

MRPA Fitness & Wellness Section Notes
April 3, 2009
10:00am
Crystal, MN

Attendance:

Michelle Snider	MRPA Executive Director
Patrice Atkinson	New Brighton Section Chair
Amy Crary	Inver Grove Heights Section Chair Elect
Pam Schmitz	Robbinsdale Recreation Programs Manager
Jody Yungers	Ramsey Co. / NRPA Step Up to Health Chair
Scott Berggren	Crystal Recreation
Sarah Molnau	Waconia
Ali Payne	GBS
Drew Wurst	Shoreview
Ryan Gunderson	Coon Rapids
Mark Daly	Fridley
Tom Godfrey	Blaine
Ruth Schumi	St Paul
Pat Busch	Brooklyn Park
Stephanie Groff	Centennial Community Education
Connie Bernardy	Ramsey County

Call meeting to order: 10:05AM

1. **Secretary position vote:** At this time no one is available to fulfill the secretary position.
2. **Welcome and Introductions.**
3. **Addition to the agenda:** Do Walk and Do Bike
4. Approved Minutes
5. **August 7 Round Table Staff Health Professionals with Sara Kooperman at Les Mills committee:**

It will be a 4 hour block – names were collected for a committee and host sites suggested
6. **Speaker:** Ali Payne a consultant from Stanton Group, a Division of Gallagher Benefit Services Spoke to us about Wellness

Does your organization have a wellness committee?

Why is wellness important?

Wellness started with the Oil Industry. Old school of thought was based on fun and providing fitness to employees.

Current practice is to teach employees to be good consumers. Everyone has preventative coverage, however on average only 20% of employees use it.

Employees should be encouraged to build a relationship with a physician. This can save the health plan money in the long run. The average cost of a doctor visit is \$98 vs ER \$800.

Most plans offer a free health assessment including Health Partners. Employers should encourage employees to have a health assessment and offer a reward to those who take advantage of it.

Stanton Group works with Medica, Blue Cross Blue Shield and Health Partners. These all have a wellness initiative and offer 100% coverage of preventive care.

Another aspect of employee wellness is stress management.

Stanton Group will give you a survey you can use for employees and provide you with a list of free speakers. Usually Public Works and the Police Department will not take the time to attend health assessments. The easiest way to get them to participate is to go to their area.

Human Resources will welcome set up of a Wellness committee. Once implemented medical costs can be reduced enough to pay for at least one full time position such as a fitness coordinator. 33% of members in attendance indicated that they have a wellness committee.

HRA/HSA programs are very forward thinking and can save organizations and consumers costs.

Most programs have an EAP- Employee Assistance Plan. This will allow you to meet with a lawyer or financial advisor. Also, most plans offer 3 free visits to a therapist for people suffering from anxiety or depression. This can also reduce medical costs for an illness that could escalate if left untreated. Some plans are considering Holistic/Chiropractic/Acupuncture. Other aspects of plans include weight loss support groups and clinics on proper lifting technique. As far as saving people from calling in sick it is often hard to study because most employers have Paid Time off verses Sick Leave.

7. Pam from the City of Robbinsdale – She showed us a poster of Copy Machine Stretches. A website that is helpful: www.healthyworkplaceweek.com Their quest for wellness fell into recreation because they are used to programming /have ideas/resources for planning events.

Their committee offers first aid and CPR training. They have used some programs from the Hennepin County Step to it Initiative. They offered a 4 week worksite physical activity campaign. They also offer a CD for \$25 with turnkey program materials that can be personalized for \$25. Look for Hennepin county/health at work. Another resource is Welcoa- Wellness Councils of America. Robbinsdale had David Honeycut from Carver County speak. Another useful resource is the Health Observance Calendar which is available online at NIH.gov.

Ideas:

Recipe contests

Salad Potlucks – Put a sign up for suggested items

Track Food diaries – Give points and then give health related door prizes

Do a poker walk where you collect cards and get the best points for poker hand

Wednesdays – Give out fun items like water, bananas, gum with a fun label.

Walk and Learn – Lead walk through departments such as chief police office at jail, park directors set up lift stations. You can google a site that will tell you distances to set up mileage for routes. Some departments have walking meetings.

Jody from Ramsey County is on an infusion committee. How does Ramsey county act as the .have showers for people who bike to work, negotiated with union so people can take 1 hour lunch and work out, set up weight watchers.

Some cities offer a recess. Others belong to food coops

A good site for logging food is Fitday.com

8. **MRPA update:** Michelle Snider Blue Cross Blue Shield is calling for planning for it's two day summit on September 1 & 2. Step up to Health has proposed being part of the conference.

How do we move from employer to community?