



**NORTH DAKOTA
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
RETIREMENT SYSTEM**



Coordinator Newsletter

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National Handwashing Awareness Week

National Handwashing Awareness Week is December 5-11. It's important to remember to wash, wipe and rub to get clean hands. Washing your hands is a simple solution to help reduce the density of virulent organisms in your environment, and the chance for spreading sickness.

Remember, 90 percent of all commonly touched surfaces are contaminated within 24 hours after an infectious agent is introduced into your home, worksite, school and community. We've attached the "Henry the Hand - Champion Handwasher" poster you can use in your worksite.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers these tips when washing hands with soap and water:

- Wet your hands with clean running water and apply soap. Use warm water if it is available.
- Rub hands together to make a lather and scrub all surfaces.
- Continue rubbing hands for 15-20 seconds. Need a timer? Imagine singing "Happy Birthday" twice through to a friend.
- Rinse hands well under running water.
- Dry your hands using a paper towel or hand dryer. If possible, use your paper towel to turn off the faucet.
- Always use soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.
- If soap and clean water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub to clean your hands. Alcohol-based hand rubs significantly reduce the number of germs on skin and are fast-acting.

When using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer:

- Apply product to the palm of one hand.
- Rub hands together.
- Rub the product over all surfaces of hands and fingers until hands are dry.



One way that germs are spread is by touching your eyes, nose or mouth, also known as the T-Zone. One doctor taught his patients a lesson about the T-Zone through wearing the "Henry the Hand Health Shield." The shield is used as a teaching device nationwide.



**BlueCross
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Noridian Mutual Insurance Company

How to exercise during the holidays

The weeks leading up to New Year's Day are often characterized by merriment, stress and weight gain. It's easy to be so busy with Christmas shopping and holiday parties that you don't make time to work out. You also may be working overtime hours to get ready to take time off for the holidays. What's more, some gyms limit their hours during the holidays. With just a bit of creativity, you can find ways to stay in shape during the holiday season.

Step 1. Shop for presents online. There is no need to waste valuable gym time or family time at department stores. Order your presents online, and while everyone is waiting in line at the stores, enjoy the extra space at the gym or a nice winter activity with your family.

Step 2. Enter a holiday-themed run or walking race. Have your worksite sponsor a Christmas-themed race or walk if there are not already events like this scheduled in your area.

Step 3. Take a post-holiday dinner walk. If possible, involve the entire family. If none of the adults are interested, walk the family dog or take the kids outside to play. If your worksite has an annual holiday potluck, have a post-potluck 15 minute walk inside or outside.

Step 4. If the conditions are right, snowshoe, cross-country ski or ice skate. These outdoor activities burn calories and keep you in the holiday spirit. Just because it's cold, doesn't mean we have to hibernate. Bundle up.

Step 5. Go Christmas caroling. Choose a caroling group that walks around the neighborhood, so you can get some walking exercise. Do this with family, coworkers or whomever. You could also try caroling at work, singing to coworkers in your building or caroling at nearby businesses.

Step 6. Shovel the snow, instead of hiring someone else to do it. Who needs that snow blower anyway? Make sure you use proper shoveling technique to avoid back injuries and take breaks when needed. At your worksite, take turns shoveling the front walk. Volunteer with your coworkers to shovel community sidewalks or homes.

Step 7. Plan to participate in an athletic event in the spring. Training for an event will keep you motivated and make you less likely to miss exercise sessions. Set goals in fitness, just like you do for your career.

Step 8. Go dancing. It will be fun for you and good for your waistline. Dancing is a great way to spend a weekend with friends and family. Have a local instructor come to your worksite and provide demo classes in Zumba, ballroom dancing, square dancing, line dancing or belly dancing.

Step 9. Purchase exercise DVDs. If you can't get to your exercise class, bring your class to your home or work. Consider trying a different type of workout. Start a library of donated exercise DVDs or VHS tapes for coworkers to take home or use during 15-minute breaks.



