Employee Wellness in your EDO and Community Businesses
The City and County of Denver Workplace Wellness Program

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Today’s Wellness Program Discussion

- Denver’s Wellness Program Journey
- How to get started
- Who to partner with
- Wellness Program with a limited budget
- When to measure investment
City of Denver Background

- 13,000 employees, including Public Safety & seasonals
- 9,220 employees taking City benefits with 2170 participating in a Wellness Incentive of $240.00 annual reimbursement
- Approximately 1000 employees across the city participate in onsite fitness, meditation, diabetes prevention, nutrition and wellbeing education
- 2016 medical premiums - $106M;
- Primary expenses: diabetes, cardiac and orthopedic
- $200K Wellness budget from our insurance carriers
- Wellness has no line item in the city budget
The Need for Change

The City of Denver needed to create a wellness program to

- **Reduce healthcare costs.**
- Engage the entire employee population, **flexible** to meet employees where they are.
- Encourage employees to **take an active role in their wellbeing** and become better healthcare consumers.
- **Use data** to inform wellness & benefits programming
Denver’s 5 Pillars of Wellbeing

### Component Definitions

- **Physical**
  - Feeling well. A healthy diet, maintaining a normal weight, and being physically active
    - Walking routes, encourage stair usage, healthy vending machine options

- **Social**
  - Quality relationships and contact with others
    - Team building activities (competitions), volunteer and community events

- **Spiritual**
  - Having direction and purpose, living life with values, ethics, and morals
    - Employee engagement, individual and team recognition

- **Emotional**
  - Expressing positive emotions and coping with demands
    - Employee Assistance Program resources (EAP), stress management education

- **Financial**
  - Effectively managing money and planning for the future
    - Retirement planning seminars, budgeting, financial education
Activate the Change

• Inventoried resources & with very little budget, how would the city create a wellness program?
• Examined data– claims experience, employee needs and interests, etc.
• Evaluated City culture– a carrot, not a stick
• Hired 2 interns to launch & manage the Wellness Program
• Created strategic goals, short term implementation and long term plan

Just get started – simply, manage and build
Our Wellness Plan for Action

Year 1 - Voluntary Participation
Monetary incentive for getting free preventative care (medical and dental). Offer lunch programs and educate.

Year 2 - Increase Engagement
High Deductible Health Plans with generously seeded HSAs.
Continued with same wellness incentive for voluntary participation.

Year 3 - Integrate Wellness Incentive into city benefit plans.
Provide HSA contribution for HDHP enrollees or premium discount for non-HDHP enrollees.
Implement the Change

Healthy Steps—
✓ Annual Doctor Visit
✓ Annual Dental Visit
✓ Health Assessment

Walking Path
"Motivation is what gets you started.
Habit is what keeps you going."
— Jim Ryun
A Cost Effective Wellness Program

- Established Wellness champions in departments as liaisons/promoters
- Also provided newsletters, posters, mobile testing, free classes, coaching, personalized support
- Utilized insurance provider free programs for first three years.
- Changed to high deductible plans saved the city money and increased employee awareness (consumerism).
- We haven’t been able to measure ROI year-to-year - but we know qualitatively that employees are making behavioral changes that should result in lower costs in the long term.
- Using insurance provider budget to pay for third party vendor in 2017.
- Employees who participate in wellness are more likely to be compliant with age/ gender appropriate cancer screenings.
Our Lessons Learned

• Third party portal tracking system in 2017 to get better measures and start measuring ROI
• Using the different insurance providers made year-to-year tracking nearly impossible
• More grassroots employee support than support from leadership
• Collaborating with existing wellness champions and committees throughout the city is extremely important
• Ongoing, regular communication is key
Thanks very much – Any questions?