



*Get Up, Get Active!*

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## FAQS AND TIPS ABOUT EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMS

### WHAT IS WELLNESS?

Wellness is the personal experience of physical and mental health. According to Health Canada, workplace health promotion programs are meant to “encourage and increase the health of employees as well as improve the ‘health’ of the organization as a whole”.

### WHY BECOME A HEALTHY WORKPLACE?

- Enhanced community image and P.R.
  - Employee productivity
  - Employee recruitment and retainment
  - Increased morale and team building
  - Lower health care costs
  - Increased profits by less sick days and injury claims
- Injuries
  - Absenteeism
  - Long-term disability frequency and costs
  - Stress and internal conflict
  - Employee turn-over

### 5 STEPS TO CREATING A SMALL BUSINESS WELLNESS PROGRAM

#### Step 1. Build Commitment

The employer or manager must be involved. Plan a wellness committee or support group to sustain the initiative.

#### Step 2. Find Out What Employees Want

Have an informal discussion and find out your employees' concerns regarding safety and their health. Ask about environment, personal resources and health practices. “Piggy back” it onto a regular meeting and ask for input, or put up a suggestion box /e-box and promote it to employees.

#### Step 3. Put Together A Plan

Determine the needs of all employees balanced with the resources available (time, people, money, expertise, access to library/association/internet resources). Set goals that are achievable and measurable! Create a health promotion plan based on the specific needs of your employees, and have written objectives, responsibilities, and a timeline for each idea.

#### Step 4. Put Activities In Motion

Select activities that improve environment, personal resources and health practices. Promote initiatives with posters, e-updates, etc.

#### Step 5. Follow Up and Revise

Determine what works and what doesn't for your workplace, as one size doesn't fit all. Check attendance of programs, get ongoing feedback, and re-evaluate future plans to justify continuing or expanding activities. Keep track of employee absenteeism and other cost drivers to see the impact of the Wellness Program.

### HEALTH AND WELLNESS THEMES TO GET YOU THINKING

- Physical activity and fitness
- Nutrition and healthy weight management
- Smoking cessation and lifestyle moderation
- Heart, stroke and cancer prevention
- Stress and mental health
- Work and life balance
- Holidays and seasons
- Theme months



*PERSONAL TRAINING & ACTIVE REHABILITATION*  
Adapted from material donated by Sarah Seeds, BA Kinesiology  
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## WORKPLACE WELLNESS ONLINE RESOURCES

- [cms.nortia.org/Org/Org149/Content/Community.asp](https://cms.nortia.org/Org/Org149/Content/Community.asp) Active Civic Employees network
- [www.activelivingatwork.com](http://www.activelivingatwork.com) Active Living At Work: stats, information, business case
- [www.actonowbc.gov.bc](http://www.actonowbc.gov.bc) ActNow BC: Tools, resources, posters
- [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/bppb/workplacehealth](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/bppb/workplacehealth) Health Canada Workplace Health
- [www.ccohs.com](http://www.ccohs.com) Canadian Centre For Occupational Health and Safety
- [www.healthyworkplaceweek.ca](http://www.healthyworkplaceweek.ca) Canada's Healthy Workplace Week
- [www.bcrpa.bc.ca](http://www.bcrpa.bc.ca) British Columbia Parks and Recreation: Fitness Leaders
- [www.activecommunities.bc.ca](http://www.activecommunities.bc.ca) Active Communities
- [www.activecomoxvalley.ca](http://www.activecomoxvalley.ca) Active Comox Valley
- [www.csep.ca](http://www.csep.ca) Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology
- [www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca) Health Canada
- [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpfb](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpfb) Canadian Food Guide
- [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/index.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/index.html) Canadian Physical Activity Guide
- [www.heartandstroke.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.ca) Heart and Stroke Foundation
- [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca) Canadian Cancer Society
- [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca) Dietitians of Canada
- [www.diabetes.ca](http://www.diabetes.ca) Canadian Diabetes Association

## 4 MAIN STRATEGIES FOR PROGRAMMING

### i. Awareness & Education

- Displays including educational posters, pamphlets & guides from health associations:
- Active Maps for trails, parks and recreational facilities in your community
- Employee 'Info-Kits' outlining workplace health and safety
- 'Lunch 'n 'Learn' mini-seminar series
- Wellness newsletters and weekly health e-updates

### ii. Skill Development

- Incentive programs like Active Comox Valley Passports to Activity; the 10,000 Steps Program (with pedometers), and Stairway to Health (to increase use of stairs)
- Exercise journeys that have teams cross a map of Canada or the province by using exercise logs to track progress/kms in teams
- 'Biggest Loser' contests, measuring before and after with goal to decrease body fat and maintain a healthy B.M.I. It is important to focus on healthy weight management, **not** weight loss so that the initiative encourages healthy long-term behaviour and inclusivity.
- Daily walking groups and special interest clubs or professional instruction in walking form, Pilates, yoga, weight-training, healthy nutrition. Fitness clinics, like 10-week 'Learn to Run' clinic

### iii. Supportive Environments

- Bike racks
- Showers
- Clean stairwells
- Space for fitness/exercise
- Healthy food options in vending machines/cafeterias
- Smoke-free environment

### iv. Policies

- Flex-time to allow for commuting or exercise
- Financial health allowance to go towards fitness memberships, classes, and equipment.
- Employee group discounts on fitness memberships.
- Healthy food policies within workplace



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