

Developing a Communication Plan

Communication may seem simple enough, but good communication can be difficult to obtain. Therefore, it is important to develop a communication strategy, so that you may have a successful wellness program resulting in happier and healthier staff.

Communicating about wellness opportunities is key in gaining awareness and participation. If they do not know what is available, they won't use it. This is why it is important to identify how you will communicate with your employees and develop your message that speaks to the population. Communication at work may also prompt employees to bring health ideas home to their families, helping create a healthier home environment too.

Define communication distribution roles - Determine early on who will develop and distribute wellness communications. It can pay off to have management involved in the delivery issues such as policy change and large program announcements. Share your communication plan with your managers. Some of those communications can include:

- **Writing of wellness mission statement** - Superintendents or Principals are good choices to handle a message of this magnitude.
- **Development of wellness committee** - Who will oversee the committee, and what are the expectations of the committee?
 - Program development
 - Wellness communications

Identify your objectives for communication - Identifying how you define success prior to communicating your wellness program, will help you determine your goals in your communication strategy.

- Improved employee health
- Creating a stronger culture of health
- Increased participation in programs
- Increase in employees receiving preventive care
- Decreased absenteeism
- Decreased presenteeism
- Increased over-all well-being

Marketing strategy - Plan your marketing strategy by asking some of these key questions:

- What is your message, is it clear and appropriate?
- What's your timeline?
- What is the message you want your staff to receive? (Are you asking for participation or just trying to educate your employees?)
- How will this message be delivered (email, posters, payroll stuffers, etc.)?
- What is the frequency of the communications (weekly, monthly or quarterly)?

Is your message timely? (Consider what the health community is messaging at the time.)

Prioritize your messages - One way to prioritize your messages is to use the WDE to identify the needs of your population through the claims data. Using this data helps you to determine which health disparities should be addressed, and which may have more urgency than others.

Identify your mode(s) for delivering communications - While you can have more than one way to deliver your message, consider your main mode(s) of delivering your messages to your employees. By having more than one mode of delivery can help ensure that employees are receiving the message that you are trying to convey.

- Email
- Newsletters
- Blog
- Intranet
- Bulletin boards
- Announcements
- Payroll stuffers
- Marketing materials
- New hire orientation

Consider “branding” your wellness program - It's tough to get anyone's attention in our media-saturated culture. Branding your wellness program, with a creative and fun theme, can snap your employees to attention and help you get your message more attention.

- Create a name that your staff can identify with.
- Create a wellness logo or use the district/school logo.

- Consider a vibrant color scheme that catches the eye.

Other things to consider when developing your communication plan

- Ensure that references are coming from credible resources.
- Be sensitive to cultural diversities.

Resources

- [National Health Observance Calendar](#)
- [WELCOA](#)