

THE WELLNESS COUNCIL OF AMERICA PRESENTS



Case Study



The Best Care Is
SELF-CARE!

Travel Right

A WELCOA Self-Care Case Study


 The logo features the word "WELCOA" in a small, bold, sans-serif font with a yellow star above the letter "O". Below it, the words "Case Study" are written in a large, light gray, sans-serif font.


ABOUT **COLLEEN REILLY** MBA, MSM

President & Founder • Total Well-Being

Colleen Reilly is the president and founder of Total Well-Being, a holistic wellness provider that offers services for achieving physical, financial, personal and professional wellness goals. She develops wellness programming and benefits for clients, with the overarching goal of improving employee health and well-being. Ms. Reilly's consulting provides clients with strategic health and productivity goals and objectives, including HRA strategies. She has collaborated with over 60 Fortune 500 clients, helping them organize and implement effective wellness programs.



ABOUT **DAVID HUNNICUTT** PHD

CEO, WELCOA

Since his arrival at WELCOA in 1995, David Hunnicutt has interviewed hundreds of the most influential business and health leaders in America. Known for his ability to make complex issues easier to understand, David has a proven track record of asking the right questions and getting straight answers. As a result of his efforts, David's expert interviews have been widely-published and read by workplace wellness practitioners across the country.

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ABOUT **WELCOA**

Wellness Council of America (WELCOA) was established as a national not-for-profit organization in the mid 1980s through the efforts of a number of forward-thinking business and health leaders. Drawing on the vision originally set forth by William Kizer, Sr., Chairman Emeritus of Central States Indemnity, and WELCOA founding Directors that included Dr. Louis Sullivan, former Secretary of Health and Human Services, and Warren Buffett, Chairman of Berkshire Hathaway, WELCOA has helped influence the face of workplace wellness in the U.S.

Today, WELCOA has become one of the most respected resources for workplace wellness in America. With a membership in excess of 4,000 organizations, WELCOA is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of all working Americans. Located in America's heartland, WELCOA makes its national headquarters in one of America's healthiest business communities—Omaha, NE.

Introduction

What Is Self-Care?

- › Empowerment for managing a healthy lifestyle and knowing the importance of getting preventive care
- › Knowing when to treat common illness or minor injuries at home and when to get medical attention
- › Knowing how to communicate effectively with doctors and other caregivers
- › Being prepared to respond effectively in an emergency
- › Knowing how to achieve a higher quality of life even when you have a serious illness or an ongoing medical condition
- › Seeing yourself as the most important member of your health care team

Self-Care Programs And Workplace Wellness

Employees are bound to get sick or injured, even with the most rigorous wellness programs and preventive measures in place. The result can be costly to both the employer and employee in terms of unnecessary health care utilization and lost productivity.

To address this predicament, organizations of all kinds are rapidly integrating medical self-care initiatives to help employees and their families make informed choices concerning the prevention, detection, initial treatment and follow-up of minor, self-limiting medical conditions.

Within the context of any given workplace, a medical self-care initiative has the power to help employees not only manage their own health and health care, but to become better and more responsible consumers of health care as well.

With the economic realities of rising health care costs, increases in company-sponsored insurance premiums, and the over-utilization of medical visits, a well-designed, effectively-integrated, workplace-based medical self-care program can be the solution that American businesses need. Medical self-care programs are win-win—in that they help employers contain escalating costs and engage employees in the medical decision-making process while empowering them to get the best care possible.

Building An Effective Medical Self-Care Program In Three Simple Phases

Overall, a results-oriented medical self-care program will get your employees actively involved in their own health and acting as advocates for quality medical care. A workplace self-care program is most effective when it is implemented in three phases:

Phase I: Collecting And Contacting

The goal of phase one in a results-oriented medical self-care program should involve employees collecting their health information in one place and contacting a primary care provider. In the initial stages of a self-care program, it's important to have your employees maintain their personal health information in an organized, secure format. Offer them advice for securing a health care provider that will meet their needs.

Phase II: Recognizing And Reacting

In the second phase of a results-oriented self-care program, the goal is to help your employees learn how to recognize their medical symptoms and react appropriately. A self-care book or manual is usually the best tool to offer sound advice for the prevention, management, and appropriate treatment of some common health issues that your employees will face. Medical self-care manuals are designed to help your employees and their family members determine whether

their symptoms can be treated at home or if they should seek medical care. Teaching such skills helps your employees take better care of their health and reduces the costs associated with unnecessary health care visits.

Phase III: Preparing And Performing

The third phase of a self-care program should help your employees build the skills they need to be prepared for their interaction with the medical system. This will ensure that they receive the best care possible from the health system by making decisions as informed, medical consumers.

