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# Wellness Needs for Smith Clinic Health System Community X Employees

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WELLNESS NEEDS FOR SMITH CLINIC HEALTH SYSTEM COMMUNITY X  
EMPLOYEES

by

Heidi S. Poole

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## Abstract

After frequent discussions with peers at Smith Clinic Health System in Community X regarding the lack of a wellness program available for employees at a top ranked healthcare facility, it was determined that a needs analysis would be beneficial to fully understand the needs and preferences of the employees, along with gaging leadership support for a program. The needs analysis may be used at a later date to create a sustainable wellness program for employees of Smith Clinic Health System in Community X. Benefits of a wellness program for both the organization and individual employee are outlined in the literature review. Survey results indicated the lack of employee satisfaction with their own health status. Survey results also displayed preferences for specific wellness related activities, preferred times to participate in wellness activities, preferred location to participate in wellness activities, and willingness to financially contribute to an employee wellness program. Interviews demonstrated the understanding of the benefits of a wellness program for both the employee and the organization by key leaders. Members of the leadership team interviewed also stated that they were willing to support and participate in an employee wellness program. Data collected throughout the paper will be used to assist with the development and implementation of an employee wellness program.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Community X became part of the Smith Health System in July 2012. Since the transition, significant changes have occurred within the organization. Changes include implementing a new electronic medical record, changes in benefits for employees, new reporting structures, personnel changes, changes to the process used to order products, expanded hours of operation, and changes to the type of services offered to patients. While navigating through the fast paced and ever changing healthcare environment, employees may benefit from resources to positively promote their own health.

Smith Health System in Community X does not have a Workplace Wellness Program currently in place. Various avenues of wellness promotion had been attempted in the past prior to joining Smith, but nothing was sustained. As Smith Health System in Community X continues to standardize practices with the rest of the Smith enterprise, this area should be addressed to promote the health and well-being of the employees of the organization.

Numerous organizations and businesses within Community X frequently reach out to leadership within Smith Health System for resources to provide to their employees to promote workplace wellness and to prevent chronic disease. Smith Health System Community X has been able to collaborate with these organizations to provide the requested resources and to develop such programs, although no formal workplace wellness programs for Smith Health System employees in Community X currently exist.

As “Sitting Disease” becomes a real threat to the health of Smith Health System employees, it is time to perform a needs analysis to be used to initiate a Workplace Wellness Program. The literature review for this research project will show how an employee wellness program may benefit both employees and employers, what is needed to build and sustain successful wellness programs, and the importance of approaching wellness holistically.

## **Purpose of the Research**

The purpose of this research study is to create a needs analysis that may be used at a later date to create a sustainable wellness program for employees of Smith Health System in Community X.

## **Research Design**

This needs analysis project will include the collection of data in two forms, both to be used to assess the possibility of implementing an organizational wellness plan for Smith Health System in Community X. First will be a survey of Smith Health System employees in Community X as a form of needs analysis. The second form of data collection used will be the use of the interview of Smith Health Systems leadership to assess the organization's options and interest in creating a sustainable wellness plan.

## **Definitions**

- **Sitting Disease** - a term commonly used when referring to metabolic syndrome and the ill effects of an overly sedentary lifestyle. (Levine, James MD, PhD, 2016)
- **Compassion fatigue** - the emotional residue or strain of exposure to employees who work with those suffering from the consequences of traumatic events, otherwise known as secondary traumatic stress. (American Institute of Stress, 1995)
- **Burnout** - the cumulative effect on employees and the general population marked by emotional exhaustion and withdrawal associated with increased workload and institutional stress. (American Institute of Stress, 1995)
- **Employee engagement** - a workplace approach resulting in the right conditions for all members of an organization to give their best each day, committed to their organization's

goals and values, motivated to contribute to organizational success, with an enhanced sense of their own well-being. (Engage for Success, 2016)

- Minimal risk- the probability and magnitude that anticipated harm or discomfort to research participants in the research is not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, 2015)

### **Limitations**

The sample used for this study's survey is considered to be a simple random sampling. A potential limitation may be the unequal representation of male and/or female employees in this sampling. The healthcare organization being surveyed employs a much greater number of females than males at an average ratio of 3:1. The findings of the survey may not accurately reflect the view of the male employees that work for the organization. The process of random sampling must be used to represent the interests of all employees even if it does not accurately reflect the views of male employees.

Another potential limitation may be the use of the interview with the individuals in key leadership positions. It may be difficult to objectively measure the commitment from leadership regarding a Workplace Wellness Program. The discussion that is to be had during the interview process will include the results from a previous survey regarding employee engagement, along with the results from the survey completed for this research project. The discussion of these results may influence how the individuals respond at the time of interview. Although the interview answers may be skewed after the individuals review the data from the surveys, it will still be used to determine the buy-in of the organization's leaders in key positions within the



organization at the time of the interview that may potentially be used to further develop a Workplace Wellness Program.

### **Delimitations**

The location that the survey participants were selected from can be considered a delimitation of the study. Smith Health System in Community X was chosen as the site of choice for survey participants, although a Workplace Wellness Program may be initiated for the Smith Health System across the entire Southeast Minnesota region after this project is complete, based upon this study. The researcher's presence and position at the site of the survey may provide for greater participation in the interview process by the key leaders at that site.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Mission**

Part of Smith Clinic's mission states "To inspire hope and contribute to health and well-being by providing the best care to every patient through integrated clinical practice, education, and resources". This statement can be interpreted to include not only the patients that are treated by Smith Clinic staff, but also the staff themselves, partially holding leadership accountable to follow this mission.

Given the myriad of challenges facing health care organizations today, it is not surprising that staff feel tired, have less energy, and often do not have more to give. As a health care organization, we not only have a responsibility to our patients, but to our staff who care for them. We believe that staff well-being is a shared responsibility of both the individual and the organization, including the board and all of you who are in positions of leading your colleagues (Well-being and Resiliency Resources Playbook, 2014, p. 3).

Leadership participation and support of a Workforce Health Promotion (WHP) program leads to improved health outcomes of the employees. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010)

### **Organizational Benefits**

There are many reasons to support wellness in the worksite which may benefit the organization as well as the individual. The proven benefits of a worksite wellness program include improved employee morale and productivity, decreased occupational injury rates, decreased health care expenditures, decreased absenteeism, and increased employee satisfaction.

It is recognized that employee satisfaction and engagement have been shown to profoundly impact an organization's success. Specifically, at Smith Clinic, that translates

to engaged and passionate staff, patient safety and satisfaction, and financial outcomes. (Well-being and Resiliency Resources Playbook, 2014, p. 3)

With tax incentives and grants available under recent federal health care legislation, companies within the U.S. can use wellness programs to reduce their enormous health care costs, which continue to rise with the aging workforce. (Berry, Mirabito, & Baun, 2010) Research has shown that every dollar devoted to a WHP program yields \$6 in health care savings. (Berry, Mirabito, & Baun, 2010) A study by Towers Watson and the National Business Group on Health shows that establishments with effective and successful wellness programs report considerably lower voluntary attrition than establishments whose wellness programs have low effectiveness (9% vs 15%). (Berry, Mirabito, & Baun, 2010) This statement equates to healthy employees remaining at their organizations longer.

The focus of a Workforce Health Promotion program can vary due to many factors, including type of organization, workforce diversity, resources, and leadership support. Program design provides an opportunity to plan and position a WHP program within the organization's overall mission. This tactic increases the potential that WHP program objectives will be recognized, such as improving employee health and productivity and reducing medical care costs for the employer and employee. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010)

### **Employee Benefits**

The need for a Workplace Health Promotion program for employees has been supported by a large amount of research. According to data collected between January and October 2011 for the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index, 86% of full-time workers are considered overweight or have co-morbidities related to their health. (Srivastaava, 2012) For employees, the upkeep of individual health is often seen as challenging amidst the competing demands of the

work day, familial responsibilities, and other societal responsibilities. Participation in health promotion events through a workplace health program allows employees to acquire knowledge, self-management and coping skills, along with building a social support system amongst coworkers, supervisors, and family (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013). A WHP program can join employees within the workforce to build this social support system that may enhance their overall health. There is significant evidence that social support and feeling connected can assist people to maintain a healthy body mass index, control blood sugars, improve cancer survival, decrease cardiovascular mortality, decrease depressive symptoms, mitigate posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms and improve overall mental health (Martino, Pegg, & Pegg Fates MD, 2015).

Healthcare providers also have an additional factor that may negatively affect their health called compassion fatigue. Compassion fatigue has been defined as the “cost of caring” for others in emotional and physical pain (Mathieu & Cameron, 2007). Compassion fatigue is considered an occupational hazard in the healthcare field. A study of Cancer Care Workers in Ontario conducted in 2006 established high levels of burnout and stress among oncology workers and revealed that a significant number of the oncology workers were considering leaving the field of oncology: 50% of physicians and 1/3 of other cancer care professionals had high levels of emotional exhaustion and low levels of personal accomplishment (Mathieu & Cameron, 2007).

Over the course of the last two Smith Clinic All Staff Surveys, a decline in staff satisfaction and engagement was noted, and an increase in burnout amongst physician staff. Smith Clinic has now exceeded national benchmarks related to physician burnout. (Well-being and Resiliency Resources Playbook, 2014, p. 3)

Comprehensive programs that address individual health behaviors as well as health and safety risks from the work environment also reduce disease and injury risk. Employees often view a holistic and effective workplace health program as an investment made by their employer for their well-being and a reflection of how much the organization values its employees, which correlates to both increased job satisfaction and morale (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013). An all-inclusive Workplace Healthcare Promotion program may address the need for physical, mental, social, and spiritual health, therefore addressing the whole person.

