback from stakeholders.²

References


To learn more about smoking cessation, visit www.workshifts.org.