

Creating a Healthier Worksite



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The Vermont Department of Health can help.

We're here to assist you as you set about creating or expanding your worksite wellness program. For additional information, contact your local Health Department office. Call us toll-free or fill out our online contact form: <http://healthvermont.gov/contact/contact.aspx>

This guide can also be found online at the Vermont Department of Health website:
<http://healthvermont.gov/family/fit/worksitewellness.aspx>

Creating a Healthier Worksite

The Case for Worksite Wellness

The physical and mental health of your employees is good for your business or organization. Studies show the clear health and economic benefits of a worksite wellness program:

- decreased absenteeism and employee turnover
- lower health care costs
- savings on downtime and temporary help needed due to illness

Yet behavioral risk factors — tobacco use, poor nutrition and physical inactivity — are the leading causes of preventable death, nationally and in our state. In Vermont:

- Every year, more than 850 people die from diseases that can be attributed to tobacco. Smoking leads to or complicates asthma, heart disease, cancer, lung disease, stroke, low birth weight in babies, and infant mortality.
- 60% of adults are overweight or obese, putting them at higher risk for many serious chronic health conditions — diabetes, heart disease, osteoarthritis, stroke, gallbladder disease and certain types of cancer.
- 17% of adults have no leisure time physical activity, and fewer than 60% meet physical activity guidelines.

Because many adults spend so much time at their worksite, employers can have a real influence on these health behaviors. And employees who can see that their employer cares about their health and wellbeing are more likely to have higher morale and dedication to their work, and experience less stress.

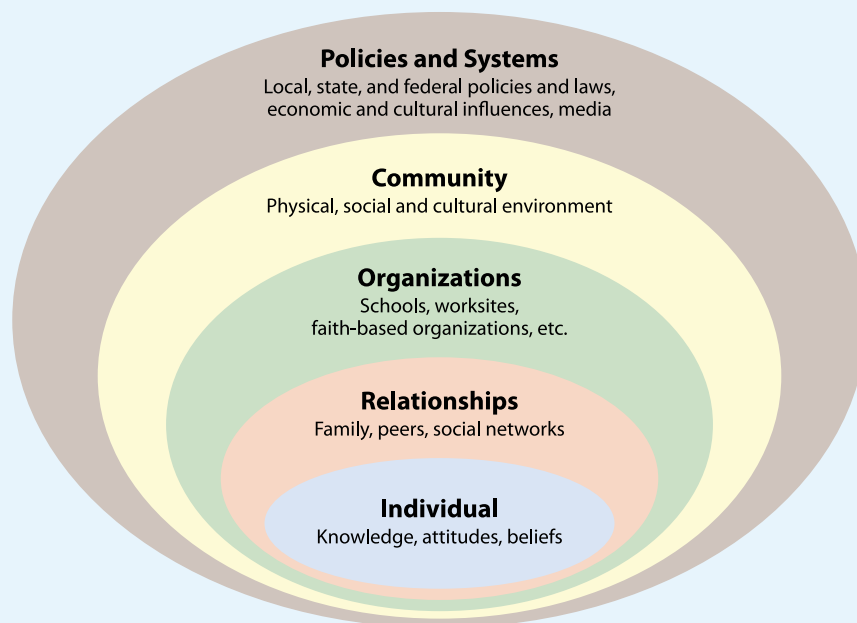
About this Guide

The purpose of the *Vermont Worksite Wellness Resource — Creating a Healthier Worksite* is to guide you through the steps to design and sustain a wellness program that fits the scale and culture of your organization. The focus here is on promoting physical and mental health, reducing the major risk factors that lead to chronic disease — poor nutrition, physical inactivity, tobacco use and substance abuse — and on supporting immunizations and breastfeeding.

In the following pages you will find guidance for:

- recruiting a wellness team, assessing the organization, surveying employee interest, determining goals and objectives (Chapter 1)
- creating a supportive environment (Chapter 2)
- engaging, motivating and communicating with employees (Chapter 3)
- choosing and implementing programs and strategies (Chapter 4)
- evaluating your efforts (Chapter 5)
- tools and resources to support your work (Toolkit)

The Vermont Prevention Model



Vermont's Prevention Model, based on a five-level Social-Ecological Model, describes multiple levels of interventions aimed at improving health. This model recognizes that, although individuals are ultimately responsible for making healthy choices, behavior change is more likely and more sustainable when the environment supports individual efforts. Comprehensive prevention and health promotion programs, to be most effective for the long term, and to reach the largest number of people, should address multiple levels of the model.

The ultimate goal is to implement interventions that make it easier for people to make the healthy choice, emphasizing the importance of prioritizing community and policy/system level strategies.



Why Wellness?

Worksites are a great place to focus on changing behavior for a variety of reasons. In an average day, people spend more time at their workplace than anywhere else outside the home. The workplace lends itself to policy and environmental changes that encourage and support healthy habits. Employees who participate in worksite wellness programs perform better at work, miss less work and are happier.

Creating a “culture of wellness” at your worksite takes time and planning. This section of the resource will focus on how to build the foundation for your wellness program through careful assessment and planning.

What is the vision/mission/purpose of your company’s wellness program?

Does your organization already have a vision and mission? Just in the same way your organization may base its activities and priorities on its vision and mission, so should your wellness program. Aligning the two creates an easier pathway for leadership to understand and support your goals and objectives.

Is your company’s leadership ready for wellness?

If so, great! Having leadership support is the backbone of any successful employee wellness program. Organizational leadership is crucial in obtaining financial resources, linking your wellness program goals to business outcomes, and implementing policy and environmental changes in the workplace.

If not, getting leadership support should be your first task. It’s important to inform and engage leadership with your wellness vision. Making your case involves communicating the benefits of the program, your vision, outcomes and any assessment or employee feedback.

Resources you can use to support the need for a wellness program at your organization:

- *The Economics of Well-Being*, Gallup:
<http://www.gallup.com/strategicconsulting/126908/Economics-Wellbeing.aspx>
- *Worksite Health 101 Training Manual*, CDC National Healthy Worksite:
www.cdc.gov/nationalhealthyworksite/docs/wh101_training-manual_09.03.13_v3-508.pdf

The Wellness Team

Form a wellness team to ensure representation and input from all areas of the organization — and to share the work. Recruit wellness team members from all areas of the organization:

- leadership
- organizational development
- Employee Assistance Program
- food service
- maintenance
- finance
- human resources
- individual departments
- marketing/public relations
- sales
- board members
- safety
- insurance providers
- occupational health

A wellness team can:

- assess the health risks and current lifestyle behaviors of employees through health interest/needs surveys.
- assess current policies and environmental factors that may affect employee wellness.
- evaluate existing resources and gaps in services.
- plan and implement the program.
- conduct financial planning for implementation of the wellness program.
- establish and enhance relationships with other community organizations and government agencies. For example, consider partnering with environmental agencies and groups to encourage walking or biking to work. This increases physical activity and decreases pollution — a win-win situation.

Toolkit ▶ *Employee Interest Survey*

Assessment

Assessments should be completed before implementing programs to ensure they meet the needs of employees and the organization. Conduct an assessment of the organization and the employee. The assessment of your organization can include the physical and cultural environment, policies, health benefit design and current wellness programming. A good understanding of current employee behaviors and interest areas will help you tailor the wellness program to your organization, and the data you gather can serve as a baseline for future evaluation.

The organizational assessment:

- determines your worksite's strengths
- draws attention to areas in need of improvement
- highlights opportunities to make the worksite more supportive of healthy behaviors (e.g., healthy food in vending machines, no smoking policies, or encouraging walking during break times)

Toolkit ▶ *Organizational Assessment*

The employee assessment includes items such as:

- health screenings
- employee interests
- employee needs

Toolkit ▶ *Employee Interest Survey*

Creating Goals and Objectives

Once the assessments are completed, use the information gathered to establish goals and objectives for your program. Goals are broad statements that describe what is to be accomplished.

Objectives state the expected amount of change in behavior, attitude, knowledge or condition to whom by when. Objectives should:

- have measurable language such as “increase” or “decrease”
- identify a specific target population
- clearly identify the behavior, attitude, condition or knowledge to be changed
- establish the time frame within which an activity takes place
- determine the magnitude of the anticipated change (when possible)
- contain a precise definition of the way change is measured

Make your objectives “**SMART**”:

- S**pecific
- M**easurable
- A**chievable
- R**ealistic
- T**ime sensitive

Goal 1: Our workplace will have a healthy food policy in place for on-site cafeterias and vending machines.

- Objective 1:** By year 1, recipes will be modified with the assistance of food service staff.
- Objective 2:** By year 2, a list of foods to be served will be generated.
- Objective 3:** By year 2, cost estimates will be gathered from different vendors for the selected foods and ingredients.

Goal 2: Our workplace will promote an active lifestyle.

- Objective 1:** By year 1, a policy will be in place allowing flextime for physical activity.
- Objective 2:** By year 2, maps of nearby trails and walking routes will be provided to all employees.

Goal 3: Our workplace will be smoke free.

- Objective 1:** By year 2, a written policy will be in place prohibiting tobacco use/smoking anywhere on the property.
- Objective 2:** By year 3, promotional signs and paycheck stuffers will be distributed promoting the toll-free Vermont quit line (1-800-QUIT-NOW).

Goal 4: Our workplace will be breastfeeding friendly.

- Objective 1:** By year 2, a written policy will be in place which supports a woman’s choice to breastfeed and outlines the accommodations and benefits available to her.
- Objective 2:** Educational packets about breastfeeding will be developed and provided to all expectant parents.

How Much Will a Wellness Program Cost?

Cost will vary widely from workplace to workplace, depending on whether the employer or employee pays all costs or if the costs are shared. The Wellness Councils of America (WELCOA) estimates the cost per employee to be between \$100 and \$150 per year to produce a return on investment of \$300 to \$450.

For more info ► <http://www.welcoa.org/freeresources/pdf/rongoetzel011912.pdf>

More comprehensive programs will likely result in a greater return on investment due to lower health care costs and decreased absenteeism. CDC's Return on Investment Calculators can estimate the cost that certain lifestyle choices and chronic diseases have on your organization:

<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/programdesign/costcalculators.htm>

Contracting for a wellness program

If the task of implementing a worksite wellness program cannot be done internally, contracting for a program is also an option. An employee interest survey should still be completed to identify needs of the program.

Toolkit ► *Employee Interest Survey*

Contact your local Health Department office or hospital for health expertise and technical assistance to implement your wellness program.

Continuing education opportunities

There are many professional continuing education opportunities for employees who would like to expand their knowledge about workforce health promotion, including workshops, seminars and certificates.

The annual Vermont Worksite Wellness conference is a great way to gain knowledge and continuing education credits.

For more info ► <http://healthvermont.gov/family/fit/worksitewellness.aspx#conference>



Creating a Supportive Environment

As today's employers and workers are faced with ever-changing demands, a new vision for healthy worksites and healthy workers is needed. This new vision recognizes that the health and safety of workplaces and their workers are intertwined. The idea that employee health and wellbeing and organizational success are linked is the starting point for creating a "culture of wellness" supported by the organization and its employees.