Shovel the snow, instead of hiring someone else to do it.

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How to improve male engagement in Worksite Wellness Programs

The Wellness Council of America (WELCOA) recommends these tips to help get more male employees involved in your worksite wellness program.

- Engage the spouse or partner of the male. This is by far the most effective strategy. It is hard to do at times, but it works magnificently.
- Engage males. It's particularly important to provide information at the right time. For example, milestone birthdays such as a man's 40th or 50th birthday are two powerful times when people reflect on their mortality and health status. Other important milestones are the birth of a child or the death of a loved one. However, it is difficult to be in close contact with employees grieving the death of a loved one if you aren't a close friend.
- Changing jobs within the company or moving to a new home are also good times to get males involved in worksite wellness, because these events cause people to reflect on their life and their circumstances.

WELCOA President Dr. David Hunnicutt said, "In general it seems that men respond well to group activities like biking, walking, etc. We also use peer assessment to get them involved and positive recognition programs. Of course, whatever is being offered needs to be relevant to them, presented in their language by someone who has gained their respect and can relate to them."

"They also need to not only believe that it (whatever 'it' is) can make a direct difference in their lives; they have to also believe that they can be successful at it," Hunnicutt said. "Men must feel confident that they can succeed at the given program."

December redemption reminder on MyHealthCenter 2010 and HRA for 2011

Please remember to remind your coworkers that they have until December 31, 2010, to redeem their points on the MyHealthCenter online wellness tool. If they do not redeem them, those points will be lost.

December is also a great time to remind your coworkers to fill out the 2011 Health Risk Assessment (HRA) starting January 1, 2011. You can also hang posters in high-traffic areas. Employees must complete the HRA to earn their Health Club Credit refund and points on the MyHealthCenter tool. Health Club Credit is only available to the employee and spouse who is covered by the benefit plan. Dependents are not eligible for Health Club Credit. Each participant may earn up to \$20 by working out 12 days a month at their health club. Health clubs must participate with the National Independent Health Club Association.



Engage the spouse or partner of the male.

MyHealthCenter voucher process and points

Please inform your coworkers they must list their name, date of birth and Benefit Plan Number on the vouchers exactly as it appears on their current health insurance card. If anything is listed differently, it may not match what is in the system. Entering this information incorrectly may result in points not being added to the MyHealthCenter redemption site.

You can find the voucher process on pages 6-10 in your Wellness Coordinator Training Manual. The actual voucher is on page 9. The training manual is located at <http://www.nd.gov/ndpers/insurance-plans/myhealthcenter-employers.html> under Training Manual.

Many of you have asked for a reminder of when the points from voucher programs will be visible to your coworkers on MyHealthCenter. Here's an explanation of how it will work.

For the NDPERS Wellness Program that runs July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010

Wellness Program Vouchers must be sent to Healthways by August 31, 2010. Healthways posts points annually. Points will be posted to the member's MyHealthCenter account by October 31, 2010. Active members will be able to redeem points, along with any other earned MyHealthCenter points, until midnight December 31, 2010.

For the NDPERS Wellness Program that runs July 1, 2010-June 30, 2011

Wellness Program Vouchers must be sent to Healthways by August 31, 2011. Healthways posts points annually and will post the points to the member's MyHealthCenter account by October 31, 2011. Active members will be able to redeem the points, along with any other earned MyHealthCenter points, until midnight December 31, 2011.

NDPERS determines the point value of the wellness programs. Contact Rebecca Fricke with questions. Points collected online through the MyHealthCenter tool by individual employees are collected and must be redeemed by December 31 of that calendar year.

Monthly conference calls and WebEx sessions

Please continue to fill out the conference call/WebEx surveys so I can better provide you with topics and times that fit your schedule. Once I have a good feeling for what works for you, I will try to schedule them at the same time and day each month.

December 7 WebEx/conference call

NDPERS/BCBSND Wellness Specialist Marissa Parmer will announce the NDPERS 2011 Agency challenge which will run from July 1, 2011 through June 30th 2012. The WebEx will be 1 p.m. (CST) December 7. Parmer will also discuss other 2 and 4 point program templates that will be available for you to utilize.