“Experts agree that planning and designing a Workplace Health Promotion (WHP) program is essential to ensuring the program's success. Just as one would not begin a long trip without considering how to reach one's destination, planners should not begin a WHP program without mapping out where the program needs to go, and how it will get there.”

(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2010)

### **Pillars of Integrated Wellness Programs**

Six strong pillars are included in a strategically integrated wellness program that simultaneously supports their success, regardless of the size of the organization. (Berry, Mirabito, & Baun, 2010) A pillar is considered to be a fundamental principle of something; in this case an employee wellness program. The pillars of an integrated wellness program include multilevel leadership, alignment, quality, accessibility, partnership, and communication. These pillars are critical for the development, implementation and sustainability of an employee wellness program.

#### **Multi-level leadership.**

The first of the pillars is multilevel leadership. A culture of health requires passionate, persistent, and persuasive leadership (Berry, Mirabito, & Baun, 2010).

“Leadership commitment and support can communicate the purpose and processes of the workplace health program to all levels of the organization. Leaders can act as models or champions for the effort, achieve buy-in and support from other levels of the organization, appoint a workplace health coordinator and wellness council members to manage the program, cultivate a supportive work environment with management and employees, and dedicate the necessary resources to the effort.” (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013)

To create a culture that embraces workplace wellness programs, leadership is required at every level. CEOs, middle managers, wellness program managers, and wellness champions are all key players in a sustainable wellness program.

**Alignment.**

Alignment is considered the second pillar of an effective workplace wellness program. A wellness program should be a natural extension of a company’s identity and aspirations. (Berry, Mirabito, & Baun, 2010). The mission, vision, and values of the organization should be considered when developing an employee wellness program. One of the vision statements of Smith Clinic is to “inspire hope and nurture the well-being of the whole person”. The alignment pillar directly supports this vision of Smith Clinic. This vision highlights the need for a holistic approach, by including physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual parts. When one part is not working at its best, it impacts all of the other parts of that person. (Walter, 2015) This framework provides an interdependent approach to the wellbeing of the patient, recognizing that all aspects of health are important.

“Holistic Health supports reaching higher levels of wellness as well as preventing illness. People enjoy the vitality and well-being that results from their positive lifestyle changes, and are motivated to continue this process throughout their lives.” (Walter, 2015)

Using a combination of individual and organizational level strategies and interventions through a holistic approach is important for the overall workplace health program.

### **Scope, relevance, and quality.**

Scope, relevance, and quality are parts of the third pillar of a wellness program. Wellness programs must be all-inclusive, engaging, and exceptional, otherwise, employees will not participate (Berry, Mirabito, & Baun, 2010). Comprehensive, fun, and individualized programs are considered essential parts of employee wellness. Health-related services are considered personal. Employees who view the services as substandard won't use them. (Berry, Mirabito, & Baun, 2010). Wellness programs that are not utilized do not benefit the employees or the organization.

### **Accessibility.**

The fourth pillar of a wellness program is accessibility. The program must aim to make low or no cost services a priority. On-site integration is crucial because convenience is important (Berry, Mirabito, & Baun, 2010). Onsite opportunities that focus on physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects of wellness are an integral part of this pillar.

Onsite opportunities regarding employee wellness can take on many different forms. The transformation of nutritional programs at the organization may be an example of an onsite opportunity. One or more meals plus snacks during work hours are typically consumed by employees. Healthy food options must be tasty, convenient, and affordable in the workplace. (Berry, Mirabito, & Baun, 2010). The use of quality ingredients and fewer processed foods

offered in the cafeteria are changes that can make healthy choices accessible for employees in the workplace.

Using online resources to deliver wellness messages and increase participation in activities that may require tracking is a way to increase accessibility. Wellness websites can also be made available on smartphones by the organizations to increase convenience (Berry, Mirabito, & Baun, 2010). Accessibility must be in the forefront when developing an employee wellness program.

### **Partnership.**

Partnership is the fifth pillar of an employee wellness program. Active, ongoing collaboration with internal and external partners, including vendors, can provide a program with some of its essential components and many of its desirable enhancements. (Berry, Mirabito, & Baun, 2010) Community resources have the potential to make a substantial impact on the employee wellness program. External partnerships with specialized vendors enable wellness staffs to benefit from vendor competencies and infrastructure without extra internal investment. (Berry, Mirabito, & Baun, 2010)

Innovative partnerships between public health and community-based organizations and businesses at the community level are changing workplace wellness, resulting in a growing number of community-based workplace wellness programs. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012) Using existing community resources maximizes impact and reduces the time and resources necessary for program development. Programs that combine multiple settings can have a greater impact than programs using only one setting. While populations reached will sometimes overlap, people who are not accessible in one setting may be in another. ( U.S.



Department of Health and Human Services, 2016) The community collaboration and partnership also increases accessibility for the employees, intertwining with Pillar 4.

### **Communication.**

The last pillar is communication. The message of wellness must be delivered effectively. Sensitivity, creativity, and media diversity are the cornerstones of communication. (Berry, Mirabito, & Baun, 2010)

“Successful implementation of the workplace health program depends, in large part, on how the employees react to the changes. Even the slightest misunderstanding can result in major disruptions. Thus, regular and consistent communication is a vital component of the overall program and fosters an organizational commitment to employee health.

Employees are key stakeholders and should be informed of the program’s purpose; the actions taken; the reasons for and results of those actions.” (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013)

When an employee wellness program is well constructed using the six pillars, the institution could see big returns such as health care costs savings, greater productivity, and higher employee morale.

Plans are to be developed for a sustainable Workforce Health Promotion program that can be implemented at Smith Health System Community X based upon the individual needs and desires of the workforce. Currently, there are no designated resources at Smith Health System in Community X to plan, complete a needs assessment, implement, or evaluate an Employee Wellness Program.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

Two forms of data were collected for the needs analysis. First a survey was completed by a random sample of Smith Health System Community in X employees. Second, an interview with key leaders of Smith Health System Community in X was conducted after the survey results were analyzed. The aim of the survey and the interviews was to complete a needs analysis for Smith Health System in Community X employees that may be used to create a sustainable wellness program.

#### **Data Collection Instruments**

##### **Survey.**

A survey was used to determine a baseline of what Smith Health System in Community X employees currently understand about wellness and healthy lifestyles. This survey (see Appendix A) was used to examine wellness related interests of the employees. Topics varied from types of physical exercises, to tobacco cessation, nutrition, sleep hygiene, mindfulness, weight management, stress management and other group activities. A Likert scale was used to define their baseline understanding of wellness and to rank their interests in wellness related activities.

Table 1 of the survey assessed employee familiarity with wellness issues. This table asked eighteen questions about the respondents' awareness of personal health issues. Each question required the respondent to respond to a 5 part Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. It was used to determine how much education may be required for the employees to gain a full understanding of how a wellness program may benefit them. It will give the developer of the wellness program a baseline of the employee needs and the type of commitment that can be expected from the employees. This section of the survey is in direct

alignment with Pillar 6 – Communication. To ensure the success of the program, planning and designing is an essential piece that will be based off of the data collected from this portion of the survey.

Table 2 of the survey is related to employee interests encompassing the holistic needs of the employee. Questions included are weight management, mindfulness training, sleep hygiene, tobacco cessation, and several other topics to encompass the holistic needs of healthcare employees.

One of Smith Clinic's values is taking care of patients from a holistic approach. Table 2 of the survey is aligned with this value, becoming a natural extension of the organization's identity. Different aspects of physical, mental, social, and spiritual health were integrated into the survey to correlate with Pillar 2, Alignment. The holistic focus will help address the different wellness interests of the employee, to ensure that maximum benefit may be gained from the program.

Tables 3 and 4 of the survey were used to determine what is required to make a Workplace Wellness Program the most accessible for employees; these questions correlate with Pillar 4, Accessibility. The best days of the week, time of day, and how much the employee is willing to invest in a program will be determined by these questions.

Table 5 asked "Where would you be most likely to participate?" (Check all that apply). The responses to this question (Worksite, YMCA, Private Health Club, Other) will be used to determine how much collaboration may be possible with the existing community wellness programs. This question as it relates to Pillar 5, Partnership. Onsite programs are not always feasible or comprehensive enough to meet the needs of the employees; therefore collaboration

with other wellness facilities within the organization may be required to further enhance the Workplace Wellness Program.

### **Interviews.**

Interviews (see Appendix B) were performed after the survey had been completed and analyzed. Seven top leaders within the organization were interviewed to determine the organizational commitment towards a sustainable workplace wellness program. The purpose of the interviews directly align with Pillar #1 in the literature review regarding leadership commitment, although other Pillars also indirectly relate to the specific interview questions. During the interviews, the results of the wellness survey taken by the employees were shared with the leaders.

### **Sample**

The survey was sent out to a random sample of the employees at Smith Health System in Community X. A master list of employees was generated by the human resource system. Every 7<sup>th</sup> employees on the list was chosen to receive the survey which equates to approximately 110 people. The organization's current contracted survey company, REDCap Survey, was utilized to distribute the survey and compile the raw data.

Interviews were conducted with seven institutional leaders: three members from the C-Suite of Smith Health System in Community X, along with a nurse administrator, human resources manager, financial manager, and the environmental services manager to determine support, leadership buy-in, understanding, and overall interest in a wellness program.

