

Promising Practice Ideas—Workplace Wellness Programs to Increase Colon Cancer Screening and Healthy Lifestyles

OUTCOME

Increased colon cancer screening and engagement in healthy lifestyle activities through workplace wellness programs



Description

The Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department, Work Well, and the Nebraska Colon Cancer Program partnered with worksites to encourage colon cancer screening, distribute screening kits, and provide healthy lifestyle education. A diverse cross-section of workers was reached.

Ingredients

- Partnerships with worksites, including Wellness Coordinators at each site.
 - Health Risk Appraisal Surveys and a system for distribution and return.
 - Educational materials and support for healthy lifestyle practices, including materials in the primary language of workers.
 - Colon cancer screening kits and/or colonoscopy coverage information.
 - Information about community programs to support healthy lifestyles.
 - Information about colon cancer screening and insurance coverage.
 - Other health screening, such as blood pressures and blood panels.
 - Data about colon cancer in Nebraska and/or the region.
- Awards to companies for efforts, outcomes, and supportive environments.

Preparation

Step 1: Identify community programs that already work with area companies on workplace wellness; find companies interested in collaboration on colon cancer screening and healthy lifestyles.

Step 2: Meet the key staff at participating companies to identify the best way to reach employees. Develop agreement to appoint a company Wellness Coordinator to organize and implement the project.

Step 3: Develop enrollment forms and paper and electronic educational materials, such as emails, direct mail, brochures, pamphlets, and posters.

Step 4: Develop a system to follow up on positive screening results and to notify the person's physician of both positive and negative screening.

Step 5: Develop evaluation plans, including a short pre-survey and post-survey.

Step 6: Provide support to companies in implementing and evaluating their projects.

Keys to Success

- Enrollment of workers by sending them a letter and enrollment form gives them time to think about the decision and to complete the form.
- An understanding of the companies' structures, workplace wellness programs, worker characteristics, methods of contacting workers, and number of sites and shifts.
- Support at all management levels.
- Information for employees on insurance coverage for colonoscopy, cost and coverage/non-coverage of prep kits, and company policy for prep time.
- Presentations by a cancer survivor, especially if that person is a co-worker.

Summary

To reduce the burden of colon cancer and increase awareness of the effects, causes, and symptoms, multiple worksites employing a diverse population were enlisted to provide colon cancer screening and education on cancer screening and healthy lifestyles.

Resources

- Wellness Council of the Midlands: <http://www.elevatingwellness.org/>
- Nebraska Worksite Wellness Toolkit: <http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/workplacewellnesstoolkit/Pages/Start.aspx>
- Live Well Survey: <http://www.nebraska.gov/workwell/>
- Guide to Community Preventive Services, Worksite Health Promotion: <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/worksite/index.html>
- Live Well Survey, Health Risk Appraisal for Worksite Wellness Programs: <http://www.nebraska.gov/workwell/>

Tips

All worksites are different, and what works for one may not work for others.

Companies that have health fairs can use them to provide education and screening kits.

If rewards are given to employees who are screened, those who do not qualify for screening because of factors such as age, should receive awards for completing educational activities.

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Funds for this project were provided through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Breast and Cervical Early Detection Program, Well Integrated Screening and Evaluation for Women Across the Nation, and Colorectal Cancer Screening Program Cooperative Agreements with NEDHHS. NU58DP003928, NU58DP004863, 2U58DP002043-06