To participate in the conference call,

- Meeting number: 791 244 633
- Call in toll-free number: 866-469-3239
- Access code: 791 244 633

Points awarded

- Attending a 1-point wellness program: 250 points
- Attending a 2-point wellness program: 500 points
- Attending a 4-point wellness program: 1,000 points

To participate in the WebEx, go to <https://meetingcenter33.webex.com/meetingcenter33/j.php?ED=147963602&UID=493297382&PW=NNGZmZTE4YWI4&RT=MIM3>.

January 27 conference call

Don't miss our 12:30 p.m. (CST) January 27 conference call with BCBSND Member Education Consultants Jessica Petrick and Milissa Van Eps on a new Member Education program titled "Better Nutrition for a Healthier You."

It can be tough to know whether you're eating a healthy, nutritious diet. This presentation outlines the recommended daily amounts of each food group, explains how to read nutrition facts labels and gives helpful tips for grocery shopping with nutrition in mind. It also addresses the importance of drinking water, exercise and being a positive role model for your kids.

- Phone number: 877-455-8688
- Access code: Code 641163

Upcoming employer based wellness program plan year update

The Employer Based Wellness Program Discount Application SFN 58436 is available for employers to complete and submit to notify NDPERS of their activities for the new plan year, which runs from July 1, 2011, to June 30, 2012. Coordinators must submit this application to NDPERS for review by February 28, 2011. NDPERS will notify coordinators in April if their application is approved for the premium discount effective July 1, 2011. Employers requesting funding will be notified in June if their funding request was approved.

Employers that participate in the NDPERS group health insurance plan who do not have an approved wellness discount application will be billed for the full premium (without the 1 percent discount) effective July 1, 2011.

The Employer Based Wellness Program Year-End Program/Activity Confirmation SFN 58437 should be completed to report back to NDPERS regarding your wellness activities upon completion of all activities. The current wellness plan year runs from July 1, 2010, to June 30, 2011. Coordinators should submit this form for the current year by May 31, 2011.

All forms are available at <http://www.nd.gov/ndpers/insurance-plans/employer-based-wellness.html>. If you have questions on the application process, please call Rebecca Fricke at (701) 328-3978 or e-mail rfricke@nd.gov.



Tips for grocery shopping with nutrition in mind.

A Partnership For Worksite Wellness

NDPERS and BCBSND are working together to support and provide you and your fellow employees the opportunity to have a healthier and more engaged worksite through Worksite Wellness tools. We appreciate feedback on all our wellness tools to serve your worksite better and welcome your suggestions.

Please take time to fill out surveys we may submit to you from time to time to evaluate these programs.

Here is a list of contacts that will be useful to you as a Wellness Coordinator:

Marissa Parmer

BCBSND/NDPERS

701-277-2852

marissa.parmar@bcbsnd.com

Main resource contact.

Direct any general wellness program questions and or assistance with developing your worksite wellness programs to the next level to Marissa.

Rebecca Fricke

NDPERS

rfricke@nd.gov

Direct 1% premium questions, points on programs, updating coordinator information, status or questions on application process or forms to Rebecca.

Kathy Allen

NDPERS

kallen@nd.gov

Direct funding program questions to Kathy.

Onalee Sellheim

BCBSND

onalee.sellheim@bcbsnd.com

Direct questions on benefit plans or schedule Member Education programs through Onalee.

Jodi Crouse

BCBSND

jodi.crouse@bcbsnd.com

To collect aggregate data on your employer from the HRA, MHC and HCC contact Jodi.

Milissa Van Eps

BCBSND

701-795-5360

Contact Milissa if you are located in eastern North Dakota to set up a Member Education program.

Jessica Petrick

BCBSND

701-255-5575

Contact Jessica if you are located in western North Dakota to set up a Member Education program.



Working together to provide a healthier and more engaged worksite.