

# At-A-Glance: Enhancing employee physical well-being.

## New trends in wellness.

While traditional employer-sponsored wellness programs primarily focus on physical health, many employers now include emotional health, and even job satisfaction, as important components of their program design. Today, some employers are shifting toward an even more holistic approach by including topics such as financial security and social connectedness opportunities.



## Why enhance employee physical well-being?

With this shift to expand the scope of employee well-being programs, there continues to be the need to stay true to the fundamentals—namely, to create a workplace culture and environment that encourages healthier daily habits that maintain and improve physical health. According to the Fidelity Investments® and the National Business Group on Health® annual survey on corporate health and well-being practices, the most popular physical well-being programs continue to be smoking cessation (91%), physical activities/challenges (86%) and weight management (79%).<sup>1</sup>

There also continues to be strong evidence suggesting a link between employee total well-being and productivity. Research shows that employees with high well-being are not only physically healthier, they also recover more quickly, have fewer sick days, better manage pain and stress, have lower levels of presenteeism and live longer than people with low well-being.<sup>2</sup> Poor nutrition habits and inadequate physical activity are significant risk factors for obesity and potentially costly chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, certain cancers and depression.<sup>3</sup>

To help address this, employers could provide benefits, programs and policies that:

- Assist employees in better managing diagnosed health conditions.
- Promote physical activity and healthier eating habits to maintain or achieve a healthier BMI, blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar levels.
- Help employees improve their sleep and better manage stress.
- Provide support for quitting tobacco.
- Encourage employees to get appropriate preventive care and select high-quality health providers.
- Improve their financial well-being, achieve higher levels of work/life balance and strengthen their social connections.

# ♥ How to help improve physical well-being at work.

Move	Eat	Care
Provide standing desks.	Deliver produce to worksites.	Offer “mothers rooms” for nursing moms.
Host walking meetings.	Offer healthier menu options in cafeteria.	Offer educational programs on stress management and sleep.
Provide onsite exercise equipment and classes.	Eliminate sugar-sweetened beverages.	Offer tobacco cessation programs and resources.
Offer desk stretching clinics.	Create guidelines for offering healthier foods at company meetings.	Provide diabetes supplies at no cost.
Provide a fitness activity device check-out program.	Host onsite cooking demonstrations and classes.	Provide access to condition management programs.
Launch a “take the stairs” campaign.	Provide access to an onsite registered dietician.	Create a pre-shift stretching policy and offer mid-meeting energizers.



## More information?

For more information on how to improve employee total well-being beyond physical health, please refer to other At-A-Glance publications including Enhancing Employee Social Well-Being.

<sup>1</sup> Fidelity Investments® and the National Business Group on Health®, 8th Annual Survey on Health and Well-being, <https://www.fidelity.com/about-fidelity/employer-services/Companies-Expand-Well-Being-Programs-and-Increase-Financial-Incentives>, accessed February 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Well-Being Concepts, <https://www.cdc.gov/hrqol/wellbeing.htm>; accessed February 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/aag/dnpao.htm>; accessed February 2020.

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