## Protocol

Smith Clinic's Office of the IRB was contacted regarding the need to complete the process for the IRB. It was determined that an IRB was not required for this study. Activities that do not meet the definition of Human Research (e.g., most classroom activities, quality improvement activities, program evaluation, and surveillance activities that do not meet the definition of Human Research) do not require IRB review and approval and do not need to be submitted to the IRB unless there is a question regarding whether the activity is Human Research. (Mayo Clinic Institutional Review Board, 2015, p. 6)

The survey was distributed on March 20<sup>th</sup>. A time frame of five days was given to complete the survey, with a reminder sent out to staff to complete the survey every day until the end of the survey timeframe. Analysis of the data collected from the survey was completed immediately after the five day time limit given to complete the survey.

After the analysis of the survey has been completed, the interviews commenced. Appointments with the key leader participants were made and completed in the final week of March, 2017. The input obtained from the interviews was gathered and analyzed immediately following the completion of the interviews. The timeframe to complete this analysis was April 17<sup>th</sup>.

The information obtained via surveys and interviews will be shared with the Smith Clinic Wellness Enterprise workgroup in the second quarter of 2017. Since the start of this project, a workgroup was developed to determine the wellness needs for the entire Smith Clinic enterprise, and to share best practices between the sites regarding local wellness initiatives. The workgroup is focused on developing plans to introduce more robust employee wellness programs. Some of

the programs will be accessible for only health plan participants and other programs will be available to everyone, regardless of health plan participation.

## **Analysis**

### **Surveys.**

The quantitative survey statistics was computed from the data collected from the survey company, REDcap Surveys. The data was calculated using an Excel program. The analysis of the data is displayed by way of a run chart. The five different Tables of the survey were separated to have a clear image of each section containing the multiple questions, displaying only data within that section. This visual representation will allow for easy interpretation of the results. This may lead to the determination of the current state of employee understanding of a wellness program (Appendix A, Table 1), what kinds of programming employees prefer (Appendix A, Table 2), what would make a wellness program most accessible for the employees (Appendix A, Tables 3 and 4), and what types of community partnership may be required to maximize employee participation (Appendix A, Table 5).

### **Interviews.**

A qualitative analysis was used to interpret the responses received through the interview process. This process provided feedback regarding leadership understanding and commitment in regards to employee wellness.

The first step in analyzing the information received during the interview was to look for patterns or themes amongst the responses by question. Responses were coded by theme and these codes were tallied to determine the popularity of the themes. Quotes that confirm each theme and quotes that suggest alternatives were identified.

Both the survey data from the sample population and the interviews from key leaders identified the employee understanding of wellness and an awareness that a WHP program at Smith Clinic Health System Community X does not exist.

## **Chapter 4: Results and Discussion**

The study was about the Smith Health System in Community X employees understanding of their own wellness and their interest in various wellness related interests. It also addressed accessibility of wellness programs and possible interest in community partnerships regarding wellness.

### **Results**

#### **Survey Results.**

Table 1 of the REDCap survey assessed employee familiarity with wellness issues. Eighteen questions were asked to illustrate the employees' perception of their own state of wellness and wellness in the workplace. Each question required the audience to respond to a 5 part Likert scale ranging from (1) Strongly Disagree to (5) Strongly Agree. The three highest ranking Top Box scores in Table 1 were from the questions regarding the perception of what it means to have wellness in the workplace, and what are considered to be individual healthy behaviors. The lowest ranking of the scores in Table 1 were answers the respondents gave regarding their own health-related behaviors. (REDCap Survey Company, 2017) Questions related to finding the time to exercise, satisfaction of their own state of health, adequate sleep, and stress management were the lowest ranking of the questions in Table 1. The future developer of a Workplace Health Promotion program may use this information to determine a baseline of the employee needs and the type of commitment that can be expected from the employees.



Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Statement 1 : Answers of Smith Clinic Health System Community X Employees Surveyed of Their Perception of Their Own Health and Wellness Status, Along with Their Perception of Behaviors Considered to be Included in Workplace Wellness.

Wellness Assessment Questions	Mean	Median	Mode	St DV	Top Box
I am satisfied with my current state of health.	<b>3.6</b>	<b>4</b>	4	<b>1.1</b>	16%
I know what is meant by 'worksite wellness.'	<b>3.6</b>	<b>4</b>	4	<b>1.3</b>	27%
Healthier people are more productive at work.	<b>4.5</b>	<b>5</b>	5	<b>0.8</b>	72%
I know what it takes to lead a healthy lifestyle.	<b>4.6</b>	<b>5</b>	5	<b>0.5</b>	64%
Whether or not to live a healthy lifestyle is completely up to the individual.	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4</b>	4	<b>0.8</b>	39%
I buy heart-healthy snacks when they are available (for example, yogurt, one percent or skim milk, fresh fruit, vegetables, nuts, raisins or other dried fruit., NOT candy, chips, pastry, etc.).	<b>3.9</b>	<b>4</b>	4	<b>0.9</b>	27%
I would eat fruit if available at our staff meetings.	<b>4.5</b>	<b>5</b>	5	<b>0.9</b>	66%
I don't think about health when deciding what to eat.	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2</b>	2	<b>1.0</b>	1%
I try to look for healthier foods, but usually eat whatever is available.	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3</b>	4	<b>1.2</b>	11%
Paying attention to healthy eating and exercising is a lot of trouble.	<b>2.8</b>	<b>3</b>	2	<b>1.1</b>	7%
If I had a five-minute break I would use it for a personal activity like stretching, yoga or a walk if there was a place to do it.	<b>3.6</b>	<b>4</b>	5	<b>1.3</b>	32%
I would participate in group activities encouraging healthy eating or physical activity if they were offered to staff.	<b>3.7</b>	<b>4</b>	5	<b>1.2</b>	32%

I make time for 30 - 60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3</b>	2	<b>1.3</b>	23%
It's hard for me to get as much exercise as I should.	<b>3.4</b>	<b>4</b>	4	<b>1.3</b>	24%
I am able to take scheduled breaks at work daily (lunch breaks and 15 minute breaks).	<b>2.8</b>	<b>2</b>	2	<b>1.5</b>	23%
I feel that I have resources available to me regarding stress management.	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3</b>	4	<b>1.3</b>	17%
I sleep 7-8 hours a night.	<b>3.4</b>	<b>4</b>	4	<b>1.4</b>	28%
When I wake in the morning I feel well rested.	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3</b>	4	<b>1.2</b>	11%

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Table 1

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Table 2 of the REDCap survey focused on the wellness interests of the audience surveyed. A 5 point Likert scale was used in this section of the survey to determine what wellness topics the employees would be most likely to participate in, ranging from (1) Not Likely to (5) Very Likely. The top rated interests noted from the respondents were weight management, a walking club, yoga, and mindfulness training. The lowest responses were in the interest of tobacco cessation, competitive sports, and group activities. (REDCap Survey Company, 2017) The future developer of the Workplace Health Promotion program may use the data collected to determine the type of programming to implement that may result in the highest participation rates.

Table 2. Descriptive Data for Statement 2: Wellness Interests of Smith Clinic Health System Community X Employees

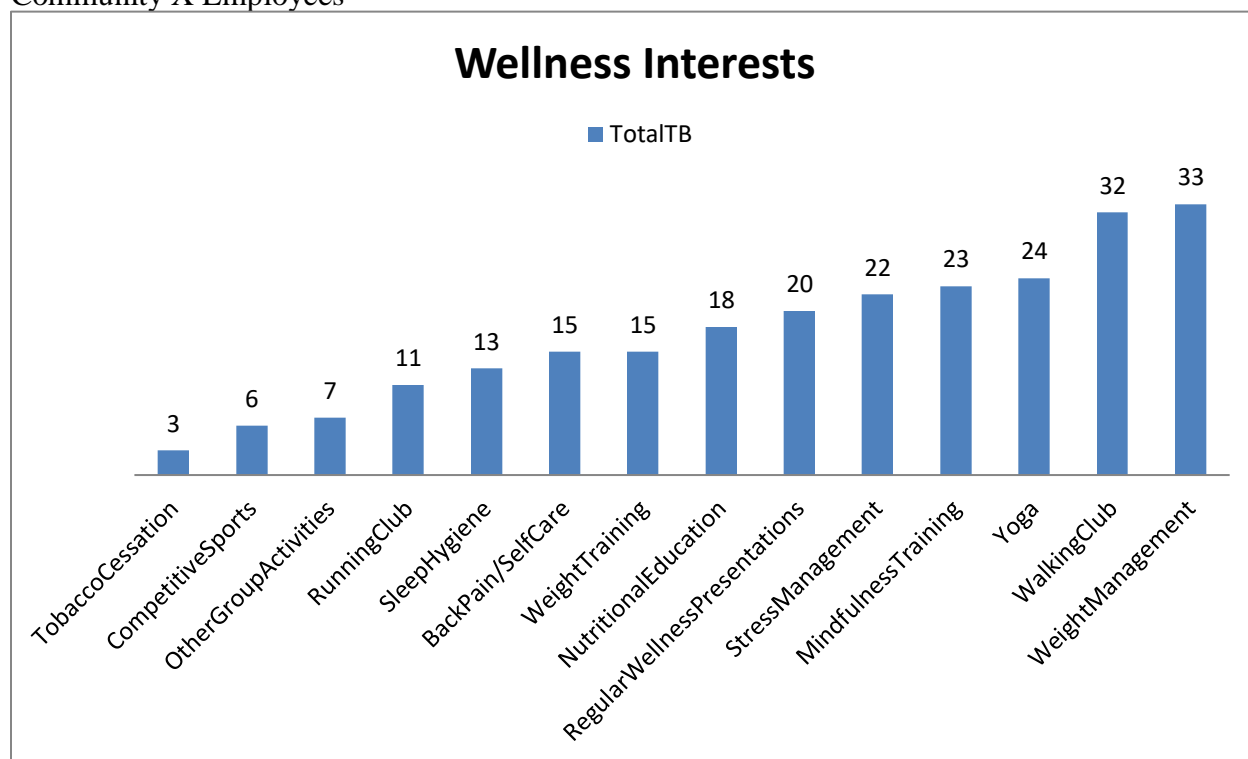
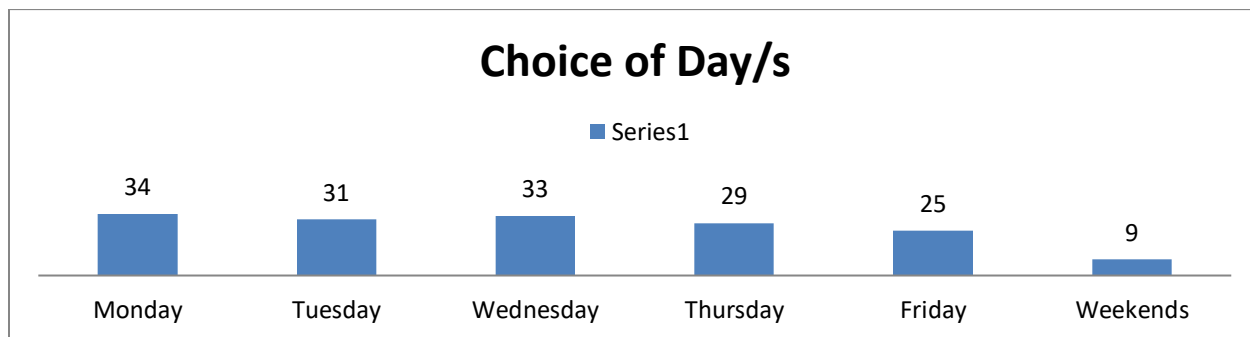


