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Community Services Benefits Trust Newsletter - Spring Edition

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CSBT Completes its NEW PATH



Our last newsletter outlined how our Board, along with our Advisor Partners and GroupHEALTH Benefits Solutions staff, recently completed our PATH (Planning Alternative Tomorrow's with Hope). This planning has no consequence unless we work on the plan. I'm so pleased to write we are moving forward with each aspect and I'll share our progress with each section throughout year.

One section of our PATH says we'll "Maintain our Integrity" by continuing to address costs and cost containment, build our relationships with key stakeholders, and increase member contact and focus. Here are a few examples of the activities moving us forward:

- Provide a program giving the best to employees while addressing costs we must work together with all stakeholders
- Build relationships with key stakeholders
- Continue to build relationships with member agencies
- Welcome new agencies with a letter and phone call
- Continue to work with GroupHEALTH to contain costs by refining our product

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We must work together with all stakeholders to provide a program giving the best to employees while addressing costs. Often employers say they can't use some key cost containment strategies because the union won't allow it. Then we learn there has been no conversation with the union. Wherever possible, we work with union staff to learn how our key tools can deliver the same benefit to employees while changing the manner of delivery. We're experiencing good progress.

One key example is our work with the Community Social Services Bargaining Association (CSSBA) (the unions) and the Community Social Services Employers Association (CSSEA) (the employers' rep) in BC. We've learned unions and employers know the old delivery methods aren't sustainable, and so with the agreement of all parties, the collective agreement now makes a managed drug program optional. Beginning in March, we'll also start a pilot program so all parties can learn how this approach controls costs.

Our work with CSSBA and CSSEA comes about from our desire to build relationships with key stakeholders. Often, employers decide the contents of a benefit package based on the budget. Many times employees aren't consulted. When unions are involved, the process is often adversarial. To know what's best in class we have to consult on what works, and to contain costs we have to work together with all parties. Our CEO, Charlene Couture, along with GroupHEALTH staff, is doing important work in consulting and learning with employee groups and their representatives. One recent example is the extensive efforts to both educate and learn with the CSSBA in BC. Consultation with them is regular (often daily), and recently an in depth presentation was made to help them understand the breadth and depth of the CSBT program.

We also continue to work at building our relationships with member agencies. Our website (csbt.ca) and this newsletter do help, but they are not enough. This is why we recently held a daylong educational session focused on wellness and getting the best use of components of our program. The session was accomplished in

conjunction with the BC CEO Network (if others are interested in this sort of education, we'd love to hear from you). We are also in the process of building "Wellness Kits" to send out to all member agencies to help all of us remember to continue to focus on this important area.

Over the last few months, we've adopted the practice of sending a welcome letter from me on behalf of our Board of Trustees to every new member agency. In the following month, I will also endeavour to call the contact person at each of those agencies. We find these approaches well received and they help build our relationship with members.

Building relationships is only a part of the solutions. It's why we continue to work with GroupHEALTH to contain costs by refining our product. We now have two alternative programs targeting the high costs of drugs called Managed Rx and PostScripts Rx, an exciting Mid-Term Disability (MTD) program that cuts the costs of traditional long-term disability, and our Release of Reserves program to release reserves (IBNR) to save members significant money. We will keep innovating to keep the program sustainable.

Here at CSBT we're committed to maintaining our integrity. We can't accomplish anything alone. If these ideas intrigue or you have others we can work on, please don't hesitate to contact me at paul.wheeler@csbt.ca.

Paul Wheeler, Chair, Board of Trustees

CSBT Wellness Kit

CSBT wants to start the New Year by sending each one of our members a WELLNESS KIT this spring. CSBT has a motto of "Keeping Healthy Employees at Work", so we thought we would help spring you forward!



How to Un-Junk Your Diet in 10 Simple, Practical Steps

We were fortunate enough to collaborate with the BCCEO network on January 29 to provide their members with an educational day focused on wellness. There was a host of speakers and interesting topics. One of our speakers, Desiree Neilson, has assisted CSBT many times in the past to deliver amazing presentations on wellness. Desiree was able to present some very interesting concepts, which promote wellness, based on her book *Un-Junk your Diet*. As a follow up to her presentation, Desiree wanted to illustrate 10 easy steps to *Un-Junk your Diet* through a an anti-inflammatory diet approach. This diet will help you feel energized and stave off the ravages of chronic disease, and it doesn't take crazy dietary regimes to get there.

Take these 10 steps one at a time to transform your health without deprivation:

1. **Un-Junk your diet:** Choose foods with ingredients lists that look like recipes. Can't pronounce it? Move on.
2. **Eat your greens...** From kale to broccoli, eat greens daily
3. **...and your beans!** Beans are blood sugar balancing, economical and convenient
4. **Stop drinking your calories** Sweetened beverages lead to inflammation, weight gain and diabetes
5. **Get cultured!** Eat fermented foods daily, such as yogurt, kombucha and miso
6. **Think slow carb...not no carb** Keep grains whole and intact like steel cut oats and quinoa
7. **Get an oil change** Make olive oil your daily staple and avoid omega-6 fats like soy and corn oils
8. **Put animal foods in their place** Keep portions of meat and dairy small, focusing on fish and poultry first
9. **Supplement strategically** Consider omega-3, vitamin D and probiotics
10. **Enjoy your food** Don't eat foods you hate, have fun cooking and eating!

