

2007 Health Confidence Survey

Fact Sheet 1: Wellness Programs

Many employers are thinking about offering wellness programs to their workers in an effort to increase their health and well-being and reduce health care costs. The 2007 Health Confidence Survey provides insight into possible employee reactions to these types of programs.

General Reaction

- Among those employed full or part time, 82 percent feel positive about employer-sponsored wellness programs, in general (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Reaction to Employer-Sponsored Wellness Programs, Among Those Employed

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Strongly positive | 41% |
| Somewhat positive | 41 |
| Neutral | 1 |
| Somewhat negative | 12 |
| Strongly negative | 4 |
| Don't know/Refused | 1 |

Source: Employee Benefit Research Institute and Mathew Greenwald & Associates, Inc., 2007 Health Confidence Survey.

Comfort With Specific Programs

- Comfort levels decrease as wellness programs become more focused. Six in 10 workers are extremely or very comfortable with a program that provides lower-cost opportunities for health screenings and programs. Half are comfortable with a program that reminds workers when annual checkups, health screenings, prescription refills, or other treatments are due, while fewer still are comfortable with a program that offers insurance at a reduced cost to workers in good health or who take steps to lower their health risk (Figure 2).

Figure 2

Comfort With Specific Wellness Programs, Among Those Employed

| | Extremely Comfortable | Very Comfortable | Somewhat Comfortable | Not Too or Not At All Comfortable |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Lower-cost opportunities for health screenings and programs for exercise, weight-loss, stress, or smoking cessation. | 36% | 25% | 27% | 11% |
| A health plan that reminds workers when annual checkups, health screenings, or other treatments are due. Workers with specific conditions might also be reminded to take tests or refill prescriptions. | 22 | 28 | 30 | 18 |
| A health plan that offers workers the opportunity to get insurance at reduced cost. Workers who take a physical and have no illnesses or at-risk behaviors would qualify for a reduction on their premium. Workers with an illness or at-risk behavior would also qualify if they agreed to take steps to manage their illness or lower their health risk. | 20 | 24 | 28 | 26 |

Source: Employee Benefit Research Institute and Mathew Greenwald & Associates, Inc., 2007 Health Confidence Survey.

Likelihood of Participation

- Most workers say they are at least somewhat likely to participate in a wellness program if it dropped their health insurance premiums (Figure 3).

Figure 3
**Likelihood of Participation in Employer-Sponsored
 Wellness Program, Among Those Employed**

| If it reduced health insurance premiums by: | Extremely Likely | Very Likely | Somewhat Likely | Not Too Likely | Not At All Likely |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 5% | 21% | 23% | 26% | 13% | 15% |
| 10% | 29 | 21 | 27 | 8 | 12 |

Source: Employee Benefit Research Institute and Mathew Greenwald & Associates, Inc., 2007 Health Confidence Survey.

- Workers are only slightly more likely to participate with increased savings. Less than half report they would be extremely or very likely to participate for a 5 percent reduction in health insurance premiums (45 percent), while half would participate if they received a 10 percent reduction (50 percent).

Perception of Programs

- Almost all workers see the positive side of employer-sponsored wellness programs. However, a good portion of workers are skeptical about employer motives and employee privacy (Figure 4).
- Almost all workers agree that these programs can help people (89%) and nearly as many feel that these types of programs would help them personally (83%). Three-quarters feel employers show concern for their workers when offering wellness programs (76%).
- However, nearly two-thirds feel employers are only concerned about their bottom line (65%), and nearly half also think these programs intrude on worker privacy (45%).

Figure 4
**Agreement With Statements about Employer-Sponsored
 Wellness Programs, Among Those Employed**

| | Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neutral | Somewhat Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|---------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Wellness programs can help people develop healthier lives | 43% | 45% | <0.5% | 7% | 4% |
| A wellness program would help you develop a healthier lifestyle | 32 | 51 | <0.5 | 9 | 7 |
| Employers that offer wellness programs are showing concern for their workers | 26 | 50 | <0.5 | 16 | 6 |
| Employers that offer wellness programs are only concerned about their bottom line | 26 | 39 | 1 | 23 | 10 |
| Employers that offer wellness programs are intruding on worker privacy | 11 | 35 | 1 | 29 | 25 |

Source: Employee Benefit Research Institute and Mathew Greenwald & Associates, Inc., 2007 Health Confidence Survey.