Table 2

Table 3 of the REDCap survey focused on when employees would be the most interested to participate in wellness activities. The survey participants chose weekdays as the most popular choice overall, particularly with Monday and Wednesday being the most popular days to participate in wellness activities. The most popular time of the day to participate was over the lunch break, with immediately after work following closely as another popular option. The seasons of spring and fall were the most favored seasons to participate in wellness activities according to the results of the wellness survey. (REDCap Survey Company, 2017) The future developer of the Workplace Health Promotion program may take the days, seasons, and time of day preferred into consideration when implementing the wellness activities to maximize potential participation.

Table 3. Descriptive Run Charts for Statement 3: Preferred Days, Time of Day, and Seasons for Participation in Wellness Activities by Smith Clinic Health System Community X Employees



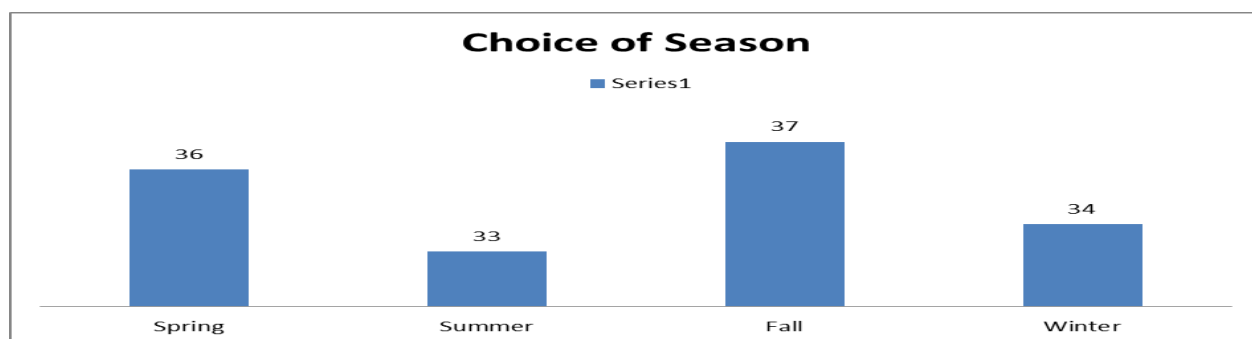
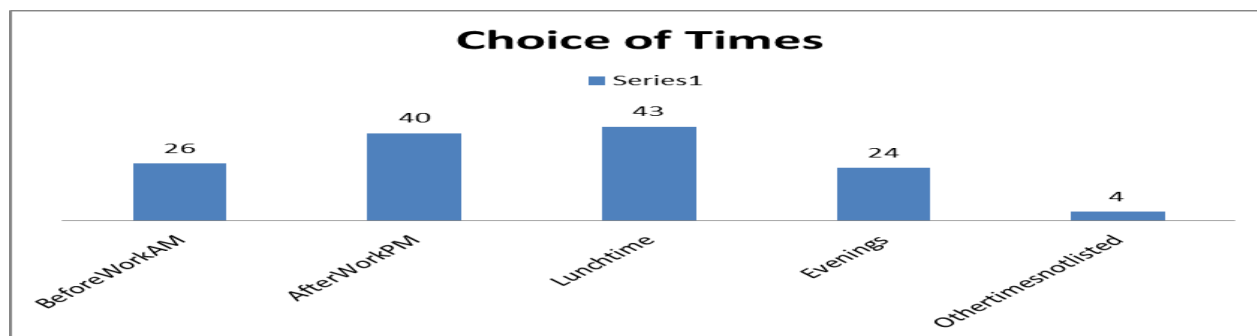


Table 3

Table 4 of the REDCap Survey focused on the preferred location of the surveyed employees to participate in wellness activities. The participants chose the worksite as the most favored location to participate in wellness activities, with the score indicating over double the amount than the next preferred choice; the local YMCA. (REDCap Survey Company, 2017) Table 4. Descriptive Data for Statement 4: Preferred Site for Participation in Wellness Activities by Smith Clinic Health System Community X Employees

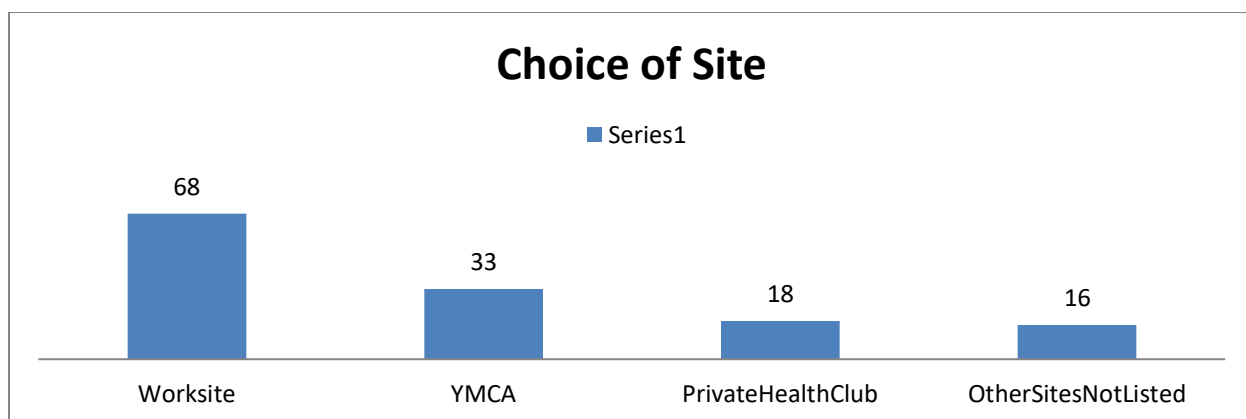


Table 4

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Table 5 of the REDCap survey posed the question of the employee willingness to share the cost of a Workplace Health Promotion program. Fifty seven out of 87 employees surveyed answered yes to this question, which equates to approximately 66% of the participants polled. (REDCap Survey Company, 2017) While considering financial implications of implementing a Workplace Health Promotion program, the future developer may use this information to receive financial support from the employees themselves so support such program.

Table 5: Pie Chart Representation for Statement 5: Willingness of Smith Clinic Health System Community X Employees to Share the Cost of a Workplace Health Promotion Program

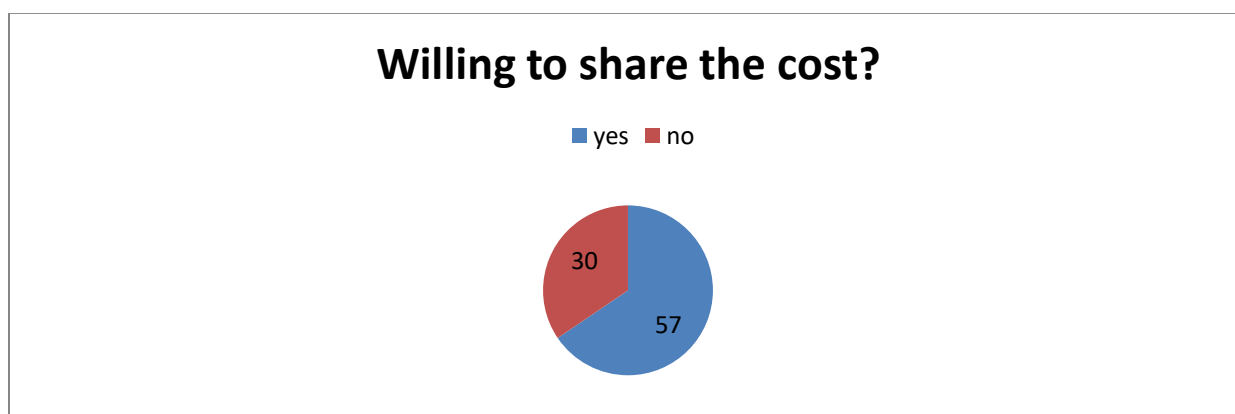


Table 5

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**Interviews**

Common themes were found throughout the interview process from the various interview participants. Not all themes were found within the answers for the same questions, but rather spread throughout the interview process with each individual.