We have heard since the presentation, more and more of our members are eating their beans, and their greens! Thanks to Desiree for outlining these 10 tips.

Hungry for more? Get her book, [Un-Junk Your Diet](#), and visit her website desireerd.com. Make olive oil your daily staple and avoid omega-6 fats like soy and corn oils.

By Desiree Nielsen, Registered Dietitian

Rewarding Wellness Programs

As two very different employers pointed out at the 2014 Benefits & Pension Summit held in Vancouver, a successful employee wellness strategy is based on an organization's unique corporate culture and the specific needs of the workforce.

"We have a strong and rich culture at Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC) where our staff, from the head office in Vancouver down to our stores across Canada, tend to live very active lives and love the outdoors," said Abbie Hodgson van Essen, the retailer's manager, compensation and benefits. "Our wellness strategy grew from conversations with employees at the grassroots and developed holistically from there."

Over time, MEC has incorporated outdoor play days for staff, a paid volunteerism program, and an employee assistance program (EAP). Other programs include everything from entering teams in charity races, yoga classes, financial literacy, interest-free bike loans, an online wellness library and a mental health awareness program.

"Our wellness strategy is all about promoting inclusion and activity," Hodgson van Essen added, stressing that having executive buy-in and good external partnerships makes a huge difference. At BP Canada, the employee wellness program was implemented after a corporate divestment process cut staff from 1,000 to 400 employees.

"We needed to show the remaining employees that we care about them and why they should stay with our

company,” explained Laurie Dreger, HR benefits advisor at BP. “Since safety is such a huge part of our culture, we decided to translate that into wellness and other parts of our employees’ life. We started by asking employees about their interests and acted on that information.”

Two and a half years since implementation, BP’s wellness strategy includes outfitting employees with pedometers to track their daily steps, a health zone room, iPads with health apps such as sleeping habits and calorie consumption, and various health challenges suited to the workforce’s competitive spirit. Employees receive credits for participation and progress, which can be used toward paying for childcare, eldercare or housecleaning services.

“When you know your culture, it gives you a good idea of where to invest your wellness dollars,” said Dreger. “Our voluntary wellness participation level has now reached 94%. The challenge going forward is to keep wellness fresh, alive and interesting for our employees.”

PostScripts Rx

GroupHEALTH recently unveiled a new product called PostScripts Rx. Aimed at helping control prescription drug costs while leaving plan design unchanged, PostScripts Rx is essentially a delivery system for maintenance medications. Once stabilized on maintenance medication, plan members use a centralized dispensing pharmacy, which ships their prescriptions to the location of their choice free of charge. GroupHEALTH has provided many groups with access to a centralized dispensing pharmacy in the past and has received lots of positive feedback regarding the cost savings.

CSSEA of BC included the centralized dispensing of maintenance drug prescriptions as one of the key features of the 2012-2014 collective agreement. They partnered with CSBT to start a pilot project with their members. CSBT has selected the groups who will be participating in our PostScripts Rx pilot program with CSSEA and we will be rolling it out with those selected groups in April 2015.

If you’d like more information about PostScripts Rx, please talk to your Advisor Partner.

Remember, this is a cost savings initiative available to anyone of our CSBT members across CANADA!

Attendance Management and the Duty to Accommodate

By Rob VaterLechner, Legal Counsel to the CSBT

About three years ago, my colleagues and I presented a daylong conference to CSBT members on attendance management and the duty to accommodate. The conference was well attended (despite a rare Vancouver snow storm) and the questions took us into overtime. Since then, many agencies have contacted me with questions and some have even asked for a copy of the materials we presented that day.

[Click here](#) for a revised version of the materials initially presented at the 2012 CSBT conference. Please note the target audience for this conference was CSBT members in BC who are also members of CSSEA. If you are not a member of CSSEA, your collective agreement (if you have one) will be different.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at 1-855-667-7788 (toll free) or Rob.VaterLechner@ravlaw.ca.

2015 IFEBP Health & Wellness Conference

Have you heard of the “ED spread”? No, it’s not butter. It’s what happens to some of us with our fast paced, high stress, inactive jobs. Colleagues and friends battle hypertension, diabetes and sleeplessness. We are **so busy building communities and lives for others, we forget to build our own.**

So why would we care what a 50 year old fireman, a 29 year old physician, and an Olympic calibre speed skater tell us? At the 2015 Health and Wellness Conference, put

on by the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans in Victoria BC, over 240 organizations from across Canada attended to hear those three presenters and others share critical information on how to reduce heart attacks, reduce colon cancer, and beat the symptoms of MS. Each presenter was different person with a different story to tell about a different health concern. Yet, a culture of wellness made an impact on them, their families, and their community.