In a culture of wellness, employees are provided with opportunities and resources to engage in wellness behaviors and health risk reduction. At the same time, organizational leadership, benefits, policies, incentives, programs and environmental supports are coordinated to support active engagement in, and sustainability of, safe workplaces and healthy lifestyles.¹

This section provides guidance for the various components involved in creating a culture of wellness at the worksite. Check out the following documents for a closer look:

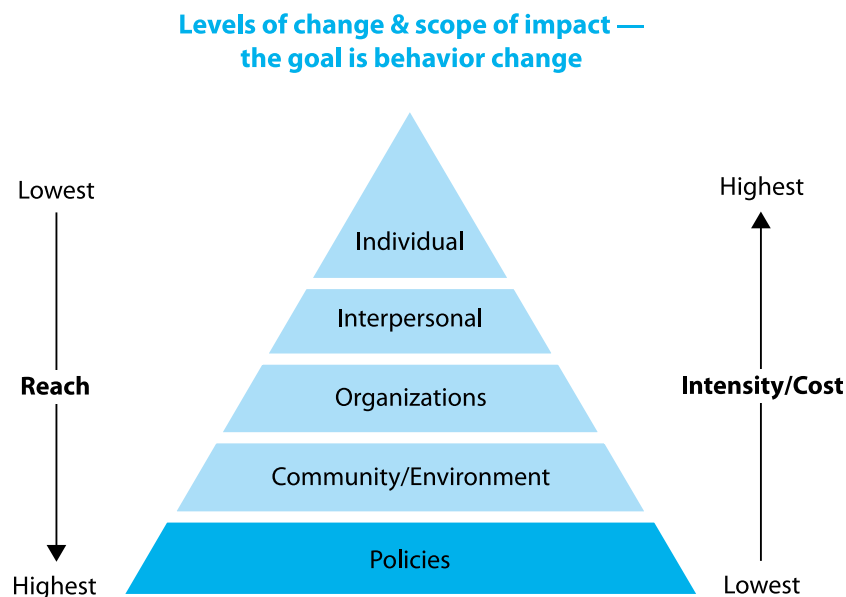
- *Healthy Workplaces, A Model for Action* (World Health Organization):
http://www.who.int/occupational_health/healthy_workplaces/en
- *SafeWell Practice Guidelines: An Integrated Approach to Worker Health*:
http://centerforworkhealth.sph.harvard.edu/sites/default/files/safewell_guidelines/SafeWellPracticeGuidelines_Complete.pdf

¹ *SafeWell Practice Guidelines: An Integrated Approach to Worker Health*, Version 1.0, 2/2012

The *SafeWell Practice Guidelines* are protected by copyright law.

Ways to Create a Supportive Environment

- Make healthy decisions the norm.
- Implement policies that encourage positive behavior change, e.g., a policy that provides breaks to breastfeeding mothers.
- Create policy and worksite environmental changes that require the lowest amount of resources and reach the greatest number of people.



Cultural Support Components

The cultural support components of an employer-sponsored wellness program are:

Leadership

- Leadership endorses and supports the wellness program.
- Leadership is involved in employee communications, creating incentives and other aspects of the program, and creating a corporate vision/mission statement that acknowledges the value of a healthy workplace culture.

Champions

- A wellness committee, champion and/or ambassador approach is implemented to help to design and advance the wellness program throughout the organization.
- An organized network of employees serving as wellness champions, a wellness committee with representatives from across the organization and volunteers who support wellness events are identified.

Environment

- A physical work environment supports employee engagement in healthy lifestyle behaviors and emphasizes safety. Examples include providing healthy food options, fitness centers, walking paths and lactation rooms.

Policies

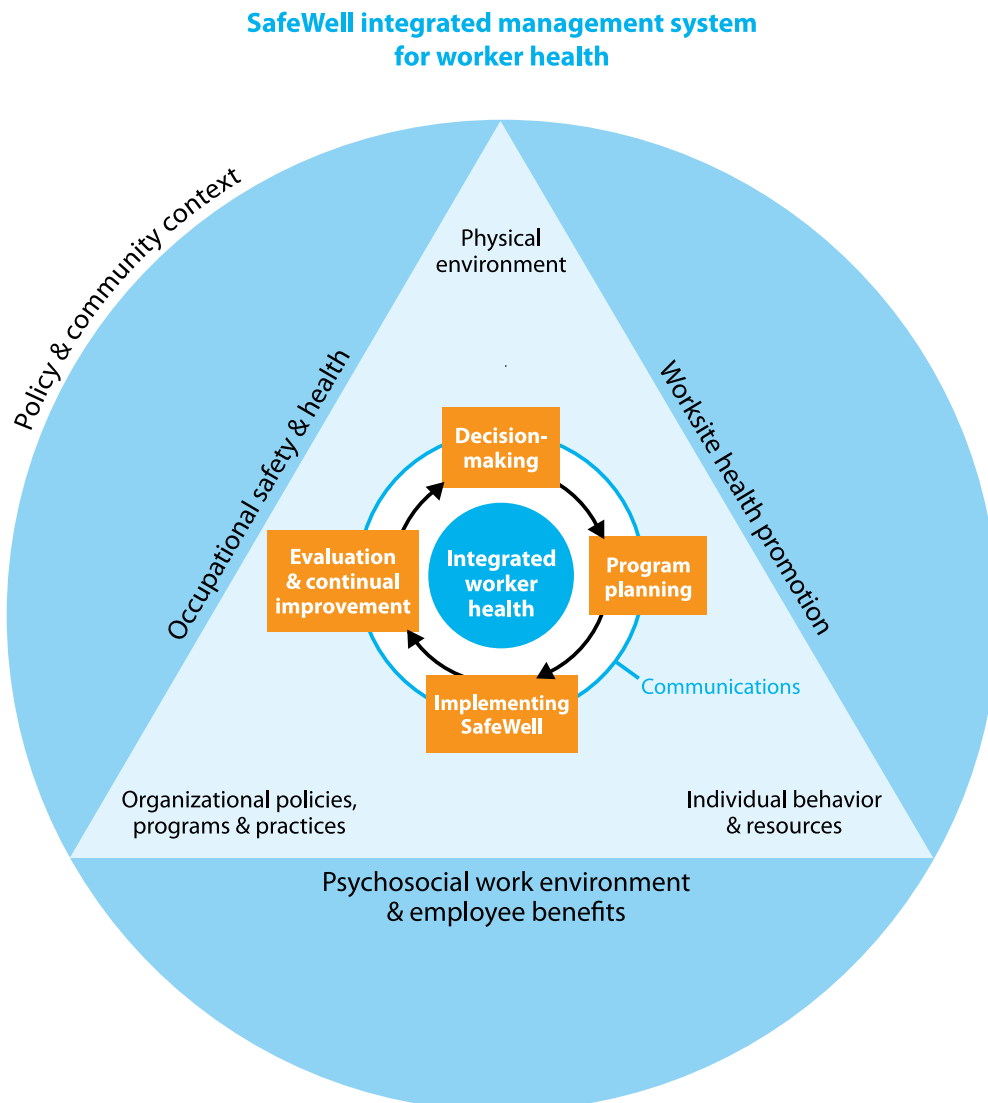
- Organizational policies support a healthy workplace. Examples include tobacco-free workplace/campus, flex-time to participate in wellness programs or to exercise, and healthy food options in vending machines, cafeterias and meetings.

Health benefits

- Coverage and access is offered or available for preventive services, and for acute and chronic health care services for all individuals. Examples include 24/7 access to nurse hotline, preventative health care coverage, and disease management class offering.

Safety & Employee Assistance Programs

Consider integrating safety and employee assistance programs into your wellness program. Below is an example of how worksite health promotion, occupational health and safety programs, and employee assistance programs can be integrated to maximize employee wellness.



Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)

An EAP provides employees with a confidential avenue to successfully address and resolve a variety of personal and professional problems. An EAP provides short-term counseling, resource information and referrals to help employees and their families with a range of issues, including: relationship problems, workplace conflicts, parenting issues, stress, anxiety and depression, substance abuse, legal problems, financial challenges, childcare and eldercare issues, to name a few.

An EAP is an essential component of any plan to ensure a healthy workforce. It is also considered a best practice to ensure the financial success of a business. In fact, more than 70 percent of U.S. businesses and more than 90 percent of Fortune 500 companies have an EAP. People are an organization's most powerful and valuable resource, and business success depends on healthy employees. In any given year, 20 percent of a typical workforce will experience personal and workplace problems that distract employees, reduce their productivity, and increase their risk of accidents.

When these problems are unaddressed they not only affect morale of individuals, but also often have ripple effects throughout a workplace. Supervisors and managers end up spending time addressing these problems instead of focusing on other important work concerns. The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that employers save anywhere from \$5 to \$16 for every dollar spent on an EAP.

When employees are provided the confidential, trusted vehicle of a professional EAP to successfully address day-to-day life problems before they become major crises, stress is reduced and morale greatly improved. Stress is the single common denominator for the majority of today's most serious chronic health conditions. Mitigating stress reduces the incidence and course of chronic disease. The availability of an EAP has been demonstrated to result in substantial reductions in health care expenditures by slowing increases in health insurance premium costs.

In Vermont: InvestEAP

InvestEAP provides employers with in-person, confidential, short-term counseling, assessment, resource and referral information on a broad range of life and work issues.

For more info ► <http://www.investeap.org/employers/overview.asp>

Safety program options

Today more than ever, there is increasing evidence that the work environment and the overall health, safety and wellbeing of the workers within it are strongly connected. Diminished health, and injury, whether caused by work or resulting from non-work activities, reduces quality of life, opportunity and income for workers and those dependent upon them. Conversely, workplaces with low risk of injury and enhanced opportunities for the total health of workers can lead to a vibrant, engaged and highly performing workforce.

Project WorkSAFE

The Vermont Department of Labor provides a free program called Project WorkSAFE for Vermont employers. Project WorkSAFE seeks to work with the employer to maintain safe working standards. Employers invite section staff to inspect their facilities, list a summary of hazards, and provide assistance in hazard correction. The employer avoids any citations or penalties, but is required to correct all hazards discovered during the inspection. Project WorkSAFE services, including phone consultations and full health and safety evaluations, are FREE and confidential.

For more info ► <http://labor.vermont.gov/?tabid=87>

Total Worker Health™

Total Worker Health™ is a strategy integrating occupational safety and health protection with health promotion to prevent worker injury and illness, and to advance health and well-being. The protection, preservation and improvement of the health and wellbeing of all people who work are goals shared by workers, their families and employers.

For more info ► National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH):
<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/twh/totalhealth.html>

Vermont success story

North Country Hospital: The Fit & Fun Club (501–999 employees)

One program that has made a significant difference to our employees and our company as a whole is the Fit & Fun Club. Fit & Fun is an individualized program in which each participating employee tracks points each day, week, and month for healthy lifestyle choices. Examples are physical activity, both aerobic and strength training, relaxing and recharging in the form of stress reduction techniques, losing and maintaining weight loss, wearing seat belts, quitting tobacco use, using stairs rather than elevators, following healthy eating choices such as specific daily servings of fruits and vegetables, and minimal alcohol intake.

Once an employee reaches a milestone such as 50, 100 or 250 points, etc., she or he receives a prize for participating. The first prize is a free cafeteria meal; the second is a Fit & Fun t-shirt. Once the third level is reached, monetary prizes are awarded. As employees achieve higher levels, they are recognized and congratulated in the monthly employee newsletter, *The Insider*. Currently, 297 employees participate in this program, or approximately half of the workforce.

Fit & Fun is a successful program for a number of reasons: It rewards employees for making healthy decisions. It is honor-based and provides incentives to track and record healthy choices even if the employee normally follows healthy lifestyle behaviors. Many employees feel that they are getting periodic payments for a lifestyle that they would choose regardless of monetary reward. Employees also receive extra points for participation in wellness center classes, and for completing annual lab screenings. Overall, the earning potential is at its greatest during the first year of enrollment, and employees can earn up to \$350 in that first year. On average, employees earn up to about 1,500 Fit & Fun points a year, which awards them about \$150 annually.

Check out the how other Vermont businesses have thriving, award-winning wellness programs as indicated by the Vermont Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports: <http://vermontfitness.org>



Engagement

Communication

Employee engagement in your wellness program may be one of the biggest challenges you face. A written communication plan can help you achieve many of the goals and objectives of your program. If employees do not know about the wellness program, or how it will benefit them, they will not participate.

A well thought-out communication plan can:

- increase awareness
- increase knowledge
- reinforce attitudes
- maintain interest
- provide cues and motivation for action
- demonstrate simple skills
- build social norms

A communication plan can often reach more employees than any single intervention.

Communication channels

The routes you choose to spread your messages will determine how many people you reach and how personal the messages may be.

Some common communication channels:

- media
- newsletters
- direct mailings
- web site
- social media sites like Facebook
- emails
- text messages
- podcasts
- face-to-face employee meetings

Also consider:

- **Branding:** Branding with a name/logo can provide recognition and visibility for your program
- **Status updates:** Provide regular program status updates, at least quarterly, to eligible participants and senior management two or more times per year.
- **Messaging:** Use culturally-appropriate communication, including messaging that addresses the overall value and purpose of the wellness program to the organization and to the individual. An example can be found here: http://socrates.berkeley.edu/~pbd/pdfs/Culture_Diversity.pdf

Additional resources:

- *Making Health Communications Programs Work* (American Cancer Society): http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/cancerlibrary/pinkbook/Pink_Book.pdf
- *The Health Communicator's Social Media Toolkit* (CDC): http://www.cdc.gov/socialmedia/tools/guidelines/pdf/socialmediatoolkit_bm.pdf

Communication is KEY!