The Case Of Travel Right

The following case study focuses on a large travel agency that provides hospitality services across the globe. With 300 employees, this company implemented a medical self-care program that effectively improved employee health and well-being and saved the company a significant amount in unnecessary health care costs.

This organization's story paints a comprehensive picture of how to build an effective medical self care program in three simple phases.

Please note: In an effort to share this information anonymously, the employer documented in this case study will be referred to simply as "Travel Right."

Why Self-Care?

The self-care program was implemented in May of 2010, only a few months after the company had implemented a Consumer Driven Health Plan for the first time. The self-care program served as a critical educational piece to help Travel Right's employees become more informed health consumers—and

to help them better understand when to use the health care system and when to utilize self-care. The motivation for implementing the medical self-care program was primarily to help build an informed health consumer population by teaching them how to effectively use their new Consumer Driven Health Plan and make the most of a benefits package with high deductibles. In addition to being a good offering for employees and their families, the program provided the wellness team an ROI scenario that could be shared with leadership to ensure their continued support of the wellness program.

Getting Started...

It took about one week to adapt an existing program to Travel Right's employee population. The Wellness Team was able to get approval within a few weeks, not only from HR and Benefits, but from the key senior leaders and management. The actual implementation of the *Guide to Self-Care* program took an additional 2-3 weeks to ensure there was adequate time to communicate, educate, and properly promote the benefits of the program in a way that would ensure high participation and employee engagement.

Building Support For The Program

The program had visible senior level support from the beginning. The Wellness Coordinator and Director of HR met with the CEO prior to program implementation, where they not only asked for senior level support, but for VISIBLE senior level support. The CEO enthusiastically agreed; a key success factor to any wellness initiative. This specifically meant that the CEO would be championing the program through communications, attendance at the Lunch & Learns, providing work-time for employees to participate and even sharing his story of how he used the book. The CEO was onboard and very enthusiastic about supporting the vision and creating an empowered and healthy culture.

The CEO kick-started the program with a company-wide email blast that emphasized how he cared

about the employees, described the program, and reminded them of the WIFM. (NOTE: WIFM is the acronym for “What’s In It For ME?”...a very important message when communicating to busy employees). Up to this point in time, employees had rarely received a targeted email from their CEO, so when they did, they knew it was important and that they had better pay attention.

Setting The Tone From Up-High

This kick-off email blast set the tone of the program—that it was important, that leadership cared and that there was an expectation for all employees to make the time to participate and get engaged. Following his well-received email, all managers then made it clear that their employees were able to attend webinars and lunch & learns on work-time. This supportive measure made it even more clear how important the program was because not only did the invitation to participate come from the CEO, but their managers were allowing them to take *work-time* to participate. This was the first time the reservations and call center employees—who were on strict schedules and only allotted

very specific breaks—were able to use work-time for this type of activity. Many managers allotted 30 minutes of their 60-minute mandatory weekly meeting towards the self-care program. This type of communication strategy combined with leadership role-modeling and supportive actions from senior management clearly conveyed that the self-care initiative was important and all hands were on deck.

“WIFM is the acronym for “What’s In It For ME?”...a very important message when communicating to busy employees.



The Plan: How Did They Do It?

Program Design & Delivery

The delivery of quick, onsite webinars and integration into existing programs was an innovative approach for Travel Right. This allowed busy employees to attend meetings onsite over their lunch break, or if they were remote, they could dial into the webinar. The initial self-care meetings were all offered on company time. For remote call center employees, the initial self-care meeting was built into already existing meetings so there was no excuse not to participate. Due to the high number of remote and call center employees, the convenience of a webinar format and integration into already existing meetings removed the barriers. The program was perceived as hassle-free, which again, set a positive tone for all the upcoming wellness initiatives.

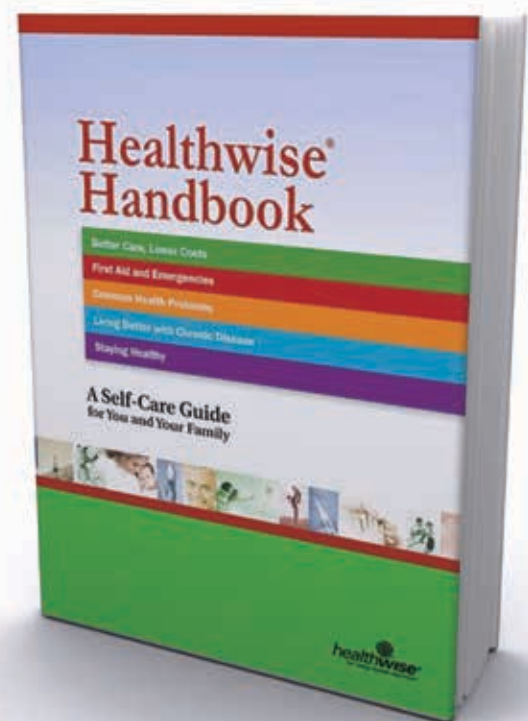
Travel Right's self-care program focused on the distribution and training of the *Healthwise Handbook*.

