HEALTH AND WELLNESS AT THE WORKPLACE: PRACTICAL IDEAS TO FOSTER A WELLNESS CULTURE

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Joann Richter, OTR
HealthReach Rehabilitation Services, Inc.
Why a culture of health at work?

- Chronic Diseases on the rise
- Health Care costs on the rise
- Most working adults spend at least 50% of waking hours at work
How to build culture of wellness?

• Executive support
• Mission statement
• Wellness committee
• Healthy workplace policies
• Employee communication
• Building blocks of wellness
Executive support

- Top down commitment
- Results in greater employee participation and enthusiasm
Mission Statement

• Employer shows an investment in their employee’s health

• Example: “The mission of the ABC company’s Wellness Program is to establish a work environment that promotes healthy lifestyles, decreases the risk of disease, enhances the quality of life, and increases productivity through healthy lifestyle choices. The company encourages its employees and their families to strengthen their health and well-being through educational opportunities, wellness activities, and self-improvement.”
Wellness Committee

- Invite volunteers from all areas of the company—they can increase the impact of your wellness efforts.

- Responsibilities:
  - Evaluate current workplace programs, services and policies.
  - Survey employee needs and preferences.
  - Develop vision statement, goals and objectives.
  - Assist in implementing, monitoring and evaluating wellness activities.
BUCYRUS STRETCH PROGRAM

Guides for Stretching

- Stand relaxed, feet shoulder width apart, knees slightly bent, tighten abdominal muscles
- Do the stretches at your own pace and ability
- Hold each stretch for a count of 10, breathing in a relaxed manner (do NOT hold breath)
- Do not bounce
- If you have questions about your ability to perform a stretch, contact HealthReach X4450

1. Warm Up-Arm circles and March in place for 30 seconds

2. Neck Stretch-
   Slowly tilt your head to the left side to stretch the muscles on the right side of neck. Hold. Repeat to right side.

3. Shoulder/Neck Stretch-
   Grasp beyond right elbow with left hand. Pull arm horizontally across body while looking over right shoulder. Repeat on other side.

4. Shoulder/Lateral Trunk Stretch-
   Hold left elbow with right hand behind your head. Keeping knees slightly bent, gently pull left elbow downward as you bend to the right at your hips. Repeat to left.

5. Calf Stretch-
   Assume stride position with right leg forward. Keep left leg straight with toes facing forward and heel flat on floor. Bend right knee. Place both hands above right knee, move hips forward. Repeat.

6. Low Back Stretch-
   Stand with knees slightly bent. Place palms on low back just above hips, fingers pointing down. Gently push your palms forward to create an extension in the low back. Hold.

7. Hip and Knee Stretch-
   Place foot on floor or up on object. Slowly lean forward until a stretch is felt in back of thigh.

8. Wrist Extensor Stretch-
   Keeping elbow straight, Grasp right hand and slowly bend wrist down until stretch is felt. Repeat.

9. Finger Stretch-
   Slowly bend fingers of hands to make fists. Hold. Then open and close fingers.

10. Wrist Flexor Stretch-
    Press palms together and slowly lower wrists until a stretch is felt. Hold.

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Wellness Committee

• Priorities (examples):
  – To promote general health and well-being to employees and their families through awareness programs.
  – To offer workshops and seminars that will educate employees on current wellness issues/topics.
  – To offer programs to employees in order to help facilitate positive behavior change.
  – To carry the company’s message into the community through participation in wellness-related programs and events.
Healthy Workplace Policies

• Should be designed to be “inclusive” but not “restrictive.”

• Positive policy changes include the following:
  – Tobacco-free workplace
  – Healthy food options at work
  – Flexible working schedules
  – At work stretching programs
Employee Communication

- Key to participation
- Develop a strategy to market your program to the employees
Building Blocks of Wellness

- Provide **Access** to healthy options at work
- Limit and remove **Barriers** to healthier lifestyles for employees
- Be **Creative** in designing your program
- **Define** your Goals and Objectives
- **Educate** employees on the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle
Wellness ideas that work at work

- Wellness Bulletin Boards
- Lunch and Learn Sessions
- Ergonomic Workstation Assessments
- Pre-work At work stretching
- Onsite fitness programs
- Biggest Loser programs
- “Work to Home” programs/incentives
- Early Intervention Programs
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COMPUTER & DESK STRETCHES

Sitting at a desk or computer can cause muscular tension and pain. Take a few minutes to do a series of stretches and your whole body will feel better. It is helpful to stretch spontaneously throughout the day, stretching any area of the body that feels tense. This will help in reducing and controlling unwanted tension and pain. The stretches may be done standing or sitting.

Guidelines for Safe Stretching:
- Stretch to a point of mild tension and relax as you hold the stretch.
- The feeling of stretch tells you whether you are stretching correctly or not.
- Do not bounce.
- The long-sustained, mild stretch reduces unwanted muscle tension and tightness.
- An archer should be held gently for 10 to 20 seconds.
- Breathe slowly during the stretch.
- Do the stretches at your own pace and ability.
- If you have questions about your ability to perform a stretch, contact your instructor.

1. Neck/Shoulder stretch
   Raise the right arm above your ears until you feel slight tension. Return to start position. Repeat with left arm. Hold for 5-10 seconds. Repeat 2-3 times.

2. Neck stretch
   Get up to your head forward to stretch the back of the neck. Hold for 5-10 seconds. Repeat 2-3 times.

3. Upper back/Arm stretch
   Interlace fingers, then spread arms out to front of you, palms facing away from you. Hold for 10-20 seconds. Do at least 3 times.

4. Low back stretch
   Bending with knees slightly bent, place your feet on floor beneath you. Keep your hips facing forward. Place your hands behind your hips. Hold for 30 seconds.

5. Chest/Shoulder stretch
   With fingers in front of your head, keep elbows straight. Sit back and relax. Place your hands behind your head, palms together. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat.

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References

• Henderson, S. *Developing A Culture of Health At the Workplace*, Corporate Wellness Magazine; June, 2012
