



Workplace Wellness Strategy at a Glance

About this strategy

A well-designed workplace wellness initiative offers an organizational foundation to support employee health and encourages positive lifestyle behaviors like adequate physical activity, healthful eating, tobacco-free environments, support for nursing moms and stress management.

What does the evidence say?

Adult Americans spend a large portion of their waking hours at work, providing workplaces with a great opportunity to affect employee health on a larger scale.

In fact, a 2010 review by the Community Preventative Services Task Force, housed at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), found that a comprehensive workplace wellness initiative can exert a positive influence on health behaviors. Well-designed initiatives can also have an impact on employer financial measures like healthcare utilization, worker productivity and employee turnover.

Activities

Local public health grantees will assist a group of employers (called a collaborative) in the following activities:

- Foundational activities: gaining leadership support, forming a wellness committee, developing a brand and communications timeline, securing a budget and assessing the workplace environment to begin planning.
- Strategies: employers will work with one or more strategies to improve the work environment in healthy eating, active living, tobacco reduction, breastfeeding support or resiliency (formerly called stress management).
- Networking meetings: grantees will continue to build a group of employers working on wellness in their communities through regular networking meetings to sustain the initial work started in the collaborative.

Priority populations

While SHIP focuses efforts across the entire population, it makes sense to affect communities with the greatest health disparities. These priority populations for the workplace include:

- Workplaces with fewer than 100 employees. Minnesota and national data show that while those employers are interested in implementing an initiative, they are the least likely to have an established wellness program.
- Workplaces with more adults over age 45 compared to the general adult population. Workforce projections show a growth of older employees within the workforce, and this age marks the start where preventable chronic diseases are more apparent.
- Industries that historically offer lower wages (and may not offer health care benefits) such as hospitality, retail, service, some manufacturing and care-provider industries.
- Workplaces that employ a significant number of limited or non-English speaking workers and/or workers who have limited education.
- Workplaces that employ a population with a high percentage of workers who are experiencing health disparities identified through grantee county-specific data.

Requirements

- Recruit and run a collaborative group of employers in selected communities.
- Use the Workplace Materials and customize them for your group.
- Invite participants to attend a quarterly networking meeting after the collaborative.
- Stay current with best practices through the Making It Better Log, Basecamp, Workplace Webinars and calls, and regional meetings.

Important dates

Webinars and critical information will be listed in Basecamp and the Making It Better log.

Resources

- [MDH Website – SHIP Workplace Wellness Strategy](https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/workwellness/index.html)
(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/workwellness/index.html>)
- [Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development](https://mn.gov/deed/data/) (<https://mn.gov/deed/data/>)
- [Centers for Disease Control – Worksite Wellness Resources](https://www.cdc.gov/workplacehealthpromotion/index.html)
(<https://www.cdc.gov/workplacehealthpromotion/index.html>)

Minnesota Department of Health
Office of Statewide Health Improvement Initiatives
85 E. 7th Place, Suite 220
PO Box 64882
St. Paul, MN 55164-0882
651-201-5443
Health.OSHII@state.mn.us
www.health.state.mn.us

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