- › The *Healthwise Handbook* provides advice on when to seek medical help and when to practice self-care, and provides practical guidance on how to manage more than 200 of the most common and costly health conditions that account for the majority of sick days, doctor visits and workers' compensation claims. It is comprehensive and based on patient care experience.

The *Healthwise Handbook*, along with most self-care guides, was designed to help people:

- › Prevent illness
- › Identify health problems before they become serious, costly concerns

The executives showed concern about the health of their employees, which inspired employees to take ownership and care about their own health too.



- › Avoid unnecessary primary care and emergency room visits
- › Take a more active role and work in partnership with their health care provider

Travel Right employees participated in the following program components:

- › A pre-program survey (to gauge their knowledge of and familiarity with self-care)
- › A webinar, ‘lunch & learn,’ or departmental meeting that reviewed the book and asked participants to engage with the book and answer trivia questions
- › Weekly quizzes with prize incentives
- › A post-program survey

The distribution of the self-care guide was accomplished through:

- › Hand delivery to employees at onsite lunch & learns and departmental meetings
- › Desk-dropped to webinar attendants
- › Individual mailings to remote (sales) associates

Planning & Programming Strategies

The overall self-care program lasted for one year. The self-care book distribution, Lunch & Learn meetings, and surveys spanned over a month—and the company continued to promote the program and the concept of self-care through the rest of the year (as the topic is “evergreen”). The wellness coordinator communicated through the monthly newsletter and issued a wellness challenge on the company’s online portal. This wellness challenge was tied to wellness points that were linked to a quarterly raffle prize and a premium rebate. Additionally, because the program launched prior to a company health screening, the company was able to remind employees of the self-care program after the health screening. This reinforced the important message for employees to know their health status (numbers from the onsite screening) and utilize preventive care for improved health.

NOTE: *The Guide to Self-Care was the first wellness program Travel Right rolled out just after implementing the new high deductible health plan. The strategy behind this was to help their employees become informed health consumers that were empowered to take charge of their health. The program’s intent was to provide Travel Right employees with skills, strategies, tools and resources so that when they entered the health care system or thought they needed to, they were adequately equipped to get the best care possible or do self-care appropriately.*



Adding A Long-Range Plan

Upon the heels of starting the self-care program, the company realized they needed a larger, population-wide strategy that spanned more than just a one-time self-care program. So, they implemented a robust three-year wellness strategy that included an annual health screening and assessment, an e-health portal, wellness challenges, and incentives tied to participation and engagement. A key component of that long-term strategy was to implement a wellness points program based on employee participation and engagement—through which an associate could earn wellness points that would accumulate towards incentives.

Specifically, one of the challenges for which employees could earn points was the “Self-Care Book Challenge.” The employees were challenged to open the book on a monthly basis and use it either for themselves or their family—and then share their story with the Wellness Team. If they engaged in this challenge, employees would earn points that accumulated towards a quarterly raffle prize and a benefit-linked incentive. This kept the employees engaged in their own health status, helped to boost their confidence in making personal health and medical decisions, and served as a reminder to keep using the self-care book, a robust and reliable resource.

This wellness strategy and wellness challenge provided the company an avenue to educate employees that their positive lifestyle choices *did* positively impact their health care costs—and Travel Right was able to demonstrate this to employees through dollars saved on their health care premiums.

The tailored CHIP program resulted in reduction in cardiovascular conditions caused/exacerbated by poor lifestyle habits.



Launching The Self-Care Program

As with any program, Travel Right's Wellness Team first designed a project plan. The team defined the program and established its goals, plans, incentives, materials, marketing and communications, and the methods of evaluation.

Travel Right's Wellness Teams Established the Following Goals to Help Them Launch a Targeted Program:

› GOAL A

To deliver the Healthwise Handbook to 100% of eligible associates.

› GOAL B

100+ associates will participate in a combination of onsite seminars and webinars.

Note: *The combination of onsite seminars (around lunchtime) and webinars was especially helpful for this group of employees. The company's workforce is largely made up of a reservations call center, remote sales people, and the rest are operations and management positions. The webinars catered towards the remote sales people, and operations/management employees were able to attend the onsite seminars on company time.*

› GOAL C

100+ associates will complete the initial survey.

