



Workplace Wellness: Accountability for Health— A Shared Responsibility

Individual health and overall wellbeing is comprised of multiple variables including; choice, lifestyle, behaviors, beliefs, social support and the environment. Research has shown that lifestyle routines are the best determinant of achieving wellbeing. Wellness programs have become an integral component of employer business objectives and cost management strategies. Workplace wellness is no longer a luxury, but a “must have” benefit design element. Worksite wellness programs have proven their value by improving the overall health of a population, improving morale, recruiting top talent, building a business culture of health and effectively managing the direct and indirect costs associated with health. It is also the first step to reinforcing personal accountability and responsibility for health.

Business Responsibility

Employers, regardless of company size, should use wellness benefits as a behavior change mechanism to encourage and support engagement in healthy lifestyle habits that will promote and sustain optimal health. While wellness benefit design and incentives are important, the act of **ACTIVE** participation in the programs is the element of the wellness programs that have been shown to help change behavior for the long-term. A number of studies clearly show a direct relationship between consistent self-monitoring (journaling, tracking, etc.) and positive behavior change (e.g. weight loss, physical activity). Many wellness programs today offer website and portals that allow for **PASSIVE** participation, meaning that the participant is not required to perform any self-monitoring activities. Thus, passive uploads of wearable devices really do not require active engagement and reduces the efficacy of self-monitoring.

Member Responsibility

Members, regardless of their health risk (but especially moderate to high risk) should engage regularly in the practice of self-monitoring to support sustainable behavior change. Through communications from the employer and the wellness program, members should understand the important role of self-monitoring and its relationship to positive health outcomes. While technology offers many journaling tools, the benefits of these online tools is to **ENGAGE** in self-reporting as part of individual accountability and responsibility for health.

Shared Responsibility

As more and more employers adopt worksite wellness programs as part of their business strategies, it becomes important to incorporate a balance of self-monitoring tools and wearable devices as part of member tracking for wellness benefit programs. Furthermore, employers should communicate regularly about the importance of self-monitoring to employees and wellness program participants as it relates to positive health outcomes. This shared responsibility and understanding of personal accountability of health will ultimately result in sustainable behavior change for employee personal health objectives and employer business objectives.

StayFit Plan Employer/Member Shared Responsibility Outcomes

As a strategic wellness partner to our clients, we assist employers with implementing programs that will help members improve their overall wellbeing. Our **Shared Responsibility** philosophy has help our clients achieve return on investment results by as much as 1:2.9 in the first year. These returns are based on the implementation of programs and services that require members to take on accountability for their health in an **ACTIVE** manner including health challenges, health screenings, health assessments and total wellbeing coaching. StayFit has been able to assist members with improvement in self-efficacy* by as much as 1700% post intervention, demonstrating that our “back to basics” approach to wellbeing is working for our employers and the members with whom we are fortunate to serve.

**Self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to exert control over one's own motivation, behavior, and social environment.*

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Sources:

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