Be sure to recruit staff members with marketing and communication skills to be part of the wellness committee.

Vermont success story

MVP Healthcare: Wellstyle Rewards (1000+ employees)

Our Wellstyle Rewards program is offered to all employees who have MVP Health Care coverage. Wellstyle Rewards is a points-based incentive program that provides financial rewards to employees and adult dependents. Our innovative outcome-based design rewards members for completing a Personal Health Assessment (PHA), submitting a wellness screening form, and meeting specified biometric parameters such as tobacco status, blood pressure, BMI, fasting blood sugar and cholesterol. The program impacts employees by rewarding members with healthy and improving critical biometric markers.

Incentives are awarded only for results or achievements proven to be correlated with lower health risks and costs (i.e., biometric indicators) By June 30, 2012, nearly 40 percent of the employees who have MVP health care coverage were participating in the Wellstyle Rewards programs. Incentive dollars rewarded to employees totals over \$118,000. The program will make a significant difference to the company because it will provide access to validated data that allows us to track year-over-year trends at the plan and employer level.

Check out the how other Vermont businesses have thriving, award-winning wellness programs as indicated by the Vermont Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports: <http://vermontfitness.org>

Employee Readiness

Your employees will likely be in varying stages of behavior change (explained below) at the start of your wellness program. Some are already living healthy lifestyles, while others are not thinking about making changes. The majority of employees in most organizations can make positive changes, given the right programming and motivation.

Employee readiness can influence the outcomes of your worksite wellness program. Use data from your employee surveys and focus groups to determine how motivated and ready employees are to make changes. Below are the five stages of change. People may move from one stage to another in order — or they may move back and forth between stages until they adopt a behavior for good. A slip in behavior is not a failure, but an important part of the behavior change process. The stages of change are:

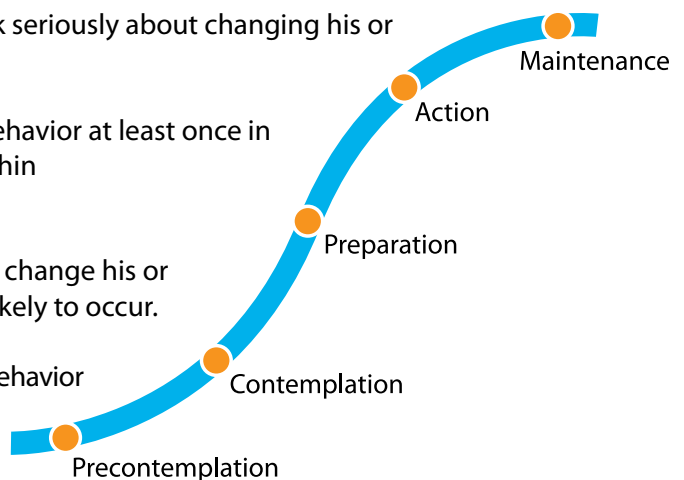
Pre-contemplation: An individual is not thinking about changing behavior in the near future.

Contemplation: An individual is beginning to think seriously about changing his or her behavior in the next six months.

Preparation: An individual has tried to change a behavior at least once in the past year and is thinking about trying again within the next month.

Action: An individual is taking real steps to actively change his or her behavior. This is the stage where a slip is most likely to occur.

Maintenance: An individual has changed his or her behavior for more than six months and is now maintaining.



Motivation

Below are some tips to help your staff stay motivated.

Consider key factors:

- **Time:** Try to work activities into employee's existing schedules, e.g., providing time off for preventive health screenings.
- **Access:** Is the program on site? Is it accessible outside of normal business hours?
- **Knowledge:** People need to know why they are participating, and how to access resources on wellness topics.
- **Cost:** No cost or reduced-cost programs increase participation rates.
- **Incentives:** These are useful when getting started. See next page.

Consider key time periods:

- **6 weeks:** If people can start and stay consistent with a program through the first six weeks, they have made a fairly serious commitment to incorporate habits into their lifestyle.
- **6 months:** If employees make it through the first six months of a program, they have a very good chance of making the changes permanent.

Goal setting

Set individual and team goals. Team goals can lead to better participation and a stronger commitment (e.g., team goal of walking the equivalent of the Long Trail).

Campaigns/promotions

Keep the activities and messages visible to keep participants motivated and informed.

Peer support

Motivated and successful employees can be great advocates for the program and inspire co-workers to participate.

Incentives

Incentives can be a powerful tool in increasing participation in your wellness program. If used effectively, incentives not only improve employee attendance and satisfaction, but will likely improve employee's health status.

Carrot vs. stick

Each organization's culture will decide the type of incentives that fit with the work environment. Both can result in the desired outcomes. Be aware that an incentive may be seen as either a reward or penalty, depending on the viewpoint of the employee.

Carrots (Rewards):

- **Achievement awards:** Verbal praise and tokens of achievement for those who have reached personal goals are meaningful. Try not to focus on those who attain the "most" (e.g., walk the most miles or steps), but on those who have been making the most significant behavior change.
- **Public recognition:** Announce progress or awards at wellness program events, in worksite newsletters, or on bulletin boards.
- **Entertainment:** Offer recreation or leisure activities in partnership with the wellness program.
- **Merchandise:** Offer sports equipment or gift certificates.
- **Time off:** Offer time off from work.

Sticks (Penalties):

- **Insurance surcharges:** Require higher insurance rate for certain health behaviors (e.g., tobacco use).
- **Not receiving additional time off:** If you use more than one sick day you will not receive additional personal leave time.

The legalities of using financial incentives

State and federal laws may also be applicable to the use of financial incentives tied to health status. The impact of incentives on people with disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is of particular concern, and employers must be careful to ensure ADA compliance.

With the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, financial incentives tied to participation in a wellness program must meet certain Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements:

1. The total amount of all rewards (or penalties) contingent on satisfying a health standard must not exceed 30 percent of the total cost of insurance coverage applicable to those who may participate fully in the wellness program.
2. The program must be reasonably designed to promote health and wellness.
3. Individuals must be offered an opportunity to qualify for the reward under the program at least once per year.
4. The reward must be available to all similarly situated individuals. If the standard is unreasonably difficult due to an employee's medical condition, or if it is medically inadvisable for an employee to attempt to satisfy the standard during the period allotted, the individual must be offered a reasonable alternative standard or waiver of the applicable health factor standard.
5. All program communication materials that describe the terms of the incentive must clearly disclose the availability of the reasonable alternative standard or the possibility of a waiver.

For more info ► http://hcr.vermont.gov/contact_us

Vermont success story

Hickock & Boardman Financial Planning & Group Benefits (11–50 employees)

In January 2012, in partnership with our health plan, we presented a “highly encouraged” health management initiative to offset the high cost of our rising health insurance premiums. This initiative included an on-site health screening and/or a visit to your doctor, and completion of an on-line health assessment.

This was first met with a great deal of employee resistance. However, through careful planning, meetings and communication, employees quickly learned the value and importance of this program, and we had 100 percent participation. We believe this success is a direct result of our supportive wellness culture where health is a top priority. A few months later, we used the aggregate analysis from our health plan to direct our future initiatives.

Check out the how other Vermont businesses have thriving, award-winning wellness programs as indicated by the Vermont Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports: <http://vermontfitness.org>



Types of Programs

A well-designed worksite wellness program will include all of the following programs described in this chapter: awareness, education, behavior change, and policy/environmental change.

Many organizations start out their wellness program by offering health screenings or activity challenges. These are great for raising awareness about a particular health issue, but rarely have any long-term impact on health behaviors if they are not followed by behavior change programs and policy/environmental changes.

Awareness

Awareness programs bring health topics to light that employees may not have considered. They highlight key facts and health risks related to certain behaviors or health conditions.

Examples of awareness programs:

- **Activity challenges:** Activity challenges are a good way to introduce activity to employees.
- **Health screenings/biometric screenings:** Health screenings (also called biometric screenings) are an opportunity to make employees aware of health risks they may have and how health risks are connected to chronic disease. They are also an opportunity to refer employees to an on-site behavior change program and to their physician for follow-up.

Emphasize the importance of the employee having a medical home, a place where a team-based health care delivery model led by a physician or nurse practitioner provides comprehensive and continuous medical care to patients with the goal of obtaining maximized health outcomes. This approach may allow better access to health care, increase satisfaction with care, and improved health.

Education

Education programs are more formal than awareness programs, and can include lectures, health classes, presentations and fitness classes. Education programs get more in depth on a particular topic, and can provide limited skill-building activities. Examples of education programs:

- on-site cooking class
- diabetes lunch-and-learn
- strength training guides
- guided meditation sessions

Behavior change

Behavior change interventions include evidence-based programs, activities and information designed to assist employees to make changes in behavior that lead to better health. These programs are typically more time and resource intensive, but are more likely to lead to long-term behavior change than awareness or education programs alone. Examples of behavior change programs:

- 12 week health coaching program
- 4 month hypertension program
- 4 week tobacco cessation classes

Policy/environment

Policy/environmental change programs are where you get the most value for your dollar. Policy and environmental changes can ultimately affect the health status of the highest percentage of your workforce, more than any of the other programs. These changes take more time and planning, in addition to a well-executed communication plan. Examples of policy/environment change programs:

- tobacco-free campus policy
- healthy vending machines
- on-site bike racks and showers
- break area with refrigerator and microwave
- on-site Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) delivery

Toolkit ▶ *Sample Policies*

Health Risk Assessment

Organizations should provide background information and resources on general health and wellness to all employees. A Health Risk Assessment (HRA) is one tool that will assist employees in identifying behaviors that may be putting their health at risk. HRAs may require more employer resources, but they are useful and of great benefit.

Benefits of a HRA:

- identifying risk factors
- providing individualized feedback
- linking a person with at least one intervention to promote health, sustain function or prevent disease

For more info ▶ http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/programdesign/health_risk_appraisals.htm

Your local Health Department office, hospital or health insurance provider may also have community outreach that can help you. They may provide expertise and technical assistance for performing HRAs.

Sample Programming Strategies

In this section you will find strategies that have been proven to be effective. The programming strategies have three functions:

- to present an overview of the amount of resources needed to implement an activity
- to determine which strategies will give you the most impact for your investment
- to identify additional resources available

The strategies focus on:

- physical activity
- nutrition
- tobacco cessation
- breastfeeding
- substance abuse
- mental health
- immunizations

The programming strategies provide an outline of changes that can be made in your workplace. Be sure to review the resources available, along with the tools provided in the links below.

Time, money, space and materials are resources needed for implementing a wellness program, and these resource needs can vary from program to program. All of the suggested wellness activities are categorized according to the amount of resources needed to implement them (low, medium, high). Many of the most highly recommended activities do not require a high level of resources.

Toolkit ▶ *Strategies*

Vermont success story

Northwestern Medical Center (501-999 employees)

Through Healthy U data analysis, it has been identified that lack of physical activity and unhealthy weight are the two top health risks. We have learned that our employees participate and are more successful with team based initiatives.

Dump Your Plump, a group weight loss program, has been offered for several years, but this year the program was expanded to 12 weeks for the initial part of the challenge, and a second 12 weeks for those who wanted a more extensive program.

Check out the how other Vermont businesses have thriving, award-winning wellness programs as indicated by the Vermont Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports: <http://vermontfitness.org>



Physical activity

People who are more physically active have a reduced risk of heart disease, diabetes and some types of cancer, in addition to lower stress. All of these benefits contribute to a happier and more productive employee, saving the company money, and reducing employee absenteeism. The current CDC guidelines for physical activity include 30 minutes of moderate activity five days a week.

For more info ► <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/adults.html>.

As an employer, you should consider liability and legal issues before establishing an exercise program. Employees should be encouraged or required to consult with their physician and/or sign a consent form prior to beginning any exercise program.

