NORTH DAKOTA
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
RETIREMENT SYSTEM

NDPERS Wellness
building healthy members

Coordinator Newsletter

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Start the year off right

January is the month many people make New Year's resolutions. As a result, it's a great time to engage your employees or coworkers in wellness activities. They are more likely to be goal-oriented and ready to make lifestyle changes. For starters, remind them to complete the Health Risk Assessment (HRA) at www.ndwellnesscenter.com. The HRA can help them better evaluate their lifestyle and understand the steps needed to reach their New Year's resolutions.

According to USA.gov, the most popular New Year's resolutions of 2010 were:

- Drink less alcohol
- Get a better education
- Get a better job
- Get fit
- Lose weight
- Manage debt
- Manage stress
- Quit smoking now
- Save money
- Take a trip
- Volunteer more to help others

Employees are more likely to be goal-oriented and ready to make lifestyle changes in January.

Create a bulletin board or a newsletter listing all upcoming Worksite Wellness events, and e-mail employees the dates. With proper notice, many employees can plan around their hectic schedules to attend more events. Send out a survey or distribute one at the first staff meeting in January to see what topics they would like to learn about and what activities they would like to do.

Please remind your employees and/or coworkers that the HRA is required for all employees to begin receiving their Health Club Credit payments when they visit a participating health club 12 days each month. Likewise, the HRA is needed to receive MyHealthCenter points.

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Six of every 25 employees in North Dakota are binge drinkers.

How alcohol affects the body

According to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, for every 25 employees in North Dakota, six are binge drinkers. The American Council on Exercise (ACE) lists four areas in your body affected by excessive alcohol consumption.

- **Muscles.** Reduces blood flow to the muscles, causing weakness and deterioration
- **Hormones.** Reduces testosterone in your blood and increases conversion of testosterone to estrogen, causing increased fat depositing and fluid retention
- **Liver.** Creates imbalances that can cause hypoglycemia (low blood sugar), fatty liver and hyperlipidemia (build-up of fats in the bloodstream)
- **Brain.** Cuts off the supply of oxygen to the brain. The resulting "blackout" is caused by a lack of oxygen supply to the brain that can kill tens of thousands of brain cells.

What's more, calories in alcoholic beverages add up. For example, one 12-ounce beer contains 150 calories; a 5-ounce glass of wine contains 100 calories, and a 1.5-ounce drink of distilled spirits contains 100 calories.

Alcohol consumption can be safe in moderation, according to ACE. You can enjoy a glass of wine with dinner. When alcohol is consumed in moderation—which is defined as no more than one drink per day for women and no more than two drinks per day for men—it has been shown to have some positive effects:

1. Increases HDL cholesterol ("good" cholesterol) within one to two weeks
2. Reduces stress levels
3. Reduces insulin resistance

Remember, if you want to increase muscle mass, decrease fat or improve general health, consume alcohol in moderation, according to ACE. Next time you are asked to go out socially, be the designated driver. Not only will your friends appreciate it and be much safer, but you will be one step closer to your fitness goals.

To find a local substance abuse specialist in your area, contact:

Pamela Sagness, LAC
Substance Abuse Prevention Administrator
North Dakota Department of Human Services
Call 701-328-8824 or e-mail psagness@nd.gov

Marissa Parmer
BCBSND/NDPERS Wellness Specialist
Phone: 701-277-2852
Fax: 701-277-2253
E-mail:
marissa.parmer@bcbsnd.com

January is National Thyroid Awareness Month

Thyroid disease affects 27 million Americans who have either overactive or underactive thyroid glands. Alarmingly, more than half of the people remain undiagnosed. Thyroid disease affects more women than men: Eight out of 10 patients are women. Women are also five to eight times more likely than men to have hypothyroidism, or an underactive thyroid.

Diabetes also puts you at risk for thyroid disease. Fifteen to 20 percent of people with diabetes—as well as their siblings and parents—are likely to develop thyroid disease compared with 4.5 percent of the general population.

The thyroid gland is the small, butterfly-shaped gland found just below the Adam's apple, according to the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists (AACE). The thyroid gland produces hormones that influence essentially every organ, tissue and cell in the body. In short, if the thyroid doesn't work properly, neither do you. If left untreated, thyroid disease can cause elevated cholesterol levels and subsequent heart disease, infertility, muscle weakness, osteoporosis and, in extreme cases, coma or death.

Thyroid disease affects 27 million Americans.

Common symptoms of hypothyroidism

- Fatigue
- Mood swings
- Forgetfulness
- Weight gain
- Depression
- Hoarse voice
- Heavy menses
- Dry, coarse skin
- Dry, coarse hair
- Constipation

Common symptoms of hyperthyroidism

- Heat intolerance
- Sweating
- Menstrual disturbance
- Weight loss
- Impaired fertility
- Alterations in appetite mental disturbances
- Frequent bowel movements
- Sleep disturbances
- Changes in vision
- Tremors
- Fatigue and muscle weakness
- Thyroid enlargement

December 7 WebEx available

If you were unable to join us for the December WebEX, you may log on to the following link to listen: https://meetingcenter33.webex.com/meetingcenter33/ldr.php?AT=pb&SP=MC&rID=19638632&rKey=80c966809083d1c9

To receive the handouts for this WebEx, please e-mail marissa.parmer@bcbsnd.com or call 701-277-2852.

Grocery shop with nutrition in mind.

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 the 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

Jessica and Milissa will also be available to answer questions about other BCBSND Member Education programs.

February 16 conference call/WebEx:

The 11 a.m. (CST) February 16 conference call/WebEX will provide information on the Educate & Drive Participation Challenge=Lifestyle Changes Challenge. This challenge will be between all NDPERS agencies. Watch your e-mails and the February Newsletter for more details. Please mark this event on your calendar.

Reminder: Worksite Wellness Plan year July 1, 2011, through June 30, 2012

Please remember to turn in all the proper paperwork to Rebecca Fricke of NDPERS by February 28 for your Worksite Wellness Plan and funding application. All forms are available on the NDPERS website: http://www.nd.gov/ndpers/insurance-plans/employer-based-wellness.html. You can e-mail Rebecca at rfricke@nd.gov.

Summer Wellness Coordinator workshops

I will lead small workshops throughout the state in June, July and possibly August. If you have space and are interested in hosting a workshop, please let me know as soon as possible. I would like to send the schedule soon, so you can mark your calendars.

Retiree health fairs 2011

I will lead the NDPERS Retiree Health Fairs from mid-May through late May in the NECE Building in Bismarck. I'm also planning fairs for Minot, Grand Forks and Fargo. If you have a large space for vendors and another area for speakers, please let me know if you are willing to host a fair at your worksite. No work needs to be done by you. If you are interested in offering biometric screenings at these Health Fairs, please e-mail me at marissa.parmer@bcbsnd.com or call me at 701-277-2852. I'd be happy to discuss details with you.

Working together to provide a healthier and more engaged worksite.

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.parmer@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.

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