

## Sample Business Plan

Employee Wellness Program for *(location)* VA Hospital

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## **Executive Summary**

### **Description**

Proposed establishment of a full-time Employee Wellness Coordinator and Wellness Planning Team to develop a comprehensive Employee Health Promotion Program.

### **Proposed Services**

Intended services will be determined based on an annual health assessment and survey of employees. Services to be provided will include, but may not be limited to, weight reduction, including components for healthy eating and physical activity, stress management, and tobacco cessation.

### **Target Market**

All employees of (*location*) VA Hospital will benefit from the Employee Health Promotion Program services. Specific services may be tailored to employees with unique health needs (i.e., tobacco users, overweight employees) on a voluntary basis. Generally, the employee population is 56 percent female with the median age of 46 years. Approximately one-third of our employee population is Veterans and may get additional health services through our hospital as patients.

### **Marketing Plan**

Employee health promotion programs and services will be marketed to all employees through email broadcasts, signage, and fliers.

### **Resources**

Estimated resources include the full-time employee equivalent (FTEE) for the Employee Wellness Coordinator and an additional \$5,000 annually for materials needed to offer wellness services. Private office space is also needed for the Coordinator to conduct individual meetings with employees and conduct routine business.

### **Description**

For years, (*location*) VA Hospital has offered a variety of educational programs to encourage the health of the staff. However, never has there been a comprehensive and targeted employee health promotion program in place. Currently, the staff at the (*location*) VA Hospital has a variety of health concerns impacting their health, productivity, and level of satisfaction. Establishment of an Employee Wellness Coordinator and interdisciplinary Wellness Planning Team is recommended to create a comprehensive program that will support success in achieving hospital goals. A full-time Employee Wellness Coordinator under Occupational Health would oversee program planning, implementation, and evaluation with the help of interdisciplinary volunteers serving as the Wellness Planning Team.

## Background

Research has shown that companies who develop a well-informed, health-conscious workforce can lower costs, reduce absenteeism, and raise productivity on the job. This is because healthy, fit workers have less health care expenses, fewer work-related injuries, fewer sick days, and greater productivity.

The American Journal of Preventative Medicine published a study in 2005 suggesting that employee health promotion programs may be the best way to keep health care costs down and increase employee productivity. Their study claimed a \$3 to \$4 return for every one dollar invested in employee health and wellness. This could mean an even greater return-on-investment at the national level.

Their study indicates that educating individuals and promoting the advantages of a healthy lifestyle could mean huge financial and other benefits for the country. Further, if employers can be encouraged by rewarding measurable outcomes to implement thoughtful, progressive wellness programs that were accepted and utilized by employees, the most affordable and effective version of health care reform would be achieved.

The work place is an ideal setting for health promotion activities because of the amount of time that people spend at work. Most major U.S. companies understand that a healthy work force is their most valuable economic asset, and for that reason, sponsor some form of health promotion for their employees. They have made a commitment to encourage healthy behaviors by creating a culture of wellness within their organization.

Veterans Health Administration (VHA) leadership recognizes that the health and well-being of the federal workforce is essential to providing Veterans the care and benefits that they have earned. "A healthier workforce means better morale, increased efficiency, reduced absenteeism, and lower health care costs. This translates into better care and services for the nation's Veterans." (John U. Sepúlveda, Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration, 2009).

## Organizational Assessment

While (*location*) VA Hospital has supported employee health promotion, past programs have failed to make an impact on their health outcomes. According to a recent survey of nearly 500 employees and employee health records, it is clear that the health of our employees is failing.

- 56 percent of employees have a body mass index (BMI) over 25, with 23 percent of employees classified as obese with a BMI over 30;
- 25 percent of staff report tobacco use;

- 67 percent of employees report feeling significant amounts of stress at work weekly;
- 98 percent of employees report they want a wellness program; and
- \$447 is spent for workers' compensation claims per each full-time equivalent each year, many due to back injuries.

With the current national health trends, it is expected that the percentage of overweight and obesity will continue to climb, likely further impacting the amount spent in worker's compensation claims for injuries.

### **Proposed Services**

A comprehensive employee health promotion program that focuses on the most crucial needs of the organization is highly recommended as a way of preventing a rise in costs and restoring the productivity and health of the staff. A health assessment and survey of employees will be conducted annually to ensure that services provided target the most crucial health needs of the population. Annually, a strategic plan will be presented to management regarding the intended goals and direction of the program.

### **Objective**

Designate a full-time Employee Wellness Coordinator to establish an Employee Wellness Committee and develop a comprehensive Employee Health Promotion Program that will specifically address the most crucial health needs of our employee population with respect to hospital and VHA goals.