All of the leaders stated that there was not a formal WHP program at Smith Clinic Health System in Community X at this time. Three out of the seven individuals interviewed stated that the messaging about “12 Habits of Highly Healthy People” and the Wellness Champion program was a start to some programming efforts, but that nothing formal was yet to be in place. Four out of seven interviewed individuals spoke of another facility that is part of the Smith Clinic Health System in an adjacent community that obtained funding through community grants to build a wellness center in the facility that would be open for employee use. All four individuals stated that this was a great opportunity for the adjacent community but unfortunately Smith Clinic Health System in Community X does not have that same type of community funding available at this time.

When answering the question about how an employee would benefit from a WHP, all seven individuals interviewed mentioned stress reduction as the first benefit. Another popular answer from four out of seven individuals was increased positivity and morale amongst the employees. Better employee engagement and an increase in quality of patient care were also themes mentioned consistently throughout the interview as benefits for the employee by five out of seven interviewees.

The question about the organizational benefits of a WHP program had a consistent theme about decreased absenteeism from all of the respondents. Another common theme amongst three of the seven leaders was about the positive image of the organization that provides a WHP program for their employees.

There were not any messages that were similar about wellness programs in other organizations worked at by this group of leaders interviewed. Some did have programs, some did not have programs, and those that did have programs at past places of employment were not similar in any fashion.

The last consistent theme heard throughout the interviews with all of the organization leaders was the organization's inability to provide financial support for any type of workplace wellness program at this time. All of the leaders stated that they would encourage and support programs by becoming visible participants and advocates of WHP programs, but that is the only resource that they could give at this time due to financial constraints.

Overall, the leaders demonstrated a clear understanding of how a Workplace Health Promotion program would benefit both the employee and the organization in many ways. They all stated that they would support programing in ways that did not include financial resources due to the current budgetary constraints, but would be willing to provide other resources to show support. The understanding of the benefits for both employees and the organization, along with the willingness to show support of a WHP program directly aligns with the pillars of successful wellness programs.



## **Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusions**

The objective of this study was to create a needs analysis based upon survey responses from employees and interview responses from individuals holding key leadership positions at Smith Health System in Community X that may be used by a future developer of a Workplace Health Promotion program.

A literature review was completed and six pillars of successful and strategic wellness programs were determined. These pillars include multilevel leadership, alignment, quality, accessibility, partnership, and communication. (Berry, Mirabito, & Baun, 2010)

The literature review also determined proven benefits of a worksite wellness program for organizations and employees. Benefits include improved employee morale and productivity,

decreased occupational injury rates, decreased health care expenditures, decreased absenteeism, and increased employee satisfaction. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013)

The primary focus of the study was to determine the wellness needs and preferences of the employees of Smith Health System in Community X. The interviews conducted were used to determine leadership understanding of the benefit of a Workplace Health Promotion Program and their buy in of such program.

The survey was sent to 110 randomly selected Smith Health System in Community X employees on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017. The employees were given 5 days to complete the survey, and were allowed to complete the survey during work time. Analysis of the survey was completed by the REDCap Survey Company and then compiled onto Excel spreadsheets.

Review of the employee survey results display a current lack of employee participation in consistent exercise programs (30-60 minutes daily), lack of adequate sleep, lack of stress management, and a general lack of satisfaction of their own current health. (REDCap Survey Company, 2017)

Survey results also displayed the employees' preferences for a Workplace Health Promotion program. The top three responses about specific programming interests were yoga, a walking club, and weight management. Weekdays during lunchtime were the preferred times to participate in a Workplace Health Promotion program. Employees preferred to participate at the worksite and 66% of the respondents would be willing to share the cost of a Workplace Health Promotion program. (REDCap Survey Company, 2017)

Interviews were conducted with key leaders of Smith Health System in Community X from March 28<sup>th</sup>-March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Interviews were transcribed beginning April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. A qualitative analysis was completed after the transcription and common themes were determined.

Stress reduction, decreased absenteeism, and increased morale of the employees were amongst the popular themes of organizational and employee benefits. All leaders were supportive of Workplace Health Promotion program and were willing to provide non-financial resources for a program.

### **Educational Implications**

In this paper, to identify the wellness needs and preferences of Smith Clinic Health System in Community X employees, a needs analysis was completed. The survey was conducted as an initial step towards the identification of the need for a Workplace Health Promotion program based upon the satisfaction of the employees surveyed regarding their health. The findings indicate Smith Clinic Health System in Community X employees have low satisfaction regarding their current health status. Interviews also indicated leadership understanding and benefits of a WHP program, along with their support to initiate this type of program.

The information provided by the literature review supports the importance of a WHP program, and steps to successfully implement such a program. The survey and interview results may be used to assist with the future development of a WHP program by a wellness coordinator.

### **Leadership Implications**

This paper demonstrates my commitment towards both the organization and the employees. As a leader, I know it is important for employees to feel valued. One way to do this is to put importance on individual wellness. Showing a commitment to employee wellbeing not only benefits employees, but also the organization as a whole. Approaching wellness with a holistic approach ensures that different types of wellness needs are met for all employees.

As a nurse leader at Smith Clinic Health System in Community X, it is important for my peers to see that valid research has been conducted to assist with the development and

implementation of an employee wellness program. It is also important to show my fellow employees that I am passionate about the wellness of all employees.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

This research project took me almost one and a half years to complete from the start of the literature review until the surveys and interviews were completed and analyzed. If I had the opportunity to change anything about this project, it would be to complete a project such as this in a timelier manner to maintain the level of excitement first felt at the start of the project. I would also invest in a transcription program to save time when transcribing the interviews. In hindsight, it may have been beneficial if I would have polled a larger audience by including other facilities within the region. This may have given more inclusive details that could be used for the regional development of a WHP program, instead of just facility focused.

### **Summary**

In conclusion, Workplace Health Promotion programs benefit both the organization and the employee. Organizations reap the benefits of increased employee satisfaction, increased employee morale, increased productivity, along with decreased healthcare expenditures. Employees benefit from a WHP program by having a social support system that enhances overall health. Employees that regularly participate in a WHP program maintain healthy body mass indexes, have less health co-morbidities, and have better overall mental health.

Employees surveyed at Smith Clinic Health System in Community X indicate low satisfaction regarding their own health related topics such as adequate sleep, exercise habits, and overall health status. They also indicated their preferences related to different wellness activities,

when and where they would like to participate, and that over half of them would be willing to contribute to a WHP program.

Leaders interviewed at Smith Clinic Health System in Community X showed support of a WHP program, although they all stated that Smith Clinic Health System in Community X is unable to support any program with financial resources.

A regional Smith Clinic Health System wellness group, in conjunction with the Smith Clinic enterprise is working to initiate a wellness program for employees. This needs analysis paper may be beneficial in determining what employees prefer and how to successfully implement a WHP program.

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## Appendix A

### Employee Survey

<p>This survey is designed to assess what employees understand about wellness and to give the employees a chance to better understand the concept of an employee wellness program. The survey will also be used to determine what type of wellness activities interest the employees. All responses will be kept anonymous. There is no financial benefit for participating in this survey. You may stop participating in this survey at any time. Responses and participation will not affect employment in any way.</p>						
	<b>Table #1 Wellness Assessment</b> – Please rate how you agree with the following statements.	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Somewhat Agree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Somewhat Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
1	I am satisfied with my current state of health.	5	4	3	2	1
2	I know what is meant by “worksite wellness.”	5	4	3	2	1
3	Healthier people are more productive at work.	5	4	3	2	1
4	I know what it takes to lead a healthy lifestyle.	5	4	3	2	1
5	Whether or not to live a healthy lifestyle is completely up to the individual.	5	4	3	2	1
6	I buy heart-healthy snacks when they are available (for example, yogurt, one percent or skim milk, fresh fruit, vegetables, nuts, raisins or other dried fruit, NOT candy, chips, pastry, etc.).	5	4	3	2	1
7	I would eat fruit if available at our staff meetings.	5	4	3	2	1
8	I don’t think about health when deciding what to eat.	5	4	3	2	1
9	I try to look for healthier foods, but usually eat whatever is available.	5	4	3	2	1
10	Paying attention to healthy eating and exercising is a lot of trouble.	5	4	3	2	1
11	If I had a five-minute break I would use it for a personal activity like stretching, yoga or a walk if there was a place to do it.	5	4	3	2	1
12	I would participate in group activities encouraging healthy eating or physical activity if they were offered to staff.	5	4	3	2	1

13	I make time for 30 – 60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.	5	4	3	2	1
14	It's hard for me to get as much exercise as I should.	5	4	3	2	1
15	I am able to take scheduled breaks at work daily (lunch breaks and 15 minute breaks).	5	4	3	2	1
16	I feel that I have resources available to me regarding stress management.	5	4	3	2	1
17	I sleep 7+ hours a night.	5	4	3	2	1
18	When I wake in the morning I feel well rested.	5	4	3	2	1

	<b>Table #2 Wellness Activity Interests-</b> Rank the following activities based on your level of interest.	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Neutral	Not Very Likely	Not at All Likely
1	Weight Management	5	4	3	2	1
2	Mindfulness Training	5	4	3	2	1
3	Tobacco Cessation	5	4	3	2	1
4	Yoga	5	4	3	2	1
5	Zumba	5	4	3	2	1
6	Walking Club	5	4	3	2	1
7	Running Club	5	4	3	2	1
8	Competitive Sports	5	4	3	2	1
9	Weight Training	5	4	3	2	1
10	Stress Management	5	4	3	2	1
11	Sleep Hygiene	5	4	3	2	1
12	Nutritional Education	5	4	3	2	1
13	Back Pain/Self Care	5	4	3	2	1
14	Regular Wellness Presentations	5	4	3	2	1
15	Other Group Activities	5	4	3	2	1