Low resources:

- Offer flexible work hours to allow for physical activity during the day.
- See CDC's Alternative Work Schedules example that allows CDC employees to vary daily arrival/departure times within a flexible band of time, and extend lunch periods up to an additional 1½ hours that can be used to exercise:
http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/downloads/alt_work_schedules.pdf
- Support physical activity breaks during the workday. Supervisors can support this as a standard work practice.
- Using these online resources, employees can set physical activity goals, stay motivated, and track their progress: **<http://healthvermont.gov/family/getmoving/index.aspx>**
- Post motivational signs at elevators and escalators to encourage using the stairs. Signage to use can be found on the CDC website at:
http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/toolkits/stairwell/motivational_signs.htm

Medium resources:

- Start employee activity clubs (e.g., walking, bicycling). See the American Heart Association's "Start! For Employers" program: **http://www.startwalkingnow.org/start_workplace_fit_friendly.jsp**.
- Implement incentive-based programs to encourage physical activity, such as pedometer walking challenges.
- The American Cancer Society offers a 10-week interactive physical activity program called Active for Life Online: **<http://www.acsworkplacesolutions.com/activeforlife.asp>**.

High resources:

- Offer on-site fitness opportunities, such as group classes or personal training.
- Provide an on-site exercise facility.

For more info ► The Vermont Department of Health is here to help. Contact the district office in your area or call 800-464-4343.



Nutrition

More than 60 percent of adult Vermonters are overweight or obese. Healthy eating improves overall wellness and decreases risk of obesity and chronic disease. Promoting and offering healthier foods, such as fruit and vegetables, will encourage employees to make healthier food choices. Meetings, conferences, vending machines and cafeterias are all places where nutritious foods can be promoted.

Dining out has been shown to increase the amount of calories, fat and sugar in one's diet. Offering employees opportunities to store and prepare food at the workplace makes it easier for them to eat foods prepared at home.

Low resources:

- Send healthy eating messages to employees via multiple means (e.g. email, posters, payroll stuffers, etc.). Sign up for a free nutrition e-newsletter at:
<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/sign-up-for-fruit-and-veggie-newsletter>
- Use competitive pricing to make healthier choices more economical:
<http://www.tompkins-co.org/wellness/worksites/workwell/snackbowl.html>
- Have on-site cafeterias set nutritional standards that align with dietary guidelines for Americans:
<http://www.health.gov/DIETARYGUIDELINES/dga2005/document/pdf/DGA2005.pdf>
- Provide appropriate portion sizes and provide portion size information via labeling of food to show serving size and calories, and by using food models and pictures. For tips and resources on portion size, see: **<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>**
- Make water available throughout the day: **<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/water/NU00283>**
- Offer appealing, low cost and healthful foods, such as fruit and vegetables, juices and low-fat dairy products in vending machines, snack bars and break rooms. Offer healthful food alternatives at meetings, company functions, and health education events.

Toolkit ► *Healthy Eating Guidelines for Worksites*

Medium resources:

- Provide on-site farmers markets: **<http://www.agriculture.vermont.gov>**
- Provide on-site gardening opportunities: **<http://vcgn.org>**
- Provide interactive food opportunities such as taste testing and food preparation skills:
<http://www.hungerfreevt.org/what/the-learning-kitchen>

High resources:

- Provide incentives for participating in nutrition or weight management/maintenance activities.
- Hire a registered dietitian on a consulting basis to do nutrition screens and counseling. List of registered dietitians in Vermont: **<http://www.eatrightvt.org>**

For more info ► The Vermont Department of Health is here to help. Contact the district office in your area or call 800-464-4343.



Asthma

Asthma is a chronic disease that affects the airways of the lungs and makes breathing difficult. During an asthma attack the lungs fill with mucus, the airways swell, and the muscles around the airways tighten.

Asthma triggers may cause asthma attacks and increase asthma symptoms. Common triggers include:

- Workplace chemicals
- Smoke
- Pets
- Dust mites
- Mold
- Air pollution

An estimated 11 million workers in a wide range of industries and occupations are exposed to at least one of the numerous agents known to be associated with occupational asthma.

- Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Work-related asthma

- Work-aggravated asthma: When a person already has asthma but something at work makes their breathing symptoms worse
- New-onset asthma or allergies: When a healthy worker develops asthma symptoms for the first time while at work

Low resources:

- Request a free project WorkSAFE, no-penalty consultation at your facility. At your request, Project WorkSAFE will go with you on a tour of your facility, point out problem areas, and help you identify solutions. Our services include safety audits, program development and evaluation, chemical exposure assessments, and noise monitoring. For more information on Project WorkSAFE call the Vermont Department of Labor-Safety and Health Consultation at 1-888-SAFE-YES (1-888-723-3937) or see their website at <http://labor.vermont.gov/project-worksafe/>

High resources:

- Provide on-site smoking cessation counseling for individuals or groups, or telephone counseling through the employee health plan: http://healthvermont.gov/prevent/tobacco/quit_at_work.aspx

Asthma Action Plans are the gold standard to properly managing asthma. These should be encouraged for workers with asthma and can be found here: <http://healthvermont.gov/prevent/asthma/tools.aspx#actionplan>

For more info ► <http://healthvermont.gov/prevent/asthma/index.aspx>; call 1-800-439-8550 or email vdhco@state.vt.us.



Cancer screening

Cancer is the leading cause of death in Vermont. More than one-third of all cancers are related to modifiable risk factors that include tobacco use, diet and physical inactivity. The use of screening tests to detect certain cancers early improves overall cancer outcomes and survival.

Why should employers support increased cancer screening?

- Cancer is a costly disease, in terms of health care costs and lost productivity. The estimated overall costs of cancer in the U.S. (2009) were \$217 billion: \$87 billion for direct medical costs and \$130 billion for lost productivity due to premature death.
- Effective screening tests are available for breast, cervical and colorectal cancers. Patients whose cancers are found and treated early are much more likely to survive than those that are detected later.
- Improving employee screening rates will result in employees finding cancers earlier, leading to treatment with fewer side effects and better outcomes.
- Increasing employee screening will reduce employee absenteeism and insurance costs related to the treatment of advanced cancer.

As the workforce continues to age, the prevalence of cancer grows, and treatments for cancer become more costly, it is even more important for employers to enhance their focus on employee cancer screening.

Low resources:

- Promote cancer screening within the workplace coinciding with national awareness month (i.e., cervical: January, colorectal: March, breast: October).
- Inform employees about insurance coverage for cancer screening.
- Provide employees with a recommended schedule of cancer screenings by type of cancer.
- Promote free or low-cost screening services for un/underinsured female workers (Ladies First program: www.ladiesfirstvt.org).

Medium resources:

- Create policy allowing for paid time off for recommended cancer screenings.
- Offer programs such as flextime to assist employees in keeping healthcare provider appointments for cancer screening.

High resources:

- Bring health educators to the worksite to provide on-site cancer screening education and referrals.
- Require health insurance provider (through insurance contract) to send regular age-appropriate reminders for breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening to all enrolled workers.
- Require health insurance provider (through insurance contract) to report utilization of cancer screening for all enrolled workers.

For more info ► http://healthvermont.gov/prevent/cancer/cancer_programs.aspx. The Vermont Department of Health is here to help. Contact the district office in your area or call 800-464-4343.



Tobacco cessation

While the adult smoking rate has gone down over the last 10 years, just over 20 percent of Vermont adults still smoke. And for certain groups — such as young adults and lower-income Vermonters — those figures are even higher. Smoking puts people at risk for a number of diseases, can worsen chronic conditions like asthma and heart disease, and exposes non-smokers to secondhand smoke.

The result is that more than 850 Vermonters die each year from tobacco-related diseases. Smoking directly affects the quality of their lives, and the lives of their families and friends. Smoking also impacts Vermont businesses through increased costs.

Based on national figures, the following estimates show some of the costs of employee tobacco use:

- **Health care costs:** Costs for smokers are higher than those for non-smokers: \$2,284 per year, per smoker (2004).
- **Productivity losses:** Lost work time due to smoking breaks and increased absenteeism for smokers and ex-smokers: \$2,021 per year, per smoker (2009).

There are other costs associated with smoking, such as secondhand smoke exposure and workers' compensation, but based only on the three issues listed above, the cost of employee tobacco use is approximately \$5,324 per year, per smoker.

Low resources:

- Develop policy prohibiting tobacco use anywhere on the property. Resources can be found at the Health Department's website:
http://healthvermont.gov/prevent/tobacco/documents/Model_Smoke_Policy_000.doc
- Provide prompts and posters to support a no-tobacco-use policy. CDC offers free resources:
http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/osh_pub_catalog/PublicationList.aspx
- Promote the Vermont quit line. The Vermont quit line offers free counseling and Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) options.
Phone: 1-800-QUIT-NOW
Online: **<http://802quits.org>**
In person: **<http://802quits.org/in-person-quit-help/>**
- Encourage pregnant workers to seek tobacco cessation support: 19 percent of pregnant Vermont women smoke. Smoking during pregnancy increases the risk of birth defects, premature delivery (when a baby is born too early) and miscarriage.

High resources:

- Provide on-site counseling for individuals or groups, or telephone counseling through the employee health plan: **http://healthvermont.gov/prevent/tobacco/quit_at_work.aspx**

For more info ► **<http://healthvermont.gov/prevent/tobacco>**; call 1-866-331-5622 or email tobaccovt@vdh.state.vt.us.

The Vermont Department of Health is here to help. Contact the district office in your area or call 800-464-4343.



Breastfeeding

Research states that formula feeding has significant health risks for infants and mothers. Studies have found increased rates of several chronic diseases throughout childhood and into adulthood among children who were not breastfed. An employee who is breastfeeding receives important health advantages, including reduced risk for developing breast and ovarian cancer, reduced risk of Type 2 diabetes, and a more rapid return to pre-pregnancy weight.

Employees need to know that when they return to work they have a place to feed their babies, or pump their milk. Active support from management is essential for breastfeeding mothers so they can address difficulties they may encounter. Breastfeeding employees benefit from management support as well as a formal infrastructure for recourse if they encounter difficulties with other employees.

For more information about how to make your workplace breastfeeding friendly, visit the Health Department's Breastfeeding Friendly Employer Project:

<http://healthvermont.gov/wic/food-feeding/breastfeeding/friendly-employer-project.aspx>

Low resources:

- Establish policy that promotes breastfeeding. For a sample policy, visit:
<http://healthvermont.gov/wic/food-feeding/breastfeeding/employers.aspx>

Medium resources:

- Provide educational packet about breastfeeding to all expectant parents:
<http://healthvermont.gov/wic/food-feeding/breastfeeding/workingmothers.aspx>
- Allow flexible break or flex-time for expressing milk.

High resources:

- Provide lactation education programs: **<http://www.workandpump.com>**
- Provide an appropriate private place with a lock on the door for breastfeeding/pumping. Include a comfortable chair, refrigerator for milk storage, and a nearby sink with running water. See *Work Site Breast Feeding Support* for more tips and resources:
<http://www.usbreastfeeding.org/Employment/WorkplaceSupport/tabid/105/Default.aspx>
- Provide lactation consultants, either as a member benefit of insurance or paid by an employer.

For more info ► The Vermont Department of Health is here to help. Contact the district office in your area or call 800-464-4343.



Substance abuse

Alcohol and other drug misuse affects many people in the United States, including many in the workforce. Of the 20.2 million current illicit drug users age 18 or older in 2010, 13.3 million (66%) were employed either full or part-time. Of the 20.3 million adults classified with dependence or abuse, 10.1 million (about half) were employed full time.

Employers have a key role in recognizing and providing assistance to these individuals, and there are many benefits to employers as well. Compared with non-substance abusing workers, workers who are struggling with alcohol or other drug issues are more likely to:

- be late or absent from work
- change jobs frequently
- be less productive
- be involved in a workplace accident
- file a workers' compensation claim

People who are misusing alcohol or other drugs can also have a negative effect on the morale and safety of their co-workers. When employers address substance abuse and provide supports to their employees, they have a healthier and more productive workforce.

Whether your worksite is required to comply or not, there are several best practices to address substance abuse among employees and their families.

The five best practices identified by the Health Department are:

- a written policy
- employee education
- supervisor training
- drug testing
- an Employee Assistance Program (EAP): <http://www.investeap.org/employers/overview.asp>

Low resources:

- Have a policy in compliance with Drug-Free Workplace Act: <http://www.dol.gov/elaws/asp/drugfree/screen4.htm>
- Promote the Vermont Recovery Network: <http://www.vtrecoverynetwork.org>

Medium resources:

- Distribute information for parents preventing underage drinking — ParentUp: http://healthvermont.gov/adap/underage_drinking/

High resources:

- Provide alcohol screenings: www.alcoholscreening.org or 1-800-639-6095
- Cover treatment services: http://healthvermont.gov/adap/treatment/treatment_county.aspx

For more info ► For employers:

- Confidential workplace helpline at 1-800-WORKPLACE: <http://workplace.samhsa.gov>
- National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices: <http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/>



Mental health

Employers have the opportunity to promote the mental wellbeing of their employees. Steps to promoting and encouraging mental wellbeing can include: promoting physical activity and healthy eating, and offering supports for those having trouble performing. These activities can contribute to overall work/life balance and stress reduction and help to create healthy, productive employees.