### Proposed Plan

Goal	Method	Timeline
Decrease the percent of employees with elevated BMI (greater than 30) to 20 percent or less in one fiscal year (FY).	Implement intensive weight reduction program, MOVEmployee!, for qualifying staff (BMI >30).  Establish employee gym.	Implement MOVEmployee! within 6 months.  Determine resources need for gym and develop proposal within 1 year. Target 3 years for gym opening.
Reduce percent of staff using tobacco to 20 percent in year 1; 15 percent by year 3.	Offer nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) and tobacco cessation support group to staff.  Enforce no-smoking areas.	Begin NRT and groups in 3 months.  Begin enforcement in 1 month.
Decrease number of staff reporting high level of stress to 30 percent or less.	Hold focus groups related to sources of stress.  Offer 1-day stress management workshop quarterly.	Initiate focus groups in 3 months.  Begin quarterly classes in 6 months.
Freeze or reduce worker's compensation expenditures related to back injury.	Provide mobile education, specific to employees required to lift frequently, regarding ergonomics, safe lifting procedures, and core strengthening exercises.	Mobile education to begin in 2 months.

### Proposed Employee Wellness Committee

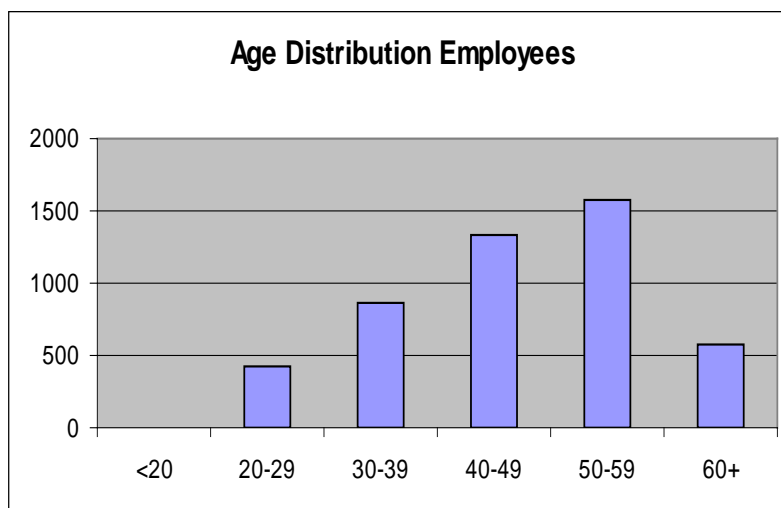
The Employee Wellness Committee should include, but is not limited to the following health professionals:

- Physician and/or Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner (ARNP);
- Nursing representative (inpatient and outpatient);
- Occupational Health representative;

- Mental Health representative;
- Physical Therapist and/or Kinesiotherapist;
- Registered Dietitian;
- Human Resources representative;
- Union representative(s);
- Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) representative;
- Safety representative;
- Additional liaisons from each service and/or community based outpatient clinic (CBOC) may be added as committee members or as another form of representation; and
- Other stakeholders, including Director's Office, Facility Management, Environmental Management, and Laboratory Service may be invited on an as-needed basis.

### Target Market Analysis

Of the 4,500 employees at (*location*) VA Hospital, 56 percent are female. The median age is 48, with the following age distribution.



**Figure 1: Age Distribution Chart**

Approximately one-third of our employee population is Veterans and may get additional health services through our hospital as patients.

The Employee Health Promotion Program at (*location*) VA Hospital is open to all employees on a voluntary basis. Based on particular population needs identified through our annual assessment, there may be specific services created with a segment of employees in mind. These programs may be tailored to interested employees with unique health needs (i.e., tobacco users, overweight employees, etc.) for which the demographic make-up of these segmented groups may be unique.

## **Marketing Plan**

To ensure that all employees are aware of the services available to them, materials will be distributed through New Employee Orientation, Human Resources, and Occupational Health. Employee health promotion programs and services will be marketed as offered to all employees through email broadcasts, signage, and fliers. Additionally, an Intranet site with an events calendar is available to employees.

## **Resources**

Estimated resources for the first year of implementation include the FTEE for the Employee Wellness Coordinator and an additional \$5,000 for materials needed to offer wellness services. Additional resources may be requested upon needs determined in annual assessments. Additional resources will be presented and requested formally as warranted. Other resources anticipated include a private office space for the coordinator to conduct individual meetings with employees and conduct routine business. In-kind resources such as use of Medical Media, Reproduction, and Information Resources Management Systems (IRMS) support of programs are anticipated.