<b>Table 3: When would you most likely participate? (Please check all that apply)</b>	
Monday	Lunchtime
Tuesday	Evenings
Wednesday	Spring
Thursday	Summer
Friday	Fall
Weekends	Winter
Before Work (AM)	Other Times Not Listed:
After Work (PM)	

<b>Table 4: Would you be willing to share the cost of participating in these programs?</b>	
	Yes
	No
	What Percentage (if any):

<b>Table 5: Where would you be most likely to participate? (Check all that apply)</b>	
	Worksite
	YMCA
	Private Health Club
	Other Sites Not Listed:

<b>Any other comments or suggestions:</b>
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## **Appendix B**

### **Leadership Interview Questions**

The following questions were asked of each interviewee:

- 1) What type of wellness program currently exists for the employees of Smith Clinic Health System Community X employees? This question is being asked to determine if there are untapped resources that the researcher is not aware of. This question directly relates to Pillar # 6, Communication.
- 2) What is the interviewee's stance on wellness for Smith Clinic Health System employees? This question is being asked to determine if the leaders at a local level

- feel support from top leadership of the entire organization and what has been done to show this support. This question directly relates to Pillar # 1, Leadership Support, and Pillar #6 Communication.
- 3) How would an employee benefit from participating in a Workplace Wellness Program? This question is being asked to assess leadership awareness regarding benefits for the employees related to wellness program participation. This question directly correlates with alignment, Pillar 2. An employee benefitting from a workplace wellness program is in direct relation to the organization's mission, value, and vision.
  - 4) How would the organization benefit from their employees participating in Workplace Wellness Programs? This question is being asked to assess leadership awareness regarding benefits for the organization related to employee wellness. This question directly correlates with alignment, Pillar 2. By following the organization's mission, values, and visions to provide an employee wellness program, the organization gains benefits too.
  - 5) Have you worked in an organization in the past that had an employee wellness program? If so what worked and what did not work? This question is asked to gain insight about other programs and if the leader has any experience in this area.
  - 6) What type of commitment can be made by leadership to initiate an employee Workplace Wellness Program? This question is asked to see if there will be any financial commitment, time commitment, or publicity commitment of the program. This question directly relates to Pillar 1, Leadership Support.

## Appendix C

### Interview Transcripts

#### Interview #1 TC

Question: “Do you know what type of wellness program currently exists for the employees of Smith Clinic Health System Community X employees?”

TC: “We did a SHIP grant program a few years ago that printed walking maps for all of the locations. I am not sure if it actually was at all of the sites. A lot of changes of facility structures since then. There is Biggest Loser competitions at different sites. There is a neat “This Week at Smith Clinic” article about one of the sites doing a weight loss challenge and losing a significant amount of weight as a group as a whole. There are some opportunities I feel locally because we have a YMCA in town. We were asked to identify wellness champions but that program hasn’t fully kicked off yet at a site or department level. If I had to name one person right now as our face of wellness, I would have to say M.W. out of the physical therapy department. She teaches yoga classes and encourages staff to come to that. Unique to our facility is that if an employee has a physical problem, they can get I think 2 sessions for evaluations and therapy type treatment with a physical therapist to manage whatever physical ailment, essentially attributed to employee wellness, to help them get them back to work quicker; instead of them just trying to power through the pain. I’ve used it once and it definitely helped me get back to work quicker.

Question: “What is your stance on wellness for Smith Clinic Health System employees? What kind of support do you feel you get from top leadership from the organization in regards to the topic of employee wellness?”

TC: “I think in general I think this is the sort of thing I would perceive they support and care about. I do feel that senior leadership does care about employees as a whole, as terms of specific initiatives, I can’t name anything off the top of my head. I do feel that especially if there is ever a case that is ever made about it, saying here is how we are able to help them; the institution is open to those types of conversations. The only other thing I would add is that it is a challenging area because quantifying the institutional and employee benefits is difficult. There are so many different opinions about what wellness means.”

Question: “How would an employee benefit from participating in a Workplace Wellness Program?”

TC: “I think that you have a lot of groups like Weight Watchers and those sorts of things that are able to leverage positive peer group to reinforce positive lifestyle behaviors. If we were able to have a similar culture as a whole to talk about health and encourage it and not in a punitive way or making people uncomfortable or overly CIA feeling in where there are inappropriately in personal life details, there is a healthy way to support each other with a peer group, we are here to support each other, whether it’s 1 or 100 pounds of a goal. We are just here to help you, and to measure ways more than pounds. And if we have a healthy culture, employee wellness would fit very well into that sort of framework.”

Question: “How would the organization benefit from their employees participating in Workplace Wellness Programs?”

TC: “Well ideally one of the questions that sort of the Press Ganey surveys asks, well in other institutions that I have worked at it has been the Gallup survey, and one of the specific questions that measures employee engagement and their likelihood to stay is “Do you have a friend at

work?” This is the sort of thing that friends care about for each other, the health of their friend. I think that you would have better employee engagement if you had an effective employee wellness program. I also think that if you are doing it well and folks are healthier, you would have lower absenteeism. Workforces that are predominantly female like healthcare is, moms set the tone for healthy lifestyles home. So fewer sick kids, fewer sick days, which means moms taking off less time with sick kids and taking off to take them to the doctor and such. Again the challenge is quantifying that benefit. I know there is research out there to support that.”

Question: “Have you worked in an organization in the past that had a Workplace Wellness Program? If so what worked and what did not work?”

TC: “One, I worked at another hospital that encouraged healthy food options in the cafeteria and tried to remove unhealthy foods. Whether or not this impacted the health of the employees would be hard to quantify. I know for me I had a cool blue cup that they gave me that helped me drink a lot more water. It was a sweet blue cup. It had the company logo on it and made you feel pride in the place that you worked. If you don’t mind me going back a little bit, for larger institutions that are self-insured, you also have the ability to reduce your expenses for chronic conditions and other issues they may have.”

Question: “What type of commitment can be made by leadership to initiate an employee Workplace Wellness Program?”

TC: “I think depending on the amount of resources and time available for leaders, I guess for me, I would point to the service champion program for example, the employees that are engaging in it are doing it because they want to and are passionate about it. Their supervisors are not forcing them to do it. It is generally uncompensated time that they spend, so you are just tapping people

in every department to participate. You don't get every department to participate but those that do tap others to do so as well. I attend those meetings and cheer them on and celebrate those victories. I role model those messages that reinforce their behaviors. I would hope leaders can support something like that in a similar fashion. Financially I am not sure what we can commit to as an institution. As opportunities come up, we try to finagle things to make what we can happen, use the skill sets and the resources that we have, if folks are willing to be creative and use opportunities to use the resources that we have."

## **Interview #2 WP**

Question: "Do you know what type of wellness program currently exists for the employees of Smith Clinic Health System Community X employees?"

WP: "Wow. Well, we have some things you can tap into through Rochester, some of those programs you can tap into, individualized things, we have wellness champions at each of the sites, we are little more hit and miss and variable at each site for what is really out there. We have the Pond House and yoga at one of the sites, but not at all. We have the new wellness center being built at the one location that will be great for the employees there, but then again, it doesn't benefit the others at every site. This will be adjacent to the Medical Center and employees will be able to use it 24/7 for a small fee. It will be staffed with an exercise physiologist; it will be geared towards after care for cardiac rehab and suggested weight loss for patients and those types of things, but it will be available for staff to use as well. We just don't have the same types of things available for all of our buildings or locations. One thing I don't know, I thought we could get a discount at the YMCA, but I really not sure at this point about this. Just one last thought,



we do have access to an online health risk assessment and as an employer we could gather the data as to what the needs that our employees may have.”

Question: “What is your stance on wellness for Smith Clinic Health System employees? What kind of support do you feel you get from top leadership from the organization in regards to the topic of employee wellness?”

WP: “Well, I think Smith as a company is still trying to figure out health and wellness as an employee base. I know they have done some big things in Rochester, but we haven’t got to that point yet. I know in the region D.P. has really supported employee wellness and that has helped us. Even the wellness champions program is great. We still have a ways to go. Trying to get with employers...As a company what are we doing to help employers? And as a company what are we doing to help our own employees? I don’t know we can honestly go to employers to say that in southeast Minnesota we got this figured out or we have a very well developed program. I think we are still in our infancy on this one. Smith is a really good company but we are not a leader on this one.

Question: “How would an employee benefit from participating in a Workplace Wellness Program?”

WP: “Improved productivity, enhanced wellbeing, they talk about less absenteeism, it’s that concept of presenteeism, when they are there they are feeling good and able to work. It is that whole mind body connection. It’s if you feel good mentally, physically, all those things are interrelated. I think that healthcare is stressful, even if people that are taking care of patients day in and day out that you can see the stress, but there are other stresses too. To offer a way for people a way to take care of themselves, again you can define wellness in a lot of ways; I am

using the broad sense here, more physical the walking clubs and stuff, but also programmatic, behavioral changes, health education. I think those are important. The hard part of this is showing financial return. It is a little all over the map. I tend to fall in the camp or am biased that there is a financial payback to a company, but you have to be in it for the long haul and be willing to put some money towards it and efforts towards so employees can benefit from it you have to have that sort of philosophical approach. Here is my other caveat towards it though. You also in my opinion, employees benefit from it but individuals need to take ownership for their own health. We have to create a culture where we incent this but we incent this for you to take ownership for your own health.”

Question: “How would the organization benefit from their employees participating in Workplace Wellness Programs?”

WP: “It is almost one and the same as to what I just answered; the presenteeism, the less absenteeism.”