A culture of **wellness is not just yogurt, yoga and celery**. It is a cultural change beginning with a single decision. Listening to these individuals made me realize I am going to take some of these ideas the others had success with, and incorporate them into my work culture. I will increase exercise in our daily routine by walking twice around the office (perhaps by having walking meetings instead of meetings while sitting behind a desk). We will ask a local bike shop to offer free or low cost bike clinic for a day (to generate interest outside of work and incorporate fitness for the whole family). The food we have at meetings will be with less than five ingredients at meetings (including ingredients we can all pronounce and know what they are).

I pledge to **make simple single choice, even once a day**.

In a controlled environment where we had healthy catered meals, cherry trees and mild weather made it easy to “do” wellness. We were surrounded by like minded people, who all wanted to take wellness to the next level. But the question remains: how do we carry forth this message and incorporate these concepts, into our regular routine? How we as leaders in our organizations and communities “do” wellness back home makes a difference. I took three ideas from the conference and shared them with you here. I am undertaking them in my organization.

No cost, no pressure, no risk. That’s wellness...I encourage all of you to take advantage of the information offered by CSBT.

Liz Barnett, Executive Director, North Shore Disability Resource Centre

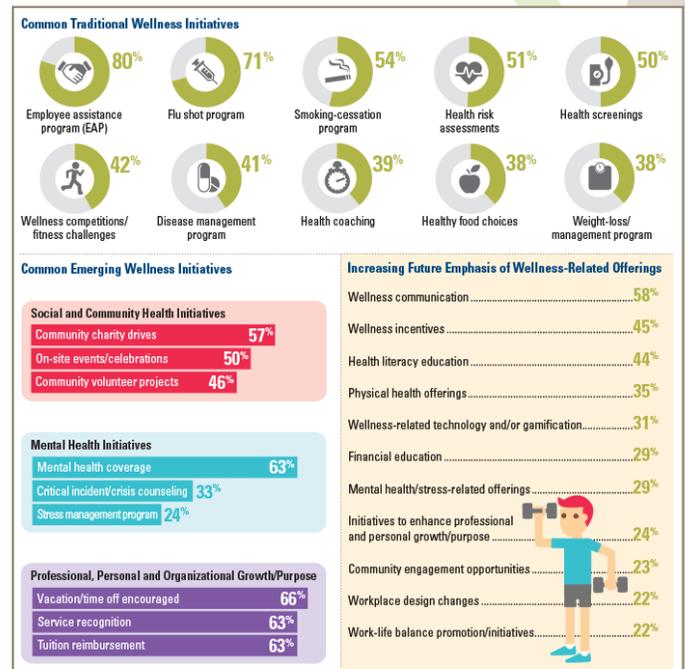
Workplace Wellness

Nontraditional wellness initiatives are quickly taking the stage as top wellness benefits, according to the [Workplace Wellness Trends survey](#) from the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans.



More traditional wellness initiatives like health risk assessments and flu shots remain popular among workplaces but the International Foundation noticed a growing emphasis on less traditional initiatives like mental health coverage (63%), encouraged vacation time (66%) and tuition reimbursement (63%). This comprehensive survey is designed to help benchmark wellness trends in the U.S. and Canada.

Click here to view the related [press release](#) and click here to view the [survey results](#).



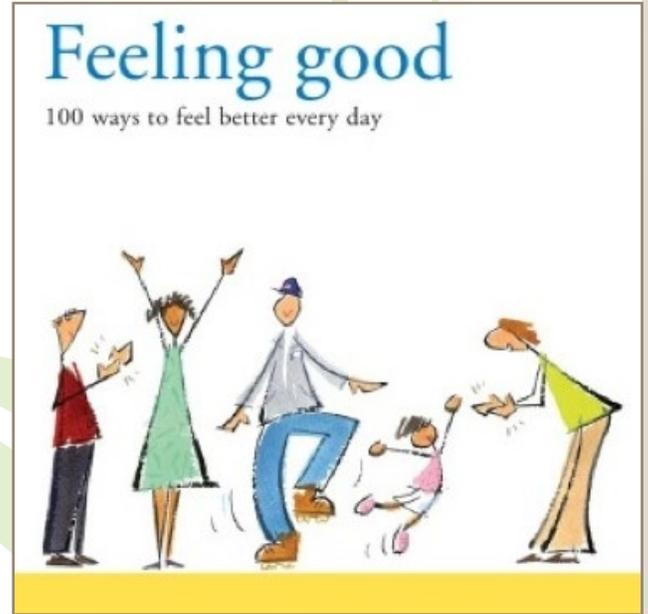
Feeling Good: 100 Ways to Feel Better Every Day

Tip 13: Work out at work.

These simple exercises from the book Office Yoga will help you feel better no matter what kind of work you do:

- Arm stretch: Hold your arms out to the side. Stretch with your fingertips to the opposite walls. Breathe and relax.
- Phone stretch: While you talk on the phone, stretch your legs out and rotate your ankles and feet. Notice your attention increase as you stretch.
- Stop what you're doing once an hour and stretch for a few moments.
- Exercise during your lunch break. Take walks or join a nearby gym or fitness center.

For more great stretches, read Office Yoga: Simple Stretches for Busy People by Darrin Zeer.



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