Factors that contribute to a mental health-friendly workplace:

- all qualified job applicants are welcome, and diversity is valued
- health care that treats mental illnesses with the same urgency as physical illnesses
- programs and/or practices that promote and support employee health-wellness and/or work-life balance
- providing training for managers and front-line supervisors in mental health workplace issues, including identification of performance problems that may indicate worker distress and possible need for referral and evaluation
- safeguarding the confidentiality of employee health information
- providing an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or other appropriate referral resources to assist managers and employees
- supporting employees who seek treatment or who require hospitalization and disability leave, including planning for return to work
- ensuring exit with dignity as a priority, should it become essential for an employee to leave
- providing all-employee communication regarding equal opportunity employment, the reasonable accommodations policy of the Americans with Disabilities Act, health and wellness programs, and similar topics that promote an accepting, anti-stigmatizing, anti-discriminating climate in the workplace

Low resources:

- Have a policy that supports employees who have mental health issues, including leaves of absence and plans for returning to work.
- Provide orientation for employees on workplace policies and supports regarding mental health: <http://www.workplacementalhealth.org/Publications-Surveys/Mental-Health-Works-Newsletter.aspx>

Medium resources:

- Provide training for supervisors on recognizing and responding to performance issues that may signal distress: <http://www.investeap.org/> and <http://www.workplacementalhealth.org>

High resources:

- Provide access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP): <http://www.investeap.org>

For more info ► Resources for planning worksite mental health support activities:

- Vermont Mental Health Resources: <http://mentalhealth.vermont.gov>
- The Vermont Department of Health is here to help. Contact the district office in your area or call 800-464-4343.
- SAMHSA's Resource Center to Promote Acceptance, Dignity and Social Inclusion Associated with Mental Health: www.promoteacceptance.samhsa.gov/publications/business_resource.aspx
- National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices: <http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/>



Immunizations

While children are generally well-vaccinated, the adult population, starting with the 19th birthday, is not adequately protected from vaccine preventable diseases.

Only 18.5 percent of high-risk adults age 19 to 64 have had the recommended pneumococcal vaccine. This vaccine is recommended for smokers, and people with chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes, lung or cardiac disease. Invasive pneumococcal disease results in many hospitalizations.

Almost 40 percent of adults age 19 to 64 are not up to date on tetanus vaccination. Only about 8 percent of adults have had the recommended combination vaccine, Tdap, which protects against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (whooping cough). The U.S., including Vermont, has seen an increase in pertussis (whooping cough) cases. Pertussis is a potentially deadly infection in young infants. Their only protection comes from adults around them being vaccinated.

An annual flu vaccine is recommended for all adults, yet only 42 percent are typically vaccinated every year. Influenza is easily spread in the workplace and at home, and the vaccine is the best means to prevent flu.

Vermont success story

Milton school district (151-500 employees)

The Milton Town School District offered a flu and Tdap vaccination clinic in October, with a record number of 90 employees that came out to get vaccinated (as compared to low 20's in the past). Mollen, an outside agency, has come into the school district in the past, coordinated by our hard working nursing staff.

The clinics have always been helpful, but with extra coordination, the clinic this year offered not only flu, but the Tdap vaccination, as whooping cough was widespread last year. We offered the clinic at both schools, which made it more accessible. We also provided online registration and snacks. With the success of the flu and Tdap clinic, we are hoping to offer a "Know Your Numbers" campaign or clinic sometime in January or February.

Employee data concludes that opportunities like the clinics save employees time by giving them access to great resources within their work day.

Check out the how other Vermont businesses have thriving, award-winning wellness programs as indicated by the Vermont Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports: <http://vermontfitness.org>

Several reasons have been identified as contributing to the gap in protection for adults:

- lack of knowledge of immunization recommendations
- adult care is often focused on acute health needs, rather than prevention
- cost and lack of insurance coverage

Low resources:

- Maintain a bulletin board with space for Vermont Department of Health or CDC immunization information for adults. Include information about all vaccines recommended for adults.
- Post free 'Cover Your Cough' posters (available in English + 7 languages) and 'Proper Handwashing' posters (English) that can be downloaded and printed from the Health Department's website:
<http://healthvermont.gov/prevent/flu/resources.aspx>
- Post free 'Know What to Do about the Flu' posters for co-workers early each fall. These are available in English + 11 languages and can be downloaded and printed from the Health Department's website:
<http://healthvermont.gov/prevent/flu/resources.aspx>
- More flu vaccine recommendations and educational resources are available at CDC's website. Follow up with personal recommendations to be vaccinated to each employee:
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/spec-grps/#adults>
- Provide sick leave and encourage staying home when ill to avoid the spread of vaccine preventable illness in the workplace.

Medium resources:

- Maintain records of required immunizations for employees (e.g., health care providers or child care providers). Keep health care records confidential.
- Assure coverage for adult immunizations on the insurance plan.
- Allow employees, especially those who do not earn sick leave, to take "vaccination leave" — paid leave time when they may schedule a vaccination.

High resources:

- Engage a licensed nurse (such as a home health care organization) to provide immunizations at the worksite, offering Tdap and flu vaccines to any employees who are not up to date.
- Contract with a pharmacy to provide vaccines (at the pharmacy) for an employee free of charge.
- Offer an employee health fair that includes vaccination opportunities at no cost: pneumococcal vaccine, human papillomavirus vaccine, hepatitis B and hepatitis A vaccines.

For more info ► The Vermont Department of Health is here to help. Contact the district office in your area or call 800-464-4343.

Taking Action

Action Plan Worksheet

Once you have identified your priorities, use the Action Plan Worksheet in the Toolkit to map out your action plan. Your action plan should include:

- overall goals and objectives of the wellness program
- specific recommendations on clearly stated and measurable strategies
- chosen activities
- staff, resources and materials needed to make it happen
- time frame for completion
- evaluation plan to measure results

Toolkit ▶ *Action Plan Worksheet*

Narrowing the scope

Use the Activity Prioritizing Tool in the Toolkit to help narrow the scope of your wellness program, based on importance, cost, time, commitment and reach. Keep in mind that addressing easier changes in the beginning builds confidence in the program. Have staff members who have had early success market and encourage participation in the program. In addition, packaging activities so they can build off each other will be more effective than implementing unrelated activities.

Remember to refer back to your stated goals and objectives when planning your program activities.

- Each area will have its own activities.
- Prioritize different aspects by looking at company resources available and which activities will reach the greatest number of employees.
- Have education readily available in the form of presentations, printed materials and web resources.

Toolkit ▶ *Activity Prioritizing Tool*

Vermont success story

The Vermont Country Store (151-500 employees)

Our program provides Clinical Activity & Trends (CAT) reports, which is a guide to the performance of the on-site health program and the overall program of population health management. Each month the report provides important information on aggregate numbers of the Vermont Country Store employees utilizing the wellness program services and why, what percentage of the employees have been screened for health risks and/or chronic conditions (the “target population”), what percentage of the target population is engaged to reduce their risks, and predicted savings from operations. Savings include: redirected care, risk mitigation, saved time away from work and enhanced productivity from a healthier workforce.

Check out the how other Vermont businesses have thriving, award-winning wellness programs as indicated by the Vermont Governor’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports: <http://vermontfitness.org>



Evaluation is essential to your wellness program to assure it is meeting individual and organizational goals. Evaluation should be done annually, if not quarterly. Questions that the organization might consider in their evaluation include:

- Are employees making appropriate decisions to improve their quality of life?
- Are changes in employees' attitudes, behaviors and health indicators a result of the worksite program?
- Have absenteeism, turnover and health-care costs decreased as hoped?
- Are there weaker areas of the program that require modification?

Keeping careful and consistent records during the program can provide valuable information for evaluation purposes. Evaluation is an ongoing activity and can be measured by process indicators and outcome evaluations.

Process Indicators

Process indicators are any combination of measurements obtained during the implementation of program activities. They are easy to measure and provide quick feedback on employee acceptance of a program.

Examples of different measures:

- number of staff enrolled and participating
- documentation of policy/environmental changes
- observation or counts (e.g., the number of people walking in the afternoons)

Outcome Evaluations

Outcome evaluations focus on the ultimate goal or outcome of the program. The program must have clear markers and baseline data from which to compare and determine impact for an outcome evaluation to be effective.

Examples:

- pre/post surveys that measure changes in attitude, knowledge and lifestyle habits from initial assessment to completion of program
- quizzes
- tracking of popular vending machine items
- changes in risk factors for chronic diseases (Health Risk Appraisals)

By completing evaluations, an organization can determine what works in the program and what needs improvement. Documentation helps justify continued funding to run the program.

Additional resources to help guide the evaluation process are available from the Vermont Department of Health. Contact the Division of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Director of Evaluation at 1-866-331-5622 for more information.

Toolkit ► *Evaluation Tools and Measures*

For more info ► The Vermont Department of Health is here to help. Contact the district office in your area or call 800-464-4343.

Vermont success story

BioTek Industries (151-500 employees)

At BioTek Industries, we implemented the IHMS Preventative Body Maintenance program (PBM), which allows for early treatment of musculoskeletal aches and pains that, when ignored, can lead to work or non-work related muscle and joint injuries. During a PBM visit, a therapist may walk through the work area or come to the work site to observe our workers' movement patterns and ergonomic set-ups and make suggestions that can improve productivity, safety and comfort. This allows our employees to catch potential problems early and prevent injuries.

Most of these manual treatments take less than 25 minutes of the worker's time and can be done right at their work site or office. Therapists are on site every other week for two hours. Each employee can sign up for one 15 minute session or a half hour if performing a work station evaluation. Attendance has been holding consistently above 90 percent for the past 32 months. One positive outcome of the program is that out of about 30 employees who utilized the program, six were clearly identified as having prevented an onset of a repetitive motion injury, which potentially saved approximately \$5,000 per worker's compensation case for a total of about \$30,000 savings!

Check out the how other Vermont businesses have thriving, award-winning wellness programs as indicated by the Vermont Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports: <http://vermontfitness.org>

Vermont Worksite Wellness Resource

Creating a Healthier Worksite

TOOLKIT

A large, stylized sun graphic is positioned in the lower-left quadrant of the page. It features a large, semi-circular orange shape on the left, representing the sun's disk, and several triangular rays of varying lengths extending from the right edge towards the center and top of the page. The rays are a lighter shade of orange than the sun's disk. The entire graphic is set against a solid, light orange background.

Organizational Assessment

STRATEGIC PLANNING						
#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS
1.	Do you have a commitment to wellness from key stakeholders such as senior management, human resource managers, safety officers, staff members, etc.?					
2.	Does the worksite outline the requirements and functions of the worksite wellness program?					
3.	Does the worksite have a wellness committee that meets regularly?					
4.	Does the worksite have a wellness plan in place that addresses the purpose, duration, resources required, participants involved, and expected results of a worksite wellness program?					
5.	Does your new employee orientation include an explanation of worksite wellness programs, including wellness-related policies?					
6.	Does the worksite offer a mix of educational, behavior change, and policy wellness programs?					

Organizational Assessment

STRATEGIC PLANNING						
#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS
7.	Does the worksite have a vision and/or mission for the wellness program?					
8.	Does the worksite promote and encourage employee participation in the wellness program? Examples of ways to "promote and encourage employee participation" include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information at new employee orientation • Information provided within paychecks • Flyers on walls or bulletin boards • Letters mailed directly to employees • Announcements at employee meetings • Employee newsletter articles • Incentive/reward programs • Public recognition • Health insurance discounts • Sponsor employee sports teams 					
9.	Does the worksite provide or arrange for health coaching or other support mechanisms to modify behavior?					
10.	Does the worksite offer or provide adequate healthcare coverage for employees and their families for prevention of and rehabilitation of chronic disease?					