Question: “Have you worked in an organization in the past that had a Workplace Wellness Program? If so what worked and what did not work?”

WP: “Yes, I worked at a couple of them. For me it is interesting because some of them take different approaches. One of them had a very well developed program. They were purposeful about putting time and energies in the programmatic piece of the program. It wasn’t so much about the bricks and mortar to build a big fitness center; it was more to create the programs. I liked what they did with that. It was what people enjoyed. Contrast that with another organization a number of years ago; they had programs, they really didn’t put funds into the bricks and mortar either but had some very well developed health behavior change materials to

help meet people where they were at. So it wasn't just programs, but behavior changes to help individuals successfully participate in the programs. I thought that was sophisticated and appropriate. I lean towards that a little bit. I think some of these things have to work together. We work hard to get the physical structures so now we need to get the health behavior changes to go along with it, to dovetail together.

Question: "What type of commitment can be made by leadership to initiate an employee Workplace Wellness Program?"

WP: "Even what we are seeing in politics right now, we are seeing a shift where we don't have a consistent policy that can be followed in a longitudinal way. What leadership can do at a company like this is to provide that long term vision blue print and how we are going to get there but not deviate significantly, meaningfully just because we saw 2 months of bad financials or whatever, we have to provide a long term vision and strategy and then be willing to put resources, time and energy, what not towards that, and I am not saying at the expense of putting the company out of business, but you can't be willy-nilly either, and I think what the company suffers from is what the government suffers from too. We don't have a long term health strategy as a country and we don't at Smith have a long term sustainable philosophy and commitment behind wellness. And I think most companies fall in the same bucket as we do a few have done some really nice things and sustained it. But rambling on, Smith is still rated one of the best companies to work for so maybe this would take us from good to great type of thing for us. I think there are other companies that might put more emphasis on this and have more of that vision than what we have had. Just because we are in healthcare doesn't mean we know how to take care of our own employees. Sometimes there are assumptions that you would or you should. So they're related but, it does take a little different skill set and mindset. I would love to see us

have a more long term vision and be consistent with it and put our money into it and let it evolve as time goes on and I think good companies can do that.”

### **Interview #3 BW**

Question: “Do you know what type of wellness program currently exists for the employees of Smith Clinic Health System Community X employees?”

BW: “Patients want us available 24 by 7. We still have patients want to see their doctor even in the emergency room, so what I guess I am trying to say is I don’t think all of the incentives are aligned yet. We have a vision, we all know and have data to support that but I think the incentives to do that vision are all aligned. There are financial pressures, there are patient care pressures, and there are personal pressures which are I got to get home to mow my lawn, or make supper, or pick my kids up from soccer practice, so for me to take 30 minutes for exercise is not easy. Probably more than what you wanted to know.”

Question: What is your stance on wellness for Smith Clinic Health System employees? What kind of support do you feel you get from top leadership from the organization in regards to the topic of employee wellness?”

BW: “I think at a high level we do hear the right message. I think that truly everybody in their heart believes that this is what is important, important for our employees as individuals, for our patients that we are trying to care for because if we are healthy they are going to get better care and it’s important for the community to see us walk the talk. So I’d say that’s all there in principle. So where we stumble is in the actions. What are the concrete actions to get us to that vision? I think we have fits and starts. I think we have good intentions but don’t always execute well. If we are going to do it well, I don’t think it can all be just the employer, it needs to have an

employee component to this as well. It is important for the employer to help pave the way, but at the end of the day it is just as important for me to execute on the individual side. I don't think we always get that either. You know how it is. I am guilty of it too. They might have set 30 minutes aside but I have an excuse to why I didn't go do it. If they would have set it aside earlier in the day or later in the day, well the answer is we need to have a commitment from the individual, we need to have that partnership; it can't all be just one."

Question: How would an employee benefit from participating in a Workplace Wellness Program?

BW: "Well it's all the things we already talked about. It helps them mentally feel more alert, on task, it's a stress reduction, self confidence in terms of "I feel better, I feel I look better" those kind of things. It is good all the way around, which translates into better for patient care.

Question: How would the organization benefit from their employees participating in Workplace Wellness Programs?

BW: "Right, I think again productivity goes up, absenteeism goes down, and morale is usually more positive, more vibrant work environment. An example that I would give, we didn't talk about it, when you have those unit challenges, when units do challenges about exercise or weight loss, keeping team minutes, I have been parts of those types of challenges as part of a team for recording minutes. That competitive spirit promotes comradery."

Question: Have you worked in an organization in the past that had an employee wellness program? If so what worked and what did not work?

BW: “When I worked in Mankato, and Waseca, I did have opportunity to use rehab equipment. The give and the get was there was education you had to do to use the equipment and you could only use the equipment during off hours. I participated in the challenge around exercise that was maybe once a year around a national whatever type of day, but I have also worked elsewhere that did not have opportunities too.”

Question: What type of commitment can be made by leadership to initiate an employee Workplace Wellness Program?

BW: “Commitment first is setting the tone. Having it as a priority for the organization strategically, that this is important to us and we want to continue with this, that is the first. The second is trying to find employees where they are at, so really trying to do things that don’t require people to get out of their normal work flow or work stream to participate. Programs should be varied, not everybody needs the same thing, so it goes back to meeting employees where they are at, so it needs to be multi-faceted I guess is the right word. And I guess we have to recognize them when they do it, when they participate, so those are all very important things.”

#### **Interview #4 ND**

Question: “Do you know what type of wellness program currently exists for the employees of Smith Clinic Health System Community X employees?”

ND: “I am not aware of any program that currently exists for physical wellness especially, but there have been programs for mindfulness training with SS and healing arts training, but physical outside of a rare class activity, I am not aware of anything we ever did. Some Qigong, some yoga, but I think it comes under the banner of private enterprise vs. organizational sponsored program of wellness physical health, mental health, so lacking.”

Question: What is your stance on wellness for Smith Clinic Health System employees? What kind of support do you feel you get from top leadership from the organization in regards to the topic of employee wellness?"

ND: "I haven't heard any messages. I have not heard. I am sure some discussions have gotten to some groups but they haven't gotten to a point where it has brought to nurse administration. I think there are so many competing priorities right now. I don't know what other sites or regions are doing at their sites.

Question: How would an employee benefit from participating in a Workplace Wellness Program?

ND: "I might give you a list. Starts with how an employee presents to an organization. Their commitment of their time, and their dedication and their professionalism to the organization. Studies show that to the extent that an employee is committed to that organization that there is a reciprocal expectation that the commitment will be provided back to them in some way or another that benefits them above and beyond what they do in their work place. So they expect commitment to help them do their job but they also have that emotional expectation that they have attached so much dedication and emotional capital to the organization and how is that shown back. So there is that ability to engage employees by recognizing that they support not only their ability to provide a service but they are dedicating much more. And there is that social piece, if you have employees and don't offer them the ability to socialize, and I think we talked about breaks. I hate scheduled breaks. I hate the concept of scheduled breaks. There should be a gathering place on each unit and when employees have the time, they should be allowed to gather, go in there, connect with other employees; employees can socialize on the workforce. I

think there is a positive correlation to the robustness of their teamwork. They become socialized as a team, especially in healthcare where you rely on teams, and to the extent that teams are engaged and supportive is the extent that you have the ability to reduce risk. Don't get me started. Instead of sending people single file to get their coffee, we should have a central place where people can connect. There is a socialization that is associated to any type of activity that is not work related that helps them in the workplace. If we are a healthcare organization very basically and we don't first don't take care of our own employees, that doesn't say much about the services we offer. If our employees don't come first, our patients won't get the kind of care they deserve either. You set a symbolic gesture of this is important. This is so important for our community, and you are part of the community, we start with you."

Question: How would the organization benefit from their employees participating in Workplace Wellness Programs?

ND: "The organization benefits because they have people that work together, who socialize together, who understand that they are in an organization that it is important to be healthy, and who do get healthier, which in the pure business sense, healthier employees reduces cost of time off, FMLAs, medical leaves, they are well nourished, well rested and at their peak. I can give you an example; our employees are the ones to connect with patients to give that lesson on health and wellness. Almost 10 years ago we wanted to introduce healing arts, and the way to have employees feel they could support a healing arts program for our patients was to provide them with the experience themselves. So we had a day long almost a manager's spa. Multiple people volunteered their time to do qigong, to do aromatherapy, to do music therapy, massage, arts therapy, all kinds of the complimentary therapies, and managers were able to rotate through this and experience this and then come back and say how they did this. They said "Wow, our



organization paid for us to do this, and then we were able to respond to that and reflect on what it did for us and to how might this benefit us and how this might benefit a patient. And the same way we might want our patients to understand the benefit of any kind of wellness program, let the employees experience it first, and then understand the organizational commitment to wellness, and spread it to our patients.”

Question: Have you worked in an organization in the past that had an employee wellness program? If so what worked and what did not work?

ND: “No”

Question: What type of commitment can be made by leadership to initiate an employee Workplace Wellness Program?

ND: “I think has to be a commitment of time, we must be willing to invest, it may be important to offer time during the workday to commit to wellness instead of after work, to value importance of taking the time for wellness. The commitment to have standing workstations is a good start. Getting a team together to say what can we do for this cost or no cost. I think you would have some wellness champions just among the employees who would be eager to start teams. I know there are people that would incorporate that role in their current job. The challenge will be that competing demands don’t take over and people stop showing up which happens. People lose energy for trying to get away when you know that this work is just going to be waiting for me and it will take longer for me to get home or at home. It might be that you tell employees like in France that you cannot turn on email at home or away from work. Or maybe our healing arts volunteers can come in and say we are going to have massage therapy in this room and if you can get away, sign up. So I think a team led by senior leadership to get together

to figure out what we can do for little or no money, and how do we engage everybody. I don't know if wellness champions has spread or started yet, but I do know they were asking for volunteers.”