› GOAL D

90% of initial survey respondents will agree that the self-care guide will be useful to them and their family members.

A KEY TO SUCCESS: Rallying The Reservations Staff

The Travel Right reservations center was also able to participate in the self-care program on company time, which was very unique for this department (typically they are always on the clock and limited to a strict schedule). The reservations center management, however, saw just how important this self-care program was to their employees and the overall company, so they allotted 30 minutes of their 60 minute monthly meeting towards a self-care seminar. This sent a message to the reservations center, and they recognized the program as important; something that deserved to take up half of their monthly meeting agenda. This precedent set the tone for all future wellness programs, as the self-care program was one of the first company-wide wellness programs this company implemented.



Timelines & Action Items:

To deliver a comprehensive self-care program, all the moving parts had to be nailed down and delivered in a sequential manner. Here is an overview of key steps that Travel Right's Wellness Team took to set its medical self-care program in motion:

Email from the CEO

The CEO sent an email blast to all employees. This was the first email letter employees had ever received from the CEO regarding how he cared about their health. In addition to its altruistic message, this letter also explained the details of the program, how to get involved and what was in it for the employee—in terms of both better health and extrinsic incentives.

NOTE: *This letter generated a lot of positive “water cooler” talk and got people excited since the CEO was excited.*

Books delivered

The self-care guides were handed out during onsite meetings. Those that attended webinars received them prior to their webinar. Remote and sales associates received them via mail. Every employee was eligible to receive a guide, and was strongly encouraged to take it home and share it with their spouses and family members. To further encourage this, the company purchased additional books and left them in key locations at the building (i.e. break rooms and conference rooms) so that employees could review the guide both at work, and most importantly, at home with their family.

NOTE: *Along with the CEO's letter, the book was seen by employees as a gift to them and thus received VERY positively.*

Messages that built momentum

Regular email blasts were sent out by the wellness coordinator to continue the momentum the CEO started through his original invitation and to encourage employees to attend a lunch & learn. These communications always contained the messages: 1) the company cares; 2) how to get started in the program; 3) what's in it for the employee—both better health and fun prizes; and 4) the program was being offered on company time for convenience. The fact that employees were able to participate on company time broke down a key barrier to the wellness program—time—and reinforced just how important wellness is to the company and the overall business strategy.

Employee engagement

The communication strategy took a multimodal approach with the online emails, flyers and print materials, but another critical component was word of mouth. The Wellness & Safety Committee reminded their co-workers about the program for the entire promotion timeframe and during the actual sessions in May of 2010. This grass-roots effort was the final key in getting high participation and maintaining enthusiasm for what could be considered a “dry” program. Specifically, the wellness committee is a diagonal slice—or representative of all departments at the organization—including members from the reservations center, HR, IT, and management. Each committee member spoke face-to-face with their co-workers, and attended regular meetings where they discussed and educated their colleagues about the program. This personal, colleague-to-colleague “nudge” provided positive peer pressure that boosted employee attendance at the onsite, self-care Lunch & Learns.

Educational events

Lunch & Learns were held on 5/5, 5/6, 5/13, and 5/20 Webinars were held on 5/11, 5/18, and 5/25

Webinars were designed to give the remote employees (off-site employees such as cruise conductors, travel guides, sales associates, and others outside the office) a similar learning experience with the self-care guide. Unlike a traditional webinar with a presenter talking at the population, these webinars were highly interactive. During the session, the presenter not only used a PowerPoint deck, but also used online quizzes and polling to get people to interact and start talking and asking questions. During the Question & Answer portion, the chat function was critical in getting people to participate. At one time there was even a contest on the webinar to see who could be the fastest to find a remedy to a health condition and post the page number where they found it. The winning time was 10 seconds, which got a round of applause and heightened the sense of urgency and attention of the group.

(Keep in mind the self-care books were mailed to all remote associates so they had them in time for the webinars. The “gift” and letter from the CEO was not only another way of reaching out and communicating with remote staff, but it also reminded them that they were part of the corporate family and deeply cared about. Typically the wellness program had not extended to the remote employees.)

A pre-program survey

The purpose of the pre-program survey was to gauge employee knowledge level and familiarity with self-care. The pre-program survey was sent out by the company’s wellness coordinator. The intent was to get a baseline of the employees’ knowledge and

 This personal, colleague-to-colleague “nudge” provided positive peer pressure that boosted employee attendance.



familiarity with self-care prior to the program. The coordinator sent this out at the end of April 2010, a month before the official program launch in May of 2010.