Organizational Assessment

STRATEGIC PLANNING						
#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS
11.	Is there a worksite budget for employee health promotion that includes some funds for programming and/or a portion of a salary for a coordinator?					
12.	Does the worksite evaluate the wellness program? (health care claims, participation, productivity, ROI, satisfaction rates)					
STRATEGIC PLANNING TOTALS (# of Yes, In Process, and No Items)						

Organizational Assessment

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY							
#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS	
13.	Does the worksite support physical activity during duty/work time (e.g. offer or allow flex time for physical activity)?						
14.	Are employees encouraged to be active during break time?						
15.	Does the company provide maps of on-site trails or nearby walking routes?						
16.	Does the company encourage employees to bike or walk to work?						
17.	Does the worksite provide showers and/or changing facilities?						
18.	Does the worksite provide prompts to promote physical activity near each stairwell or elevator?						
19.	Does the worksite provide bike racks in safe and convenient locations?						

Organizational Assessment

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY						
#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS
20.	Does the worksite provide outdoor exercise areas, playing fields, or walking trails for employee use?					
21.	Does the worksite provide an on-site exercise facility?					
22.	Does the worksite provide free, discounted, or employer-subsidized memberships to fitness centers?					
23.	Does the company offer incentive-based programs to encourage activity (e.g. pedometer walking campaigns)?					
24.	Does the worksite provide on-site physical-activity classes such as aerobics, kickboxing, dancing, etc.?					
25.	Does the worksite provide on-site child care coverage while employees work out?					
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TOTALS (# of Yes, In Process, and No Items)						

Organizational Assessment

NUTRITION						
#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS
26.	Does the worksite send healthy-eating messages to employees (delivered via e-mail, messages, payroll stuffers, bulletin boards, etc.)?					
27.	Does the worksite provide protected time and dedicated space away from the work area for breaks and lunch?					
28.	Does the worksite offer appealing, low-cost, healthful food options, such as fruits and vegetables, juices, and low-fat dairy products in vending machines, snack bars, and break rooms?					
29.	Does the worksite promote healthy choices by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the percent of healthy options that are available • Using competitive pricing to make healthier choices more economical • Advertising or marking healthy options so that they stand out 					
30.	Does the worksite have on-site cafeterias follow healthy cooking practices?					
31.	Does the worksite have a healthy food policy(ies)? (E.g. vending, food procurement)					

Organizational Assessment

NUTRITION						
#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS
32.	Does the worksite have a healthy foods/beverages at meetings policy?					
33.	Does the worksite make water available throughout the day?					
34.	Does the worksite make kitchen equipment (refrigerators, microwaves, stoves, etc) available for employee food storage and cooking?					
35.	Does the worksite offer local fruits and vegetables (i.e. CSA, farmer's market)?					
36.	Does the worksite provide on-site gardening?					
37.	Does the worksite provide interactive food opportunities such as taste testing, food preparation skills, and peer-to-peer modeling?					

Organizational Assessment

NUTRITION						
#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS
38.	Does the worksite provide incentives for participation in nutrition and/or weight management activities?					
39.	Does the worksite include the employees' family members in campaigns promoting fruit and vegetable consumption?					
NUTRITION TOTALS (# of Yes, In Process, and No Items)						

Organizational Assessment

HEALTH SCREENING and DISEASE PREVENTION and MANAGEMENT						
#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS
40.	Does the worksite offer health risk appraisals?					
41.	Does the worksite offer or provide on-site health screenings (blood pressure, blood glucose, cholesterol, weight, etc.)					
42.	Does the worksite offer on-site disease management classes?					
43.	Does the worksite offer health screenings more than 1 x a year?					
44.	Does the worksite provide follow-up health coaching after health screenings have been conducted?					
45.	Does the worksite accommodate disease management activities? (i.e., checking blood sugar, eating snacks)					
46.	Does the worksite's health insurance cover chronic disease medications at a low-cost to the employee?					
SCREENING AREA TOTALS (# of Yes, In Process, and No Items)						

Organizational Assessment

TOBACCO USE						
#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS
47.	Does the company post prompts/posters to support the no tobacco use policy?					
48.	Does the company promote the Vermont Quit Network's three programs (Quit Online, Quit by Phone [1-800-QUITNOW], and Quit In Person)?					
49.	Does the company policy support participation in smoking cessation activities during work time (e.g. allowing flextime to attend cessation classes)?					
50.	Does the company provide on-site individual or group cessation counseling?					
51.	Does the company use a health plan that covers individual, group, or telephone-based cessation counseling?					
52.	Does the company provide cessation medications through health insurance?					
TOBACCO USE TOTALS (# of Yes, In Process, and No Items)						

Organizational Assessment

BREASTFEEDING						
#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS
53.	Does the company have a written policy that states your company's support of a woman's choice to breastfeed her infant(s) and describes the worksite accommodations and/or benefits available to her?					
54.	Does the company provide a private area for nursing or expressing milk? (It should be quiet, clean, and have enough room for a comfortable chair.)					
55.	Does the worksite provide lactation education programs?					
BREASTFEEDING TOTALS (# of Yes, In Process, and No Items)						

Organizational Assessment

MENTAL HEALTH						
#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS
56.	Do you have a list of local resources for screening and referral for mental health issues?					
57.	Do you have a policy that supports employees who have mental health issues including leaves of absence and plans for returning to work?					
58.	Do you provide orientation for employees regarding workplace policies and supports available?					
59.	Do you display health messages promoting workplace policies, understanding/acceptance, and resources for assistance with mental health?					
60.	Do you provide training for supervisors on recognizing and responding to performance issues that may signal distress?					
61.	Do you provide education to employees on mental health?					

Organizational Assessment

MENTAL HEALTH						
#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS
62.	Do you allow flexible work hours to promote work/life balance and returning to work after leaves of absence?					
63.	Do you provide opportunities for stress-reduction at the workplace?					
64.	Do you provide access to an Employee Assistance Program?					
65.	Do you allow employees to access support services during working hours?					
MENTAL HEALTH TOTALS (# of Yes, In Process, and No Items)						

Organizational Assessment

SUBSTANCE ABUSE						
#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS
66.	Do you have a list of local resources for screening and referral for suspected drug issues?					
67.	Do you have a policy in compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act (if required)?					
68.	Does your policy include legal drugs like alcohol, tobacco, and prescription medication?					
69.	Do you have a policy that indicates when and how drug testing will be used?					
70.	Do you provide orientation for employees regarding workplace policies?					
71.	Do you display health messages promoting non-use, workplace policies, and resources for assistance with substance abuse?					

Organizational Assessment

SUBSTANCE ABUSE						
#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS
72.	Do you provide training for supervisors on recognizing and responding to employees in distress and suspected violations of workplace policy?					
73.	Do you provide education to employees on substance abuse?					
74.	Do you provide drug-free options at social gatherings?					
75.	Do you provide access to an Employee Assistance Program?					
76.	Do you allow employees to access recovery support services during working hours?					
SUBSTANCE ABUSE TOTALS (# of Yes, In Process, and No Items)						

Organizational Assessment

IMMUNIZATIONS						
#	WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS
77.	Does the worksite encourage all staff to be up to date on their immunizations?					
78.	Does the workplace offer insurance coverage that includes routinely recommended adult immunizations?					
79.	Does the workplace actively promote vaccinations such as flu and pertussis (included in Tdap, the tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis vaccine)?					
80.	If health care personnel are employed, does the workplace require and follow-up on immunization recommendations for HCP?					
81.	Does the workplace provide a sick leave benefit, so that ill people can stay home and not spread infection in the workplace?					
IMMUNIZATIONS TOTALS (# of Yes, In Process, and No Items)						

Organizational Assessment

WORKSITE SCORECARD					
WELLNESS COMPONENT	YES	IN PROCESS	NO	PRIORITY AREA (YES/NO)	COMMENTS
Strategic Planning					
Physical Activity					
Nutrition					
Health Screening and Disease Prevention and Management					
Tobacco Use					
Breastfeeding					
Mental Health					
Substance Abuse					
Immunizations					
WORKSITE TOTALS (# of Yes, In Process, and No Items)					

Employee Interest Survey

Directions

1. Distribute the employee interest survey to all employees.
2. Designate a location and date for employees to return surveys anonymously.
3. Collect all completed surveys.
4. Tally the responses for each question on all surveys.
5. The response items with the most checkmarks will give you an indication of your employees' interests.
6. Share the results with employees so that they know their feedback was heard and taken seriously.

Employee Interest Survey

Employee Interest Survey

Thank you for completing this survey. Your responses will give us insight into the types of activities that interest you. Participation in this survey is voluntary, and you do not need to respond to any question(s) that you do not wish to answer.

The survey should take about five minutes to complete. We will use the information you provide to incorporate policies and environmental supports into our worksite to help support your individual health efforts.

1. Which of the following policy supports would be of interest to you if offered at the worksite? (Check all that apply.)

- Tobacco-free grounds
- Healthy food/drinks at meetings
- Paid time for physical activity
- Flexible work schedule
- Flexible dress code for physical activity
- Healthy food/drinks in vending machines
- Other: _____
- Not interested in any of the above

2. Which of the following supports would be of interest to you if offered at the worksite? (Check all that would be of interest.)

- Company garden
- Discounted gym membership
- Tobacco cessation assistance
- Farmers market at work
- Walking paths around worksite
- Bicycle parking
- Prompts to take the stairs
- Not interested in any of the above
- Other: _____

Employee Interest Survey

Employee Interest Survey (continued)

3. How would you prefer to receive information about employee health activities?

Check one:

- Bulletin boards
- Email
- Memo
- Newsletter
- Paycheck stuffer
- Other _____
- Not interested in receiving information about health activities

4. Are you interested in participating in planning health programs and/or activities?

Yes No

(Optional) If yes, please provide your name and phone number so that we may follow up:

(Source: Adapted from Michigan Department of Community Health. Sample Employee Survey)

Program Planning Strategies



Starred items offer the highest impact and best return on investment

LOW RESOURCES

Have a current policy outlining the requirements and functions of a comprehensive worksite wellness program

Have a worksite wellness plan in place that addresses the purpose, nature, duration, resources required, participants in, and expected results of a worksite wellness program



Orient employees to the wellness program and give them copies of the wellness policies

Provide health education information through newsletters, publications, web sites, email, libraries, and other company communications

MEDIUM RESOURCES

Have a representative committee that meets regularly to oversee worksite wellness program

Offer regular health education presentations on various physical activity, nutrition, and wellness-related topics, (ask voluntary health associations, health-care providers, and/or public health agencies to offer on-site education classes)

Designate specific areas to support employees such as diabetics and nursing mothers



Provide health education information through newsletters, publications, web sites, email, libraries, and other company communications

Provide confidential Health Risk Appraisals

Offer on-site weight management/maintenance programs for employees

Program Planning Strategies

HIGH RESOURCES

-  Have a worksite budget for employee health promotion that includes some funds for programming and/or a portion of a salary for a coordinator (budget amount will determine level of resources)
-  Provide adequate health-care coverage for employees and their families for prevention of and rehabilitation of chronic disease
- Add weight management/maintenance, nutrition, and physical activity counseling as a member benefit in health insurance contracts

Best general resource:

Wellness Councils of America (WELCOA) for a variety of general wellness information:
<http://www.welcoa.org/freeresources/index.php?category=12>

Physical Activity Strategies



Starred items offer the highest impact and best return on investment

LOW RESOURCES

Create a company culture that discourages sedentary behavior, such as TV viewing on breaks and sitting for long periods of time



Offer flexible work hours to allow for physical activity during the day

Map out on-site trails or nearby walking routes or routes inside

Post motivational signs at elevators & escalators to encourage stair use

Provide exercise/physical fitness messages and information to employees



Provide bicycle racks in safe, convenient, and accessible locations

MEDIUM RESOURCES

Provide showers and/or changing facilities on-site

Provide outdoor exercise areas such as fields and trails for employee use

Start employee activity or recreational sports clubs (e.g., walking, bicycling, softball, basketball)

Provide discounted or subsidized memberships at local health clubs, recreation centers, or YMCAs

Physical Activity Strategies



Starred items offer the highest impact and best return on investment

HIGH RESOURCES

	Offer on-site fitness opportunities, such as group classes or personal training
	Provide an on-site exercise facility
	Provide incentives for participation in physical activity and/or weight management/maintenance activities
	Allow for use of facilities outside of normal work hours (before/after work)
	Provide on-site child care to facilitate parents engaging in physical activity

Best general resource:

Vermont Department of Health’s “Get Moving Vermont!” website provides excellent information:
<http://getmoving.vermont.gov>

Nutrition Strategies



Starred items offer the highest impact and best return on investment

LOW RESOURCES

	Send healthy eating messages to employees via multiple means (e.g. email, posters, payroll stuffers, etc.)
	Promote the consumption of fruit and vegetables in catering/cafeteria through motivational signs, posters, etc.
	Provide protected time and dedicated space away from the work area for breaks and lunch
	Offer appealing, low-cost, healthful food options, such as fruits and vegetables, juices, and low-fat dairy products in vending machines, snack bars, and break rooms
	Promote healthy choices by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increasing the percentage of healthy options that are available• Using competitive pricing to make healthier choices more economical• Advertising or marking healthy options so that they stand out
	Have healthy food procurement and healthy cooking practices policies in place in cafes and cafeterias.
	Have a healthy food at meetings, company functions, and health education events policy in place.
	Make water available throughout the day

Nutrition Strategies



Starred items offer the highest impact and best return on investment

MEDIUM RESOURCES

- Make kitchen equipment (refrigerators, microwaves, stoves, etc.) available for employee food storage and preparation
- Offer local fruits and vegetables at the worksite (i.e. farmers market, CSA)
- Provide on-site gardening
- Provide interactive food opportunities such as taste testing, food preparation skills, and peer-to-peer modeling

HIGH RESOURCES

- Provide incentives for participation in nutrition and/or weight management/maintenance activities. (These can range from inexpensive low resource items such as water bottles to high-resource items like health insurance rebates)
- Include the employees' family members in campaigns promoting fruit and vegetable consumption (worksite plus family intervention)
- Hire a registered dietitian on a consulting basis to do nutrition screens and counseling

Best general resource:

Vermont Department of Health's "Eat for Health" website (part of the Fit and Healthy Vermonter Obesity Prevention Plan) has many resources for general improvements to nutritional habits: <http://healthvermont.gov/eatforhealth/index.aspx>

Tobacco Use Strategies



Starred items offer the highest impact and best return on investment

REQUIREMENTS

In 2009, Vermont amended its Smoking in the Workplace law to prohibit smoking inside all areas of the workplace. The law requires all indoor areas of workplaces to be 100% smoke-free. In addition, Vermont passed the Clean Indoor Air Act in 1993, which required all enclosed indoor public places to be smoke-free, including restaurants. In 2005, the law was amended to include bars and clubs.

LOW RESOURCES



Establish a policy prohibiting tobacco use anywhere on the property

Provide prompts/posters to support no tobacco use policy



Promote the Vermont Quit Network's three programs (Quit Online, Quit by Phone [1-800-QUITNOW], and Quit In Person)

MEDIUM RESOURCES

Establish a policy supporting participation in smoking cessation activities during duty time (flextime)

HIGH RESOURCES

Provide counseling through an individual, group, or telephone counseling program on-site

Provide counseling through a health plan sponsored individual, group, or telephone counseling program

Provide cessation medications through health insurance

Best general resource:

Vermont Quit Network
<http://802quits.org>

Breastfeeding Strategies



Starred items offer the highest impact and best return on investment

REQUIREMENTS

Provide time and an appropriate private space (with a lock on the inside) for breastfeeding / expressing breast milk.

Vermont Labor Law Supports Breastfeeding in the Workplace. Vermont's labor law requires employers to provide reasonable break time; either compensated or uncompensated throughout the day for the employee to express breast milk and make a reasonable accommodation to provide an appropriate space that is not a bathroom stall. (May 2008)

Federal Health Reform: Break Time for Nursing Mothers - Fair Labor Standards Act § 7(r) Employers are required to provide "reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk for her nursing child for 1 year after the child's birth each time such employee has need to express the milk." Employers are also required to provide "a place, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public, which may be used by an employee to express breast milk." (March 2010)

LOW RESOURCES



Establish a written policy which promotes breastfeeding

Allow employed mothers to bring their babies to work

Allow employed mothers to work from home (or combination of office and home)

Provide an educational packet outlining support for breastfeeding to all employees

Breastfeeding Strategies



Starred items offer the highest impact and best return on investment

MEDIUM RESOURCES



Allow flexible breaks or flex time for expressing breast milk

Provide lactation benefits as part of insurance coverage (i.e. breast pumps, breastfeeding classes and lactation consultation)

Health Resources and Services Administration-Supported Women's Preventive Services: Required Health Plan Coverage Guidelines. These guidelines are effective August 1, 2011. Accordingly, non-grandfathered plans and issuers are required to provide coverage without cost sharing consistent with these guidelines in the first plan year (in the individual market, policy year) that begins on or after August 1, 2012.)

Type of Preventive Service - Breastfeeding support, supplies, and counseling.

HHS Guideline for Health Insurance Coverage - Comprehensive lactation support and counseling, by a trained provider during pregnancy and/or in the postpartum period, and costs for renting breastfeeding equipment.

Frequency - In conjunction with each birth.

Provide a "Lactation Room" that includes: a comfortable chair, a refrigerator for milk storage, and a sink for washing hands and pump equipment.

HIGH RESOURCES

Provide Lactation Consultant services for employees in addition to those covered by insurance benefit.

Provide lactation education programs (support group, classes)

Provide a small refrigerator for a mother to keep her expressed milk at her work station

Best general resource:

Breastfeeding Friendly Employer Project


<http://healthvermont.gov/wic/food-feeding/breastfeeding/friendly-employer-project.aspx>

Substance Abuse Strategies




Starred items offer the highest impact and best return on investment

LOW RESOURCES

- Identify local resources for screening and referral of employees displaying signs of substance abuse
-  Have a policy in compliance with Drug-Free Workplace Act (if applicable)
- Have a policy addressing the use of legal drugs like alcohol, tobacco, and prescription medication
- Provide orientation for employees on expectations regarding substance use and workplace policies
- Display health messages promoting non-use, workplace policies, and resources for assistance

MEDIUM RESOURCES

- Have a policy explaining how and when drug testing will be used
-  Provide training for supervisors on recognizing and responding to signs of workplace policy violations
- Provide education for employees on substance abuse: what it is, how it affects families, and how to prevent it
- Provide education on connection between substance abuse and mental health
- Provide substance-free options at social gatherings

Substance Abuse Strategies



Starred items offer the highest impact and best return on investment

HIGH RESOURCES



Provide access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Allow employees to access recovery support services during working hours

Best general resource:

Making Your Workplace Drug-Free: A Kit for Employers

<http://store.samhsa.gov/product/Making-Your-Workplace-Drug-Free/SMA07-4230>

Mental Health Strategies



Starred items offer the highest impact and best return on investment

LOW RESOURCES

- Identify local resources for screening and referral of employees who may be experiencing signs or symptoms of distress
- Establish policies that support employees who have mental health issues including leaves of absence and plans for returning to work
- Provide orientation for employees on workplace policies and supports regarding mental health
- Display health messages promoting workplace policies, understanding/acceptance, and resources for assistance

MEDIUM RESOURCES

- Provide training for supervisors on recognizing and responding to performance issues that may signal distress
- Provide education for employees on mental health: what it is, how it affects families, and how to find support
- Provide stress-reduction activities at the workplace
- Allow flexible work hours to promote work/life balance and returning to work after leaves of absence

Mental Health Strategies



Starred items offer the highest impact and best return on investment

HIGH RESOURCES

Provide access to an Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Allow employees to access support services during working hours

Best general resource:

Businesses Materials for a Mental Health-Friendly Workplace


http://www.promoteacceptance.samhsa.gov/publications/business_resource.aspx

Immunizations Strategies




Starred items offer the highest impact and best return on investment

LOW RESOURCES

- Maintain a bulletin board with space for Vermont Department of Health or CDC immunization information for adults. (Include information about all vaccines recommended for adults)
- Display posters from the CDC about the flu vaccination early each fall. (Follow up with personal recommendation to each employee to be vaccinated)
- Post public flu clinic information on the bulletin board
- List local Federally Qualified Health Centers or Rural Health Clinics that can provide immunization services (and other health care) for low income employees who are without insurance
-  Provide sick leave and encourage staying home when ill to avoid the spread of vaccine preventable illness in the workplace

MEDIUM RESOURCES

- For health care providers or child care providers, maintain record of staff vaccinations, and written “declinations” (Keep health care records confidential)
-  Assure coverage for adult immunizations on the insurance plan
- Allow employees, especially those who do not earn sick leave to take “vaccination leave,” paid leave time when they may schedule a vaccination

Immunizations Strategies



Starred items offer the highest impact and best return on investment

HIGH RESOURCES



Engage licensed nurses (such as a home health care organization) to provide immunizations at the worksite, offering Tdap and flu vaccines to any employees who are not up to date

Contract with a pharmacy to provide vaccines (at pharmacy) for an employee at no charge to the employee

Offer an employee health fair that includes vaccination opportunities at no cost: pneumococcal vaccine, human papillomavirus vaccine, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis A vaccines.

Best general resource:

CDC Recommended Immunizations for Adults

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/downloads/adult/adult-schedule-easy-read.pdf>

Activity Prioritizing Tool

INSTRUCTIONS

Rate each of the recommendations identified in the Worksite Wellness Assessment on the following aspects: importance, cost, time, commitment. Rate each on a scale of 1–5 using the chart below. Higher scores should indicate priority items to implement.

Importance: How important is the recommendation?

1 = Not at all important, 3 = Somewhat important, 5 = Very important

Cost: How expensive would it be to plan and implement the recommendation?

1 = Very expensive, 3 = Moderately expensive, 5 = Not expensive

NOTE: You can get an idea of relative cost by looking at the programming strategy tables, which are arranged by low, medium, and high resources needs.

Time: How much time and effort would be needed to implement the recommendation?

1 = Extensive time and effort, 3 = Moderate time and effort, 5 = Low time and effort

Commitment: How enthusiastic would employees be about implementing the recommendation?

1 = Not enthusiastic, 3 = Moderately enthusiastic, 5 = Very enthusiastic

Reach: How many employees will likely be affected by this recommendation?

1 = Very few employees, 3 = Some employees, 5 = Most or all employees

Activity Prioritizing Tool

#	RECOMMENDATION	IMPORTANCE	COST	TIME	COMMITTMENT	REACH	POINTS/RANKING	COMMENTS:

Action Plan Worksheet

Recommendations: Describe the strategies selected from the Activity-Prioritizing Tool.

Activities: List the activities required to meet the recommendation.

Time: How much time and effort would be needed to implement the recommendation?

Materials, Resources and Personnel: List the individuals who will do the work and the resources and tools they need to get the job done.

Time Frame: When will implementation begin? How long will it take to finish?

Evaluation: How will you measure your successes and/or misfortunes?

RECOMMENDATION	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS, RESOURCES, and PERSONNEL	TIME FRAME	EVALUATION	COMMENTS:

Action Plan Worksheet

RECOMMENDATION	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS, RESOURCES, and PERSONNEL	TIME FRAME	EVALUATION	COMMENTS:

Evaluation Tools and Measures

SAMPLE PROCESS OBJECTIVES	Year One	Year Two	CHANGE
Number of staff enrolled and participating (participation rates)			
Observation or counts (e.g. track number walking at noon)			
Participant satisfaction (via survey, focus groups, interviews, stakeholder survey, etc.)			
Policy or environmental changes/tracking (use Worksite Wellness Assessment Checklist and compare list of policy or environmental changes from initial site assessment with later follow up at one year, two years, etc.)			
SAMPLE OUTCOME OBJECTIVES	Year One	Year Two	CHANGE
Pretest/posttest surveys can measure changes in attitude, knowledge, current eating and physical activity habits from initial assessment to completion of a specified program or campaign			
Quizzes: test of knowledge on various topics			
Vending items being chosen (arrange with vendor to track selections)			
Cafeteria menu options			
Health indicators/reduced risk factors. Complete a comparison of company aggregate screening measures such as blood pressure, cholesterol, body weight, BMI, etc. before and after a specified program or campaign			
Corporate costs and return on investment (the expense side, or what it costs to run your wellness program, can be fairly easy to quantify. However, computing savings from reduced healthcare claims, lost work days or absenteeism may be harder to calculate. Work with your human resources and benefits contacts to determine what can be measured and then set a baseline figure to compare against later)			

Healthy Eating Guidelines for Worksites



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Healthy Eating Guidelines for Worksites

Why offer healthy foods at meetings, conferences and seminars?