### **Interview #5 VB**

Question: “Do you know what type of wellness program currently exists for the employees of Smith Clinic Health System Community X employees?”

VB: “Wow, I am not sure of anything that I am aware of that is overall structured other than the 12 habits of highly healthy people of course is the biggest thing I am aware of. The programs in place, besides the yearly things we do, I am not sure there is anything. There are the Wellness Games and that sort of thing, but nothing else that I am aware of.”

Question: What is your stance on wellness for Smith Clinic Health System employees? What kind of support do you feel you get from top leadership from the organization in regards to the topic of employee wellness?”

VB: “I think if we were organized a little bit better and had the resources available on site, we would be supported. CF has the benefactor for the wellness area, but I don't think we have done anything and we haven't done a really great job at this site to promote and we even haven't been looking to this community for programs, space or equipment, but I think it would be supported for sure. I think wellness is one of those things that would be supported. Personally I would support that. Healthier employees are happier employees, better employees. There are a lot of studies out there about retention and cost of care for employees. There are probably a lot of benefits I would say that if we could help with exercise programs, our own employees are healthier, so less costs for internal systems of treating patients who are our employees.”

Question: How would an employee benefit from participating in a Workplace Wellness Program?

VB: “So a little to what I alluded to earlier. Better production, we have seen over time groups of employees that would benefit from both a stress management perspective and from definitely weight management programs at least that is the buzz around the facility, that there are certain teams in place for wellness challenges and weight loss challenges and those sorts of things. I think there would be a benefit there for people to feel healthy. Stress management and burnout are things that exercise and wellness programs help with. I think the other thing personally speaking is that it also makes for a healthier home life if you can release some of that stress at work during your off time and not bring it home to your significant other, family and kids, it makes you a not only a better employee but a better parent, a better person in general.”

Question: “How would the organization benefit from their employees participating in Workplace Wellness Programs?”

VB: “Turnover is another benefit. Having programs like that in place help with retention, help with promotion, and help with recruitment, especially provider recruitment and we have heard about that a lot in the past. Also there is an equity piece being a Smith employee. Other facilities in the organizations have more services available and employees have pointed that out to me on several occasions that they feel that if these types of services are going to be available to some employees, they should be available to all.”

Question: “Have you worked in an organization in the past that had an employee wellness program? If so what worked and what did not work?”

VB: “I have actually, it was for a minimal cost; I think it was \$15 a month to pay to use the equipment on site during off hours. There was a running track, some Nautilus equipment and so on. I think having it available and promoting it were two different things. Those that were interested and took the initiative used it and used it a lot. I also think they didn’t do such a great job at promotion and programs designed around the equipment. That was something lacking in it. It was nice to have the facilities on site that you could use onsite before work and shower and get ready for work right there. I know they were looking at some studies around the use of the facility and equipment but I never heard the results of that.”

Question: “What type of commitment can be made by leadership to initiate an employee Workplace Wellness Program?”

VB: “I think having the Wellness Champion program in place is something that is going to help as far as the ownership goes by department. As far as leadership goes, we need to make sure that employees get out for lunch and we support that. I think that work sponsored events that we support like Chamber events, like golf or something else that we pay for and support, and canvas for employees to participate in. The Challenge Games locally that we support and participate in is another piece. The organization as a whole has a commitment to wellness and sponsor a lot of 5k runs and other sporting type events that we support, if time away from work is needed for the employee to participate, we make sure they are compensated, and also equipment and team jerseys and things like that to help promote and support.”

## **Interview #6 SG**

Question: “Do you know what type of wellness program currently exists for the employees of Smith Clinic Health System Community X employees?”

SG: “To be honest not a lot. There are some educational opportunities. We have done some stress reduction, mindfulness training, but people have to actively reach out for it too. There are some online resources. IN LC there are some yoga classes; in CF there will be the new facility that employees will have access to for a monthly fee that will be available to them 24/7. The funding was 100% community funded. There are some different programs around but we haven’t been able to offer a subsidy to the Y, because there aren’t Y’s available everywhere for our employees. It is all over the map. It is not that we don’t want to; it is just that with everything else going on it hasn’t percolated to the top of the list. Full transparency. This round of employee forums we are talking about taking care of ourselves, having a Wellness Champions, discussing the 12 Healthy Habits.”

Question: What is your stance on wellness for Smith Clinic Health System employees? What kind of support do you feel you get from top leadership from the organization in regards to the topic of employee wellness?”

SG: “Yes, leadership is supportive of the programs and given our current financial situation, a conscience decision was made to try and develop the Wellness Champions at each site and try to develop a cadre of champions down to each of the work units to get people out and walking and thinking about it and signing up for online training and stress reduction programs. At this point we are not going to be able to put a wellness center in each facility, but if someone was willing to schedule a daily 1 mile walk around the facility or something like that, we would certainly support that. We are trying to support that but we really cannot put any resource into it. We are

looking for staff that are engaged and excited about it. We are looking for more of a grass roots type program.”

Question: “How would an employee benefit from participating in a Workplace Wellness Program?”

SG: “For the employees themselves, I think the work place wellness is a reminder. Looking at the survey results, we all know what we need to do. The workplace wellness program is the visible reminder that we do need to take care of ourselves, it doesn’t happen automatically. There are programs designed in different facilities that if you swipe a card when you work out you can get a reduction for insurance premiums and things like that, we just don’t have that available at this point. We are supposed to be teaching our patients healthcare, but we have to practice it ourselves.”

Question: “How would the organization benefit from their employees participating in Workplace Wellness Programs?”

SG: “I think there are lots of benefits. One, the physical benefit of cardiovascular exercise and maintaining a healthy body is important. Personally I find that when I exercise it is good for my mental state, so I am on the exercise side, but other parts of wellness as far as stress management and stress reduction, along with weight management, proper nutrition all tie into that. If we are not healthy and feeling good ourselves, it is hard to take care of our patients and provide our best services to our patients and their families. We encounter them when they are stressed and in need, and if we are stressed and in need it is hard to be on top of our game all the time.”

Question: “Have you worked in an organization in the past that had an employee wellness program? If so what worked and what did not work?”

SG: “I’ve only worked for Smith Clinic my adult life. On one hand I would say that Smith Clinic has programs and things, and it’s up to each of us to engage at it. In the Health system it is not as strong as in Rochester, but there are opportunities and we could be better at it.”

Question: “What type of commitment can be made by leadership to initiate an employee Workplace Wellness Program?”

SG: “I think certainly the visible commitment to wellness is important, access to resources, being a role model or champion if we can get something going and leadership can participate in that. Continue to provide that type of support. I wish I could say that we could build a wellness center or something like that but we can’t swing that right now. It is just being a wellness champion like we are at the employee forums, reminding people to get plenty of sleep, laugh, and take care of themselves.”

### **Interview #7 GC**

Question: “Do you know what type of wellness program currently exists for the employees of Smith Clinic Health System Community X employees?”

GC: “So we do encourage walking, certainly we do those types of things. Since PH started 12 Habits of Highly Healthy People, I think there has been somewhat of an emphasis trying to get people to focus on that, whether it’s eating, sleeping, walking, exercising, and those types of things. I think we are trying to encourage that, I don’t know how good of a job we have done at that. I do see many more people taking their break; more are taking a walking type of a break, with weather getting nicer people are getting outside even. We do have a walking path that has been posted throughout facility so people know how far they have walked. There is a new wellness center under construction in CF, but that doesn’t help us in all of the facilities in need.

There is a wellness group that helps to promote wellness activities. We discuss things at huddle. Recently we discussed portion sizes and do discuss these different types of things at different times.

Question: “What is your stance on wellness for Smith Clinic Health System employees? What kind of support do you feel you get from top leadership from the organization in regards to the topic of employee wellness?”

GC: “I think we could do a better job at it. At the same time, CF had the opportunity for the wellness center; I am super impressed with senior leadership standing behind it. One thing we used there was development dollars for the project, so nothing was out of our operations budget. I think that senior leadership does try to talk about wellness types of activities, but could it be emphasized more? I think it could be. We do have stressful work and if we don’t address it, we are not going to be able to deal with our work as well.”

Question: How would an employee benefit from participating in a Workplace Wellness Program?

GC: “We have stressful work that we are dealing with. You are as good as you feel. If you are feeling good, you are going to be better for our patients and our staff and just have a general overall positive attitude. I do think it is important to promote healthy lifestyles and wellbeing in the organization because it will affect others.”

Question: “How would the organization benefit from their employees participating in Workplace Wellness Programs?”



GC: “If you feel healthy, you look healthy. Those are things to promote a positive image for our organization. If you look like you are tired and don’t want to be here and stressed out, all of the things that don’t promote a positive sense of well-being it is going to reflect on the care of our patients.”

Question: “Have you worked in an organization in the past that had an employee Workplace Wellness Program? If so what worked and what did not work?”

GC: “I think we have tried things at different organizations, like we gave everyone pedometers to walk and those types of things, or had fitness challenges. I can remember one time we put up a map and we went around the state of Minnesota by riding a bike or walking or running. You were given points and it was tracked by distance to move you around the map. We had an overall prize for the top team. Other things like at the cafeteria with portion control so employees could see how much they were eating and things like that.”

Question: “What type of commitment can be made by leadership to initiate an employee Workplace Wellness Program?”

GC: “Giving an organized support of a wellness group. I think we could give more support to those types of groups. Staff members that participate in their own challenges and we probably weren’t involved, but how can we as a broader organization support these things? I think if we could show more support to what employees want to do, maybe be more visible. I can’t think of anything more than that.”