Newsletter plugs & quarterly challenges

Travel Right's Wellness Team promoted the *Healthwise Handbook* and the self-care program through monthly newsletter articles that included quarterly wellness challenges (with points) for utilizing the handbook. The newsletter was a company tradition published by the benefits department. Over time, the focus of the newsletter changed from providing purely transactional information to more transformational information on building a culture of health. This meant that the newsletter gradually allocated nearly 2/3 of its content to wellness—and more specifically, to the power of behavior change and becoming an informed health consumer.

Each issue of the newsletter had a wellness theme such as nutrition, healthy holidays, safety in the workplace, seasonal flu, etc.), but during the late spring and early summer the theme was “The Power of Self-Care,” and the articles inspired and educated employees on what they could do to personally improve their health. These articles also provided tips for self-care treatment at home and when to seek outside care. It always indicated specific pages of the *Healthwise Handbook*, with the intention of encouraging employees to refer to the book on at least a monthly basis.

In addition to newsletter articles on the importance of self-care, there were benefits articles on the high deductible health plan linked to the *Healthwise Handbook*. This helped employees make the correlation to the importance of being an informed health consumer and using their health plan effectively.



This type of multimodal approach made the program impossible to ignore.

Communications campaign

The self-care program was communicated using a multimodal approach that used various modes (print, online, verbal) and a variety of methods such as company-wide emails, flyers and posters, as well as face-to-face communications with employees. Travel Right utilized their marketing team to create flyers and posters; the program was truly a company-wide effort. The initial launch came from the top leader, the CEO, which set the tone of the importance of the program. The message cascaded out through the company's wellness coordinator and was then carried throughout the organization by the wellness committee members. This face to face “championing” of the program really kept the momentum of the program alive and inspired and motivated employees to attend the meetings.

After the self-care meetings, employees were reminded through challenges on the online e-health portal to use the book and to get their annual preventive visits.

This type of multimodal approach made the program impossible to ignore and removed the possibility of employees deleting an email invitation and being “unaware.” This was a big initiative and Travel Right's communication efforts and strategy supported that. The program was extremely visible to the employees—so they began to care too.

The Particulars: Key Components

The next section of the case study takes a look at specific elements that were involved in delivering Travel Right's self-care campaign. The following details or "particulars" were the key components for program implementation.

Selecting A Guide To Self-Care

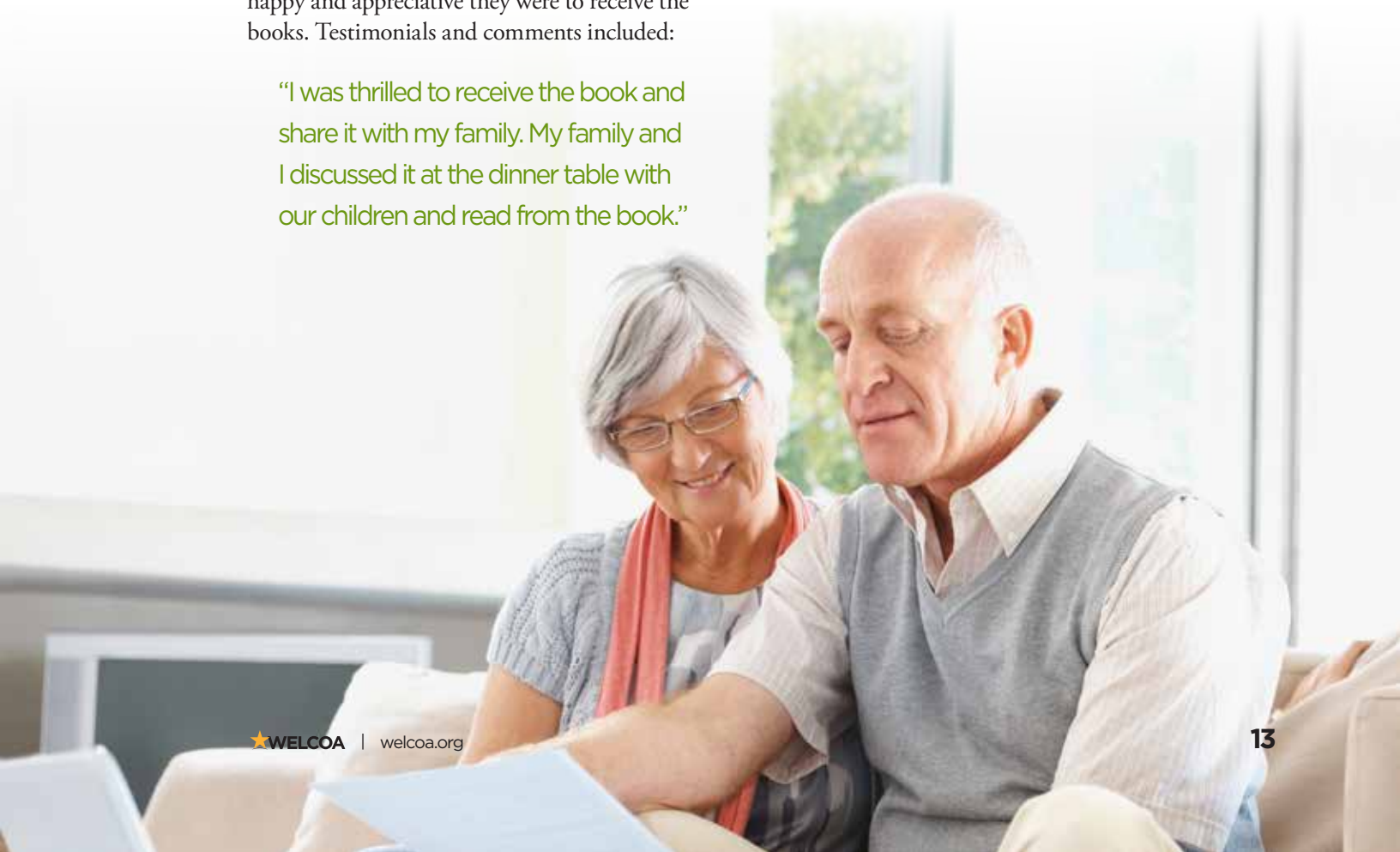
The *Healthwise Handbook* was used because the company's health care plan provided these at a subsidized cost. In addition, the book is known as a comprehensive, well organized, and well-respected guide. Employees were very excited to receive the book and responded extremely positively. Through discussion in the onsite seminars and messages on the webinars, employees communicated just how happy and appreciative they were to receive the books. Testimonials and comments included:

"I was thrilled to receive the book and share it with my family. My family and I discussed it at the dinner table with our children and read from the book."

Encouraging Employees To Take The Book Home

Spouses were not incentivized to participate in the program. However, employees were strongly encouraged to take the book home and share it with a spouse or family member. In fact, to encourage taking the book home and not leave it at work, the company had extra books in break rooms and key areas so that employees could have access to it both at work and at home. Employees reported that their spouses really enjoyed the book as well.

"I brought the book home to peruse in the evening. Before I could open it, my husband had snatched it—I found him reading it on our living room couch!"



Incentives & Prizes Involved

The actual book was the first incentive given for participating in the program. The book was very well received as employees rarely received presents, gifts, or prizes from the company. Along with the kick-off letter from the CEO, the book made it clear that the company truly cared about their well-being.

Overall, four types of incentives were tied to Travel Right's self-care program:

#1 The Healthwise Handbook

The self-care guide was given to all participants, and because employees receive so few gifts and incentives, this book was received very positively and enthusiastically.

#2 Sunscreen, toothbrush and other self-care aides

These prizes were given for participation during the meetings.

#3 High-end first aid kits, blood pressure cuffs and other high-end self-care aides

These prizes were given for employee engagement demonstrated during the utilization quizzes.

#4 Wellness points tied to benefits

Employees were encouraged to engage in quarterly wellness challenges to earn points for a quarterly prize drawing and benefits-linked incentive such as a premium rebate. This not only motivated participation, but it helped connect the dots that positive healthy lifestyle choices can help with managing one's health and health care costs.

Self-Care Scenarios

Participants who attended the self-care trainings received sunscreen, lip balm, toothbrushes and other small tokens for actively participating during the meetings and answering questions that required them to open their self-care book. The employees that

could find and share the answers the quickest were rewarded during the meeting. This format prompted a lot of discussion and made the meetings interactive.

The questions provided employees with scenarios (i.e. Employees were given a description of someone with appendicitis symptoms, and asked "Where would you look in the book? What does the book say? Do you need to seek outside care?").

Travel Right established goals for helping their employees become informed health consumers. These goals aligned with their benefits strategy while the company was implementing a high deductible health plan.



Here are a few of the scenarios that were used during the onsite meetings and webinars to get employees engaged. These trainings helped employees realize the benefits of knowing how to use their self-care guides:

Your back hurts and you are considering spending the day in bed. Should you spend the day in bed to rest your back?

- What page did you find the correct information on?
- Where did you first begin to look-up information on this scenario?
- What self-care tips does the book suggest?
- When would you know to seek medical attention or just continue to stay in bed?

Your daughter has been hit in the nose with a softball. Looks like a simple nosebleed. Should you apply ice or not or take her to the emergency room?

- What page did you find the correct information on?
- Where did you first begin to look-up information on this scenario?
- What self-care tips does the book suggest?
- When would you know to seek medical attention?

