

Partnering for Employee Health

Imagine working someplace where your employer encourages you to exercise and eat healthy while providing you the support needed to achieve such goals. Do workplaces like that even exist? PartnerSHIP 4 Health (PS4H), local public health and community partners in Becker, Clay, Otter Tail and Wilkin counties, brings workplaces together in a collaborative model to address wellness. Workplaces learn from experts about best practices for increasing wellness in the workplace, and to establish policies, systems, and environments that support workplace wellness.



Family HealthCare (FHC), a family-oriented primary care clinic and federally qualified health center (FQHC) in Fargo-Moorhead, participated in the 2015-2016 Workplace Wellness Collaborative. FHC provides a variety of services including medical, dental, optometry, lifestyle medicine, pharmacy, physical therapy, vision services, and lab/x-ray. Providers offer high quality, affordable health services in a compassionate and personal setting, and do not refuse care for any patient, regardless of ability to pay. Diane Jones, Human Resources Director, says that FHC joined PartnerSHIP 4 Health's worksite wellness collaborative, "to get more ideas and information about wellness programs from other organizations that would help us to enhance our organization's program."

The mission of the FHC wellness committee is "To improve the health and wellbeing of all Family HealthCare employees by empowering people to promote and model positive attitudes and behaviors through a commitment to wellness." Knowing that leadership support is a key part of any worksite wellness initiative, and that promotion and modeling of positive attitudes and behaviors should be a top-down approach, Family HealthCare's CEO serves as a 'Wellness Advocate.'

Promoting physical health has been a key part of the workplace wellness program. FHC has a gym that is open to employees, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, free of charge. They have also increased access to healthy foods via healthier vending options.



In 2016, FHC became the second business in North Dakota to receive a Bicycle Friendly Business designation. The organization received a bronze level designation. To align with the four elements of a Bicycle Friendly Business (engineering, education, encouragement, and evaluation) FHC partnered with Great Rides, Fargo's local bike share program. Great Rides provided information and education on the bike share program during an all staff meeting and FHC provided access to the bike share program. "Growing our network of wellness partnerships has been key to growing our wellness program and initiatives," stated Katie Orth, Patient Support Services Manager and wellness committee member.

While the top three reasons for supporting worksite wellness initiatives are health risk reduction, health care cost savings, and productivity improvements, additional reasons include improving job satisfaction, attracting and retaining talented employees, reducing the number of sick days, and improving employee morale.¹ FHC has become one of the "very few" health care settings to address these reasons via effective worksite wellness policies and environments and thereby become a leader and role model of health and wellness in the communities that they serve.²

¹Optum, Inc. (2015). Beyond ROI: Building employee health and wellness value of investment. White paper. Retrieved from https://www.optum.com/content/dam/optum/resources/whitePapers/Beyond_ROI_health-wellness-investment.pdf

²North Carolina Prevention Partners (2013). Hospitals: Leading the way in workplace wellness. Retrieved from <http://healthyamericans.org/health-issues/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/CDC-Report-Final-9.24.13.pdf>

Made possible through support from the Minnesota Department of Health's Statewide Health Improvement Program

