



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

Employee Services

Thursday, July 16, 2015

MEMORANDUM FOR: Human Resources Directors

FROM: MARK D. REINHOLD ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, EMPLOYEE SERVICES AND CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER

Subject: 2014 WellCheck Results

I am pleased to share the results of WellCheck (WC) 2014, an online assessment offered to Federal agencies to help assess health and wellness programs. This evidence-based tool helps agencies determine how effective their worksite health and wellness programs are in developing a healthy workforce, and it is part of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) commitment to help agencies as specified in the June 23, 2014 Presidential Memorandum on [Enhancing Workplace Flexibilities and Work-Life Programs](#) (the PM). WC 2014 measured 131 evidence-based workplace strategies that research indicates impact health and wellness. Compared to previous WC assessments, Federal agencies have improved their efforts to implement comprehensive worksite health and wellness programs, especially with regard to addressing vaccine-preventable diseases, occupational health and safety, and tobacco-free living.

BACKGROUND

WC 2014 is based on the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Worksite Health ScoreCard \(HSC\)](#). The survey has 16 sections that focus on leading causes of preventable death and major illness in the United States. The results of the assessment reflect the relative impact of proven health promotion strategies. The assessment sections are:

- Tobacco-Free Living (10 questions)
- Nutrition (13 questions)
- Lactation Support (5 questions)
- Physical Activity (10 questions)
- Weight Management (5 questions)
- Stress Management (8 questions)
- Depression (8 questions)
- High Blood Pressure (8 questions)
- High Cholesterol (7 questions)
- Diabetes (7 questions)
- Signs, Symptoms, and Emergency Response to Heart Attack and Stroke (10 questions)
- Occupational Health and Safety (11 questions)
- Vaccine-Preventable Diseases (6 questions)
- Organizational Supports (21 questions)

- Linkages to Related Programs (8 questions)
- Worksite Background Information (4 questions)

OPM will provide agency Worksite Health and Wellness Coordinators a Governmentwide WC report, as well as an individual report with information on how to use the results and recommended next steps.

RESULTS

291 worksites, from 36 different Federal agencies, participated in the WC assessment. The average score across participating worksites was 61.5 percent (176 out of 286 possible points). Individual worksite scores ranged from 28 to a perfect score of 286. On average, agencies scored the highest in addressing vaccine-preventable diseases, occupational health and safety, and tobacco-free living. Agencies have the most room for improvement in the areas of nutrition, lactation support, and organizational supports. [1] The high-impact wellness strategies that agencies use the most are:

- Influenza (flu) vaccinations at the worksite (84 percent)
- One or more functioning automated external defibrillator in place (82 percent)
- A written policy banning tobacco use at the worksite (79 percent)
- A private space (other than a restroom) to express breast milk (77 percent)
- Stress management programs (75 percent)
- An on-site exercise facility (70 percent)

TOP AGENCY WORKSITES

The PM stresses the importance of sharing best practices that support the productive use of worksite health and wellness programs. The ten worksites with the highest scores were:

- Transportation – National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
- Homeland Security – Immigration and Customs Enforcement
- Defense – Army Installation Management Command, USA-Detroit Arsenal
- NASA – Langley Research Center
- Agriculture – Forest Service
- Homeland Security – Federal Emergency Management Agency Headquarters, Office of the Component Chief Human Capital Officer
- Defense – Defense Finance and Accounting Services, Cleveland
- Homeland Security – Federal Law Enforcement Training Center
- Health and Human Services – National Institutes of Health

[1] When strong organizational supports are in place, agencies can achieve maximum benefits of worksite health and wellness programs. Examples of organizational support strategies measured on WC include, but are not limited to, having a comprehensive health and wellness policy, briefing senior leadership, providing training for managers on the value of worksite health and wellness, conducting health risk appraisals, having an official communication strategy, having an active worksite health and wellness committee, and systematically gathering data to evaluate programs.

- Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Over the next year, OPM will host forums to showcase best practices from these leading worksites. Congratulations to the WC Top Ten!

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

Increasing the availability and use of worksite health and wellness programs, as directed by the PM, depends on agencies translating the WC results into action. OPM recommends four next steps:

1. Implement Required or Strongly Recommended Interventions – The WC 2014 assessed 12 wellness strategies that are required by law or are strongly correlated to employee health and wellness. Worksite health and wellness programs have the potential to dramatically improve employee health by fully implementing these strategies:

- More than 50 percent of the food and beverage choices available in vending machines, cafeterias, snack bars, or other purchase points are healthy
- Provide nutritional information (beyond standard nutrition information on labels) on sodium, calories, trans fats, or saturated fats for foods and beverages sold in worksite cafeterias, snack bars, or other purchase points
- Identify healthier food and beverage choices with signs or symbols
- Have a written policy on lactation supports for employees
- Provide a private space (other than a restroom) that may be used by an employee to express breast milk
- Provide flexible scheduling, unpaid break times, and/or paid break times to allow mothers to express breast milk
- Provide work-life balance/life-skills programs
- Provide training for managers on identifying and reducing workplace stress-related issues
- Provide training for managers on dealing with employee depression
- Provide training for managers on the value of worksite health and wellness programs
- Have a policy that allows employees to use flexible scheduling or excused absence to participate in worksite health and wellness activities
- Promote the benefits of influenza (flu) vaccinations through brochures, videos, posters, pamphlets, newsletters or other written or online information

2. Communicate Health Insurance Benefits – CDC endorses specific health benefits and wellness practices that have been shown to improve health and prevent disease. Data was collected on whether worksites provided information to employees about health insurance coverage or wellness programs addressing five important conditions:

1. Tobacco cessation medication and counseling;
2. Depression medication and mental health counseling;
3. Cholesterol or lipid control medication;
4. Blood pressure control medication; and
5. Diabetes medication and supplies.

The WC results indicate 58 percent or less of the surveyed worksites communicate these benefits to employees.

3. Share Promising Practices and Resources – OPM encourages agencies to share effective practices with one another, as well as across individual worksites. The results of WC 2014 indicate larger worksites are more likely to have comprehensive programs than their smaller counterparts. Challenges at smaller worksites may be addressed by implementing centralized, agency-wide initiatives and/or having larger worksites share resources with smaller worksites.

4. Focus on Organizational Supports – Research indicates that an effective worksite health and wellness program is fully embedded in the agency’s organizational culture. Successful programs are developed not only on evidence-based health interventions, but also have:

- A comprehensive health and wellness policy;
- Senior leadership support;
- Training for managers on the value of worksite health and wellness;
- An official communication strategy;
- An active worksite health and wellness committee; and
- Robust metrics and evaluation programs that demonstrate impact.

These critical elements have the potential to influence all of the other strategies measured on WC and drive a highly-effective worksite health and wellness program.

If you have any questions regarding WC 2014, you may contact Julie Brill (Julie.Brill@opm.gov) or worklife@opm.gov.

cc: CHCOs, Deputy CHCOs, Worksite Health and Wellness Coordinators, and National Prevention Council Members