Your mother always gave you soda crackers when you had an upset stomach. Your toddler was vomiting a few hours ago, but her stomach seems to be settling now. Is it okay to offer her soda crackers or should you take her to the doctor?

The participants who completed the utilization quizzes were entered into raffles for a blood pressure

cuff, ear thermometer, and other self-care related prizes (such as high-end first-aid kits). Self-Care Challenges were also released throughout the year with wellness points tied to them. The challenge reminded employees to utilize the book, and rewarded them with points for doing so. Employees were to aim for earning 2500 wellness points per quarter, which would make them eligible for a quarterly prize raffle. (Note: Since 2010, the wellness strategy has grown to link these 2500 points—which are still allotted to practicing self-care—to a premium rebate).

Data Collection & Evaluation

Travel Right's Wellness Team collected data from a pre-program survey. Due to poor participation in the utilization quizzes, they were not able to implement a post-survey as the sample size was not representative.

This robust and integrated approach helped employees feel like they could go to one source and get self-care information.



Components, Costs & Integration

The company was able to purchase the *Healthwise Handbook* through their health care plan carrier.

(Note: In general, employers may sometimes have opportunities to ask their health care plan for help with a self-care book or to donate resources towards a program. In Travel Right's case, their health care plan provider subsidized the cost of the books—as this was the first wellness initiative and the health care plan wanted to be supportive.)

The self-care program also served as a teaching-moment to communicate the health plan's offerings to employees (i.e. The Nurse Line), which helped to further instill the importance of becoming informed health consumers. Since the health care plan donated the books, all the content was similar to what an employee would find online in a health portal that was also offered by the health plan. In addition, the books were customized to match the nursesline, which promoted the telephonic self-care resource that employees had available to them as well. This robust and integrated approach helped employees feel like they could go to one source and get self-care information online, paper and telephonically depending on their needs and learning style.

- **Contest prizes: \$300**
(First Aid Kits, other tokens, fun raffle prizes)
- **TOTAL SPENT: \$300**

The Payoff: Results Of The Program

This section contains program results and outcomes from Travel Right's self-care program. The payoff for a self-care program is often measured by how positively it impacts peoples' lives—in addition to the ROI and health care cost-savings such programs can produce.

Participation Results

Participation in the Travel Right self-care campaign was defined as attendance at the initial onsite meetings (or remote webinars). A total of 159 participants, which was over half of the population (or 53%) attended either a Webinar, Lunch & Learn, or the initial presentation on the *Healthwise Handbook*.

Engagement, however, was tracked by the number of employees completing the utilization quizzes at follow-up meetings—which ended up being a smaller, 8-10% of the initial 159 participants.

(Note: attendance at the follow-up meetings was not as carefully tracked—and this lower rate may reflect different people coming on different days). According to the data, overall participation was high with over half of the population attending the onsite meetings, but only 10% of those employees remained engaged in the program after the initial meeting.)

SURVEY SAYS:

89 people completed Travel Right's pre-program survey. Of those individuals:

- ✓ 66% felt the need to have a self-care book
- ✓ 70% believed that the book would help them improve the quality of self-care at home and make better decisions regarding doctor visits
- ✓ 94% planned to attend a Self-Care Webinar or Lunch & Learn

Boosting Engagement

Due to this poor engagement in the program (as measured by the utilization quiz meetings), the wellness coordinator implemented additional strategies to keep the self-care book alive and to constantly remind employees of the “power of being an informed health consumer.”

The two key strategies used to boost engagement were:

- 1 adding a newsletter article to continue the education and awareness of employees
- 2 adding a “Self-Care Challenge” where employees could get instant recognition and rewards for using the self-care guide.

PROCESS IMPROVEMENT: Travel Right determined that one reason for low engagement numbers was that the utilization quizzes were all paper-based. Travel Right’s Wellness Team discovered that online wellness programs work much more effectively for getting their employees on board because employees find them more engaging and hassle-free. Promoting self-care is a timeless wellness program that the company will likely implement again, but the next time it is offered, Travel Right will utilize the online challenge tool to make the program more engaging and increase participation numbers.

Relieving Tension

The self-care program supported Travel Right’s unveiling of a new high deductible health care plan. It helped to remove the high tension and stress surrounding the initial implementation of the high deductible wasn’t sitting well with employees. This was part of the overall strategy as it supported the mission of helping Travel Right’s employees become empowered and act as better advocates for their own

health. Self-care was implemented because this type of program requires individuals to understand how to use the health care system appropriately—and this aspect was the key educational component of Travel Right’s health plan launch. The self-care program helped people understand how they can save money and get better care, which is a critical message to share with a the introduction of a high deductible health plan.

Travel Right associates realized that with the new high deductible health plan they were responsible for first dollar of their health care costs. The self-care program equipped them with the confidence and the skill set to look in a reference book and determine if they needed to go to the doctor or emergency room (and pay first dollar), or if their situation could it be remedied via self-care. This helped employees realize the importance of their role as a health care consumer—reinforcing that they could and should seek medical care when they need it, but that, when appropriate, they also have tools and resources to help them manage and care for their health independently.

The self-care program helped people understand how they can save money and get better care, which is a critical message to share with a the introduction of a high deductible health plan.

Tangible Results

Participation in the High Deductible Health Plan was low the first year, however enrollment did increase after the self-care program was implemented. In year 1 (2010) of the HDHP, prior to implementation of the self-care program, enrollment was 8% of the combined medical coverage. In year two (2011), after the self-care program was implemented, enrollment in the HDHP rose to 13%.

In addition to the key metrics above, this program was one of the first core wellness initiatives this organization offered. In having senior level support, a multimodal communication plan and an incentive strategy, Travel Right's Wellness Team was able to create a framework for building a solid culture of health at the company. The fact that the organization allowed employees (even the call center) to participate on company time made its workers realize just how important wellness was to the overall business strategy. This program set the tone for all future wellness initiatives.



TRAVEL RIGHT'S Keys To Self-Care Success

#1 Having Visible Senior Level Support

Even with self-care as one of the first programs, it was because of the senior level support that employees came to see wellness as a business initiative and not just another activity from HR/Benefits. Employees could see that the company really cared about their overall well-being, which made them feel good, increased morale, and promoted engagement in the self-care program as well as additional wellness programs and challenges thereafter.

#2 Solid Delivery Of The Program

The delivery of quick onsite webinars and integration into existing programs was innovative. It allowed busy employees to attend meetings onsite over their lunch break or if they were remote they could dial into the webinar—and it was all offered on

company time. For those who were call center employees, the self-care presentations were built into already existing meetings, so there was no excuse not to participate.

#3 The Communication Strategy

The multimodal communication strategy took the age old approach of three different modes—and repeated the message at least seven different times through the following communication outlets:

- **Print**—multiple flyers, posters, table tents; all communications were customized and printed with the wellness logo for consistency
- **Online**—emails from leaders, reminder emails from wellness coordinator
- **Face to Face**—managers discussed and promoted self-care at established meetings; wellness champions shared information and promotions with their colleagues; employees' word-of-mouth 'water cooler' talk

#4 Tiered Incentive Strategy (ongoing and multi-level)

- **Incentive #1:** the self-care guide for participants
- **Incentive #2:** sunscreen, toothbrush and other self-care aides for participation during the meetings
- **Incentive #3:** high-end first aid kits, blood pressure cuffs and other high-end self-care aides for engagement in the utilization quizzes
- **Incentive #4:** wellness points that accumulated to benefits-linked incentives

#5 Building A Culture Of Health

This program was the first wellness initiative for Travel Right, and as such, helped to establish best practices for getting senior leadership involved. Having a well-planned program design—with strategies for multimodal communications and integrated incentives—gave the company a strong foundation for building their culture of wellness.

Employee Testimonials From Travel Right's Self-Care Campaign:

"This book is awesome! I can think of so many times it would have helped me over the past year."

-LUNCH-N-LEARN ATTENDEE

"Thank you for offering so many webinar options. It got me to open the book—this book is great!"

-ATTENDEE FROM 5/25 WEBINAR

"My family absolutely loves this book. My husband sat for two hours last night reading it."

-DEPARTMENTAL MEETING ATTENDEE

"I brought the book home to peruse in the evening. Before I could open it, my husband had snatched—I found him reading it on our living room couch!"

-TRAVEL RIGHT EMPLOYEE

"This is so great! I have two young children and often wonder when to visit the doctor; this will help me be more confident in my decisions."

-TRAVEL RIGHT EMPLOYEE

"I keep this book in my car—that way, if I ever have a question when I am not at home with my other books and computer; I have this as a reference guide. It makes me feel secure and I appreciate that the company cares about us as much as they do."

-TRAVEL RIGHT EMPLOYEE

Challenges & Hindsight

What made this company's program successful was the visible senior leadership support and tiered incentive strategy. These two components are critical for any wellness program to be successful. However, Travel Right felt its initial program had much room for improvement and their Wellness Team Leader provided the following feedback:

- › The self-care program was implemented right after the high deductible health plan was implemented. With such poor enrollment in the HDHP, the self-care program was a key moment to educate employees on the HDHP and show them that it is really a positive, and not 'scary'. While the program did educate on the importance of asking the right questions and being an informed health consumer, it did not specifically discuss the HDHP and connect the dots outright.

