



WELLNESS COUNCIL

OF WEST VIRGINIA

health- headlines

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Industry insider information to help YOU do your job better, faster and smarter

We have met the enemy . . .

The truth is that nobody and nothing will lower your health care costs. That's the first startling revelation in a new HWI Commentary entitled ***Healthcare vs. Sickcare: It's Time to Level-Set*** prepared by Michael Samuelson, President and CEO, The Health & Wellness Institute in Providence, Rhode Island

The other revelations Samuelson sets forth and discusses in detail include these:

- Death is not a curable disease.
- “Wellness” is an amorphous, dangerous, and distracting term.
- The primary areas of focus should be affordable health care for all, universal coverage, health promotion, disease prevention, employee productivity and more.
- Organizations measure success according to mission and margin, while individuals (your employees) measure success in terms of subjective well-being.
- There is no political will to change health care in a meaningful way.
- If “greed” is good, “sickness” is better.
- Pogo was right: We have met the enemy and he is us.
- Health care spend and focus needs to shift from disease management (survival and costly) to primary prevention (thrival and inexpensive)

Guaranteed to change your perspective or give you one. For a copy of the complete paper, email michael.samuelson@hwainstitute.com.

RESEARCH BRIEFS

- **Here's the question: Do extra pounds change attitudes toward exercising in health clubs?** A research study out of the George Washington University Medical Center answered it: People who were overweight believed exercise improved appearance and self-image more than individuals who were normal weight. People who were overweight felt more embarrassed and intimidated about exercising, exercising around young people, exercising

around fit people, and about health club salespeople than did individuals of normal weight. The study appeared in the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*.

- **Weight management program reduced absenteeism.** Emory University Rollins School of Public Health researchers presented data at the American Public Health Association. Environmental weight management interventions were implemented in 12 worksites at The Dow Chemical Company in 2006–2007. Five sites received intense weight management interventions; 4 sites received moderate interventions; and 3 control sites received Dow’s standard individual programs. For the moderate or intense intervention employees, the average days absent due to illness per year decreased from 3.9 days in 2006 to 3.4 days in 2007. Researchers found that average absenteeism days at the moderate or intense sites were 1.5 days lower than at the standard sites between 2006 and 2007. Cost savings due to reduced absenteeism were estimated at \$414.90 per employee per year.
- **You gotta have faith.** A faith-based behavior change intervention promoted physical activity among members of African American churches. The program called 8 Steps to Fitness showed significant differences in participants who received the intervention compared with the control group. At 6 months, the intervention group showed favorable changes in BMI, waist circumference, social support, blood pressure, and depression. The study was published in the *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*.

FREE-quent flyers

FREE survey and social media walking app. Although 58% of American adults have resolved to make improvements in their health this year, more than half say they often find reasons not to exercise, according to an American Heart Association survey, available at www.startwalkingnow.org. The AHA’s Start! initiative is introducing the *Start! Daily Walking Guide*, a FREE social media application that can get more Americans active and help them keep their health and physical activity resolutions. Nearly half of all Americans use online tools to track their health. Download the *Start! Daily Walking Guide* and embed it into a variety of sites including Facebook, Windows Live and iGoogle. Users get started with a quiz that generates 12 weeks’ worth of customized walking plans, a private journal section that lets users record their walks and reference archived exercises, and keep motivated with daily inspirational messages and heart-health tips

FREE demo of incentive campaign. Based on the principles of social support, a new incentive campaign from Health Enhancement Systems. The online program called *5on5* focuses on ways to eat better through simple daily habits wrapped in an exciting basketball tournament format. Download the free white paper outlining 30 studies showing how social support like this boosts employee engagement, *Social Support: Impact on Health and the Bottom Line*, at www.healthenhancementsystems.com/sswp/. View a demo of the *5on5* incentive campaign at www.5on5.com.

FREE video on hand hygiene. From the CDC, Catholic Healthcare Partners, and the Premier healthcare alliance, a video called *Hand Hygiene Saves Lives*, to encourage patients, family, and visitors to play a role in their own care by helping health care professionals remember to clean their hands before and after touching patients. Download at

www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/Patient_Admission_Video.html), or free DVD copies may be ordered from CDC by calling 1-800-CDC-INFO.

FREE white paper. According to The Vitality Group, a provider of incentive-based wellness solutions, the workplace represents an ideal setting for the delivery of health and wellness programs, where building and sustaining a corporate culture of health is a critical component in implementing an effective program. Their new white paper, *Creating a Next-Generation Health and Wellness Program*, was developed to assist employers in developing companywide programs to help employees take responsibility for their health and become more effective consumers of health care. Download at www.thevitalitygroup.com/whitepaper.

FREE toolkit for employers to promote healthy child weight. *It's Everyone's Business* (published by the National Business Group on Health with support from the Health Resources and Services Administration's Maternal and Child Health Bureau) is an action-oriented toolkit designed to help employers address childhood obesity and its impact on health care costs for the current and future workforce. Download the toolkit for examples of how employers can use existing programs or facilities to fight childhood obesity in their communities: www.businessgrouphealth.org/benefittopics/et_chobesity.cfm.

FREE online health disparity guide. From Lilly USA and NCQA, a free online guide and resource library for health care organizations that wish to undertake quality improvement initiatives to improve culturally and linguistically appropriate services and reduce disparities in care. The Web site, *Multicultural Health Care: A Quality Improvement Guide* (www.CLAShealth.org) is easy to navigate. Of particular interest for managed care plans, hospitals, public health agencies, DM organizations, and community health centers.

FREE report on caregiving. No surprise, American caregivers are mostly female, average age 48. Most care for a parent or other relative. And many women still put their career and financial futures on hold as they juggle part-time caregiving and full-time jobs. The most comprehensive study to date is called *Caregiving in the U.S. 2009*, funded by MetLife Foundation. Cut and paste into your browser: http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/il/caregiving_09_fr.pdf.

From our bookshelf to yours: *Diabetes: A Plan for Living* and *Healthy Eating for Type 2 Diabetes* are available for \$18 each from Harvard Health Publications (www.health.harvard.edu/SHR), the publishing division of Harvard Medical School.

Odds @ the end: Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV for 3 hours.

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