

The 8 Best Strategies You Can Implement Now for Wellness ROI

How to Rescue Corporate Health Risks and Costs

A Special White Paper by Scott Foster, Wellness Expert



Do you like movies? If you do, it is probably because they provide a temporary distraction from the stress of everyday life. They focus on someone's problems other than your own. Art imitates life, right? Whether it is Groundhog Day, 50 First Dates, or Tru Calling, Hollywood has a recurring theme of characters reliving days because of poor choices they have made. Is the same thing happening to your employee wellness program? If you want to improve the health risks, costs and productivity of your employees, you will benefit from these 8 ClaimTamer™ strategies.

1. Identify Your Health Care Costs.

You likely spend at least \$5,440 per employee annually for healthcare and prescription coverage. For example, A company with 100 employees will spend just over half a million dollars per year. Determine your actual payments to your health benefit provider for your most recent full fiscal or calendar year for even greater accuracy and personalized impact.

2. Determine Your Projected Increase.

The average projected health care cost increase for the next 5 years is 11 percent annually. A company with 100 employees, for example, can expect to pay nearly \$60,000 more next year or about \$5,000 more per month. Compare this estimated projection with your actual increase between your most recent 2 full fiscal or calendar years.

3. Budget For A Comprehensive Wellness Program.

How much are you spending on prevention? What percentage of your medical expenditure is your wellness budget? What will happen to your health care expenses if you do nothing? It takes about \$150 per eligible employee per year to demonstrate a positive return on investment (ROI). To put this in perspective, this is about \$12 per employee per month and probably less than 3% of your medical care expenses. Positive ROI has been well documented with comprehensive

programs. However, the message has become muddled by exaggerated claims from lower quality programs. Be very suspicious of anyone who claims ROI for less.

4. Learn From The Best.

There are more than 500 studies documenting the impact of well-designed health promotion programs. The 3 biggest predictors of success are comprehensiveness, individual attention and follow-up. Consequently, the 3 biggest predictors of failure are poor design, poor implementation and poor follow-up. Avoid the most common mistakes by thoroughly researching best practice programs or choosing an expert wellness firm. Choose a comprehensive, evidence-based program model and stick with it.

5. Deliver A Comprehensive Program.

Do not dilute the quality of your program because of a less than perfect budget! This is one of the most important strategies you can follow. Provide a comprehensive wellness program to as many employees as you can afford within your wellness budget. If the number of participants is less than your entire group, provide a pilot program. You will achieve much greater outcomes and will be ensured that your program "grows" rather than "goes".

6. Measure Your Health Culture.

How much does your workforce believe that you care about their health? You might be surprised at the answer. For example, a recent new client found that nearly 45% of their

employees strongly disagreed, disagreed or were neutral that their employer valued their health. This is a significant benchmark and is certainly related to productivity, absenteeism and health care costs. An improvement in the culture is one of the first significant rewards of a comprehensive wellness program and an early sign that costs are improving.

7. Provide Thorough, Private Wellness Testing.

Evidenced-based wellness testing included in your health risk appraisal (HRA) should serve as the foundation for your program. The right HRA system provides critical personal attention, integrates intervention programs, coordinates targeted communication, tracks progress and provides HIPAA-compliant storage, security and reports. It will also boost interest in future programs. For example, more than just the healthy people will begin showing up for your lunch-and-learns. The award-winning HealthHammer™ system that our clients use represents more than 10 years of research and is often used as the gold standard for launching or comparing an HRA. HealthHammer is the first system of its kind to integrate avoidable costs, paperless health risk appraisal, biometrics (the measurement of biological characteristics), and medical claims in one

powerful tool that offers instant, onsite results without any delay for lab processing or reports to be mailed. That means the health of your employees and your bottom line can begin improving faster than ever before. Look for an HRA system that does more than hit the nail on the head when it comes to saving your company's money: you could save an employee's life

8. Provide Consistent Follow-up.

Each employee should receive follow-up and each employer should receive a detailed update after every program. Follow-up should be performed at 1 month, 3 months and every 6 months after each program. Consistent follow-up demonstrates concern from you as an employer, improves communication, increases participation and improves compliance. Integrating follow-up with your HRA and prior programs provides better outcomes. If you are working with wellness vendors, they should be able to consistently identify, target, individually invite and communicate based upon any criteria you specify and report back to you.

When you focus on The 8 Best Strategies You Can Implement Now for Wellness ROI you are well on your way toward a healthier workforce and bottom line.

With corporate wellness spending up 24% in 4 years and continued double-digit health premium increases, do you really have the time and expertise necessary to effectively manage your employee's health? These evidenced-based strategies are a small part of the systems we provide with our ClaimTamer and HealthHammer systems. Our systems recently reduced high-risk medical claims for our largest client by 63% and provided an overall return on investment of 3 to 1. You may qualify to be one of the few new clients I will work within the next 6 months. I am happy to provide a complimentary 15-minute telephone consultation to help you optimize your program goals and outcomes.

For additional white paper reports or to find out my availability for a no-charge, no-obligation telephone conversation, please visit www.wellcocorp.com or call my office at (248) 549-4247.