The physical and social environment of the workplace influences health-related behaviors. Work is where many people spend most of their time; therefore, food available at a person's workplace frequently determines what they eat throughout the day. Workplace gatherings can promote healthier food choices by following the recommendations put forth by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans by offering:

- More fruits and vegetables
- Non- or low-fat milk products
- Whole grains
- Foods low in saturated and trans fats
- Smaller serving sizes (see page 8 for examples of proper serving sizes)

General guidelines:

- Emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy and lean protein sources
- Offer low-fat and low-calorie foods
- Serve smaller portions of higher calorie foods (e.g. mini, halved or quartered bagels, muffins or cookies)
- Include a vegetarian option with meals and snacks
- Offer seasonal and local foods when possible (see page 7)
- Use lower fat versions of condiments (e.g. dressings, mayo, cream cheese, sour cream, dips)
- For mid-morning and mid-afternoon meetings, consider serving only beverages
- Serve low-fat or skim milk with coffee and tea
- Offer water with meals and snacks
- If registration forms are used, provide space to indicate food allergies or dietary restrictions



Whole Grains Tip:

When buying whole-grain products, the first or second ingredient must list "whole" before the grain (e.g. whole wheat, whole oats, whole corn meal, whole rye). Wheat, rye, pumpernickel, 12-grain and multi-grain breads are not necessarily whole grains.



Menu Ideas for Meetings and Conferences

Employers can make it easier for people to make healthy food choices by providing healthy food at meetings and other events they sponsor. Here are sample menus that offer healthy foods.

Breakfast

- Fruit pieces (offer seasonal, local fruit whenever possible)
- Low- or non-fat yogurt
- Small muffins (2-3oz) or large muffins cut in half (look for whole-grain muffins)
- 100% whole-grain bread and/or whole-grain English muffins
- Whole-grain cereals (serve with skim or 1% milk)
- Mini whole-grain bagels or larger bagels cut in half

Spreads to offer:

Single servings of peanut butter, jam, jelly, low-fat cream cheese, trans fat free spread

Beverages:

- Bottled water
- Skim or 1% milk
- Coffee and tea (offer skim and 1% milk)

Mid-morning meetings

Consider only serving beverages (see beverage list on page 4).

Lunch

- Low-sodium meat-based broth or low-sodium vegetable-based soup
- Green or vegetable salad (offer light vinaigrettes or low-fat dressings on the side)
- Pasta or rice salad (made with light vinaigrettes or low-fat dressings)
- Potato salad (use combination of low-fat mayo and yogurt, and dress lightly)
- Whole-grain rolls with trans fat free spread (if offering butter, use single-serving packets)
- Pizza (choose vegetable topping and avoid pepperoni, sausage and extra cheese)



Sandwich Ideas:

- Whole-grain breads, rolls, wraps (cut sandwiches in half for smaller portions)
- Lean roast beef, lean poultry without skin, ham, tuna fish with low-fat mayo, hummus (always offer a vegetarian choice)
- 1oz slices of reduced-fat cheese
- Vegetable toppings
- Packets of mustard and low-fat mayo

Beverages:

- Bottled water
- Unsweetened iced tea
- Flavored water (no sugar)
- Skim or 1% milk
- Coffee and tea (offer skim and 1% milk)

Menu Ideas for Meetings and Conferences

Mid-afternoon meetings

Consider only serving beverages.

Snack ideas:

- Baked chips with salsa
- Fruit pieces or fruit salad
- Low- or non-fat yogurt
- Raw veggies with low-fat dip, hummus and/or bean dip
- Whole-grain pita bread with hummus and/or bean dip
- Whole-grain crackers with cheese (1oz portions of cheese)
- Dried fruit with and without nuts
- Pretzels and plain popcorn

Beverages:

- Bottled water
- Unsweetened iced tea
- Flavored water (no sugar)
- Skim or 1% milk
- Coffee and tea (offer skim and 1% milk)

Snack Tip:

Consider not offering food at staff meetings. Calories from one extra bagel per week equals to a weight gain of 5 pounds per year.



Dinner

Work with the conference center or caterer to select entrées that have less than 15 grams of fat per serving and always include a vegetarian option.

- Green or vegetable salad (with light vinaigrettes or low-fat dressings on the side)
- Whole-grain rolls with trans fat free spread (if offering butter, use single-serving packets)
- Pasta with marinara sauce
- Lean meats, skinless poultry, fish or tofu that is grilled, broiled, roasted or baked
- Serve at least two vegetables with meals (e.g. steamed vegetables, salad)
- Request seasonal and local vegetables (avoid butter and cream sauces)

Beverages:

- Bottled water
- Unsweetened iced tea
- Flavored water (no sugar)
- Skim or 1% milk
- Coffee and tea (offer skim and 1% milk)

Dessert

- Fresh fruit pieces or fruit salad (with low-fat yogurt dip)
- Angel food cake with fruit topping
- Low-fat ice cream or frozen yogurt, sherbet or sorbet
- If cookies are offered, consider whole-grain cookies such as oatmeal or offer lower-fat varieties and smaller sizes (2–3oz)
- If cake is offered, cut into 2" squares

Making Healthier Food Choices

Conference centers and caterers should be willing to work with you or your planning committee to develop a healthy menu. Use the list below as a guide when talking to the chef or caterer. These guidelines are appropriate for meetings off-site or in the office.

	BEST	GOOD	LIMIT / AVOID
BEVERAGES	skim or 1% milk fat-free half & half soy milk (unflavored) tea coffee water sugar-free flavored water unsweetened iced tea	2% milk fruit juice 100% fruit or vegetable juice in 8oz containers diet soda	regular soda whole milk and cream sweetened tea lemonade sweetened fruit drinks sports drinks energy drinks
FRUIT	fresh frozen canned in own juice	canned in light syrup dried	canned in heavy syrup sweetened canned fruit
VEGETABLES	all fresh or frozen without added fat and sauces low-sodium vegetable-based broth or soup soups made with vegetable puree or skim milk	canned stir-fried but not battered oven-baked potatoes vegetable-based broth or soup	fried battered served with cheese or butter sauce cream-based soups (such as cream of broccoli)

Making Healthier Food Choices

	BEST	GOOD	LIMIT / AVOID
MILK & MILK PRODUCTS	skim milk non-fat cream non-fat yogurt low-fat and part skim cheese fat-free cream cheese fat-free or low-fat cottage cheese	1% milk low-fat or whipped cream cheese low-fat yogurt low-fat cheese	whole milk and cream full-fat cheese and cream cheese processed cheese spread
BREADS, CEREALS & PASTAS	whole-grain or whole wheat: rolls, bread, English muffins or bagels low-fat granola and granola bars whole-grain cereal oatmeal whole-grain pasta brown rice	white: rolls, bread, English muffins or bagels mini-muffins unsweetened cereals grits pancakes French toast white pasta and rice corn bread	Danishes croissants doughnuts sweet rolls large muffins pastries sweetened cereals pasta with cheese, meat or Alfredo sauce pasta salad made with mayonnaise or creamy dressing crackers made with trans fat (see page 10)
MEAT, POULTRY, FISH, EGGS, BEANS & NUTS	extra-lean ground meat trimmed beef and pork skinless chicken and turkey tuna canned in water grilled, broiled, roasted or baked fish and shellfish beans split peas lentils tofu egg whites egg substitute	lean ground beef meat stir-fried in olive oil low-sodium and low-fat lunch meats broiled hamburgers Canadian bacon low-fat hot dogs tuna canned in oil nuts whole eggs cooked without added fat	fried meat or fish untrimmed beef and pork bacon sausage pepperoni ribs hot dogs chicken and turkey with skin lunch meats whole eggs cooked with fat

Making Healthier Food Choices

	BEST	GOOD	LIMIT / AVOID
CONDIMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> catsup mustard vinegar Tabasco® non-fat or low-fat dressings non-fat cream cheese 100% fruit jam trans fat free margarine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> whipped margarine and butter jelly low-fat mayonnaise oil-based dressings peanut butter low-fat sour cream 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> stick margarine and butter mayonnaise cream cheese creamy dressings sour cream gravy tartar sauce cream sauce cheese sauce
DESSERTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> frozen fruit juice bars ice milk bars low-fat frozen yogurt and ice cream sherbet sorbet fig bars ginger snaps fresh fruit pieces or fruit salad with low-fat yogurt dip angel food cake with fruit topping whole-grain cookies such as oatmeal (or lower-fat varieties) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> dark chocolate cocoa cakes and pies cut into 2" squares 2-3oz cookies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> cookies and cakes pies cheese cake ice cream milk or white chocolate candy



Offering Seasonal and Local Foods at Conferences and Meetings

Why use seasonal and local foods?

- It supports our local community, economy and agriculture, and protects Vermont's farmland.
- It is better for the environment. Seasonal and local foods do not need artificial heat and light to create year-round growing conditions. Traditional systems of local farming are often small and diverse, reducing the need for synthetic pesticides, herbicides and artificial fertilizers. Additionally, fewer fossil fuels are burned on foods that travel short distances from farm to table and don't require as much packaging for transport.
- Food tastes better in season.
- Food in season can be less expensive, especially if you buy in bulk or purchase "seconds" (produce that is cosmetically damaged, but otherwise just fine).
- Local foods require less travel time; they'll be fresher and taste better, and are bred for taste, not for durability on the road. When food tastes better, you don't need to add calories, salt and fat in the form of sauces to increase flavor.
- Local producers and processors usually do not add preservatives or other artificial ingredients.

Remember to ask the chef to use local foods. Most hotels and conference centers will accommodate when asked. Here are some simple-to-serve, easy-to-find local items:

- Milk
- Cider
- Cream for coffee
- Yogurt
- Cheese
- Fresh vegetables (in season)
- Garden salad (in season)
- Fresh fruit (in season – apples most of the year)
- Local beef, chicken, turkey, pork, lamb, sausage, lunchmeat
- Honey (as tea sweetener and spread) and maple syrup
- Butter
- Herbs (garnish, salad, seasoning)

For more detailed information on substituting local ingredients into common meeting and conference menus, visit the "Buy Local/ Buy Vermont" section at www.vermontagriculture.com or call (802) 828-2416.



The Vermont Fresh Network can also be a great resource for chefs and customers who want to do more with local foods. Their mission is to connect local farmers with local restaurants. You can find out more and search their membership at www.vermontfresh.net.

Visualize a Serving Size

When cutting food to serve at meetings or when discussing menus with chefs, visualize these standard serving sizes to help keep portions in check.



3 ounces of meat: size of a deck of cards



3 ounces of fish: size of a checkbook



1 ounce of cheese: size of four dice



1 medium potato: size of a computer mouse



2 tablespoons of peanut butter: size of a ping pong ball



1 teaspoon of butter or margarine: size of the tip of your thumb



1 cup of pasta: size of a tennis ball



1 cup of mashed potatoes or broccoli: size of your fist



1 average bagel: size of a hockey puck



1 ounce of nuts or dried fruit: size of a golf ball

What to Look for on a Food Label

Limit saturated and trans fats

Diets low in saturated fat and cholesterol and as low as possible in trans fat may reduce the risk for heart disease. Look for foods that have 5% or less daily value for fat.

To identify trans fat look for the words “hydrogenated” or “partially hydrogenated” on the food label.

Watch cholesterol

A food that is low in cholesterol contains less than 20mg of cholesterol per serving and less than 2 grams of saturated fat per serving.

Limit sodium

Adults should consume less than 2,300mg (approximately 1 teaspoon) of salt per day, less for those with health problems or a family history of high blood pressure. Low sodium foods have less than 140mg of sodium per serving.

Look for fiber

Adults need at least 25 grams of fiber everyday. High fiber foods contain at least 5 grams per serving. Fruits, veggies and whole grain foods are naturally good sources of fiber.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 3 oz. (85g)	
Servings Per Container 4	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 220	Calories from Fat 140
<hr/>	
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 16g	25%
Saturated Fat 5g	25%
Trans Fat 2g	
Cholesterol 55mg	18%
Sodium 640mg	27%
Total Carbohydrate 3g	1%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Sugars 0g	
Protein 14g	
<hr/>	
Vitamin A 4%	• Vitamin C 4%
Calcium 2%	• Iron 4%
<small>*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:</small>	

Example of a food label

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www.healthvermont.gov

DECEMBER 2014