



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT  
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Tuesday, March 30, 2004

**MEMORANDUM FOR: HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES**

FROM: KAY COLES JAMES, Director

Subject: 2004 HealthierFeds Campaign

I am pleased to announce that we have launched a new OPM website to support our 2004 *HealthierFeds* campaign. The *HealthierFeds* initiative places emphasis on educating Federal employees and retirees on healthy living and best-treatment strategies. It is well established that physical activity, nutrition, preventive screenings and healthy lifestyle choices all reduce demand on the health care system. *HealthierFeds* brings attention to the healthcare industry's "demand" side, incorporating personal responsibility and the consumer's role in driving both quality and affordability. It is aimed at educating the Federal workforce on how they can take greater responsibility for their personal health.

We intend *HealthierFeds* to be a model for agencies as well as for private employers. And, we envision it as a collaborative effort. We have been partnering with Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHB) carriers this past year and, with the introduction of the new website, are expanding the scope of the *HealthierFeds* campaign to include all Federal agencies. We plan to include *HealthierFeds* on the agenda for the Chief Human Capital Officers Council. It is a win-win situation for everyone.

*HealthierFeds* fully supports President Bush's *HealthierUS* initiative for a healthier America: Be physically active every day, eat a nutritious diet, get preventive screenings and make healthy choices. *HealthierFeds* also supports the *Steps to a HealthierUS*, led by Secretary Tommy G. Thompson of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that advances the *HealthierUS* goal of helping Americans live longer, better, and healthier lives. The Steps includes both personal responsibility for the choices Americans make and social responsibility to ensure that policy makers support programs that foster healthy behaviors and prevent disease. The Steps initiative envisions a healthy, strong U.S. population supported by a health care system in which diseases are prevented when possible, controlled when necessary, and treated when appropriate. This initiative is a shift in the traditional approach to the health of our citizens, moving us from a disease care system to a health care system.

**HealthierUS**

President Bush's *HealthierUS* Initiative is based on the premise that increasing personal fitness and becoming healthier is critical to achieving a better and longer life. Extensive research, much of it conducted or funded by the Federal Government, has shown that improving overall health and thus preventing disease and premature death, is as easy as making small adjustments and

improvements in the activities of daily life. The President's HealthierUS Initiative uses the resources of the Federal Government to alert Americans to the vital health benefits of simple and modest improvements in physical activity, nutrition, and behavior.

The guiding principles for *HealthierFeds* are based on my perspective for good health-care policy. The first principle is that there are smart consumers who are capable of making wise health-care decisions. Second, the relationship between the physician and patient should drive health-care decisions. Third, it is competition in the health-care market that promotes innovation and produces better health-care options and higher quality care. And fourth, it is up to patients to be involved and responsible.

The 2004 *HealthierFeds* campaign will be comprised of three major components: 1) education and awareness, 2) personal progress and responsibility, and 3) benchmarking/best practices. OPM will serve as a central source for healthy lifestyle communications to both agencies and individual employees, primarily through the HealthierFeds website at [HealthierFeds.opm.gov](http://HealthierFeds.opm.gov). The website will include health information for both employees and agencies, FEHB carriers' information, and downloadable posters and other materials. OPM will also sponsor a series of internal and external events and "challenges" encouraging both agencies and employees to become more aware of healthy lifestyles and to take personal responsibility for their own health. Finally, OPM along with other *HealthierFeds* partners will identify and recognize outstanding *HealthierFeds* initiatives and best practices.

We will continue our work with FEHB carriers to help promote healthy lifestyles. We believe that Federal employees and their families are intelligent health care consumers, and it is to everyone's benefit to provide them with sound information. We also believe educating the Federal population holds great potential for more patient involvement in health care decision-making and, consequently, more consumer responsibility. We will also look for ways in which the *HealthierFeds* campaign can help agencies in their health promotion activities for Federal employees.

We are very excited about the 2004 *HealthierFeds* campaign and invite all agencies to become involved with this initiative to build a healthier Federal workforce. Through these activities, the Federal community can demonstrate ways by which we can improve health care and lifestyle choices.

We ask that your agency designate a point of contact for future communications and information on the *HealthierFeds* campaign. (Some agency human resources and/or work/life coordinators may already be involved in health promotion activities which could tie into this campaign). Please contact us at [HealthierFeds@OPM.gov](mailto:HealthierFeds@OPM.gov) with this information.

### **Questions and Information**

For additional information, agency Chief Human Capital Officers and/or Human Resources (HR) Directors may contact their assigned OPM Human Capital Officers. Employees should contact their agency human resources offices for assistance.

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers  
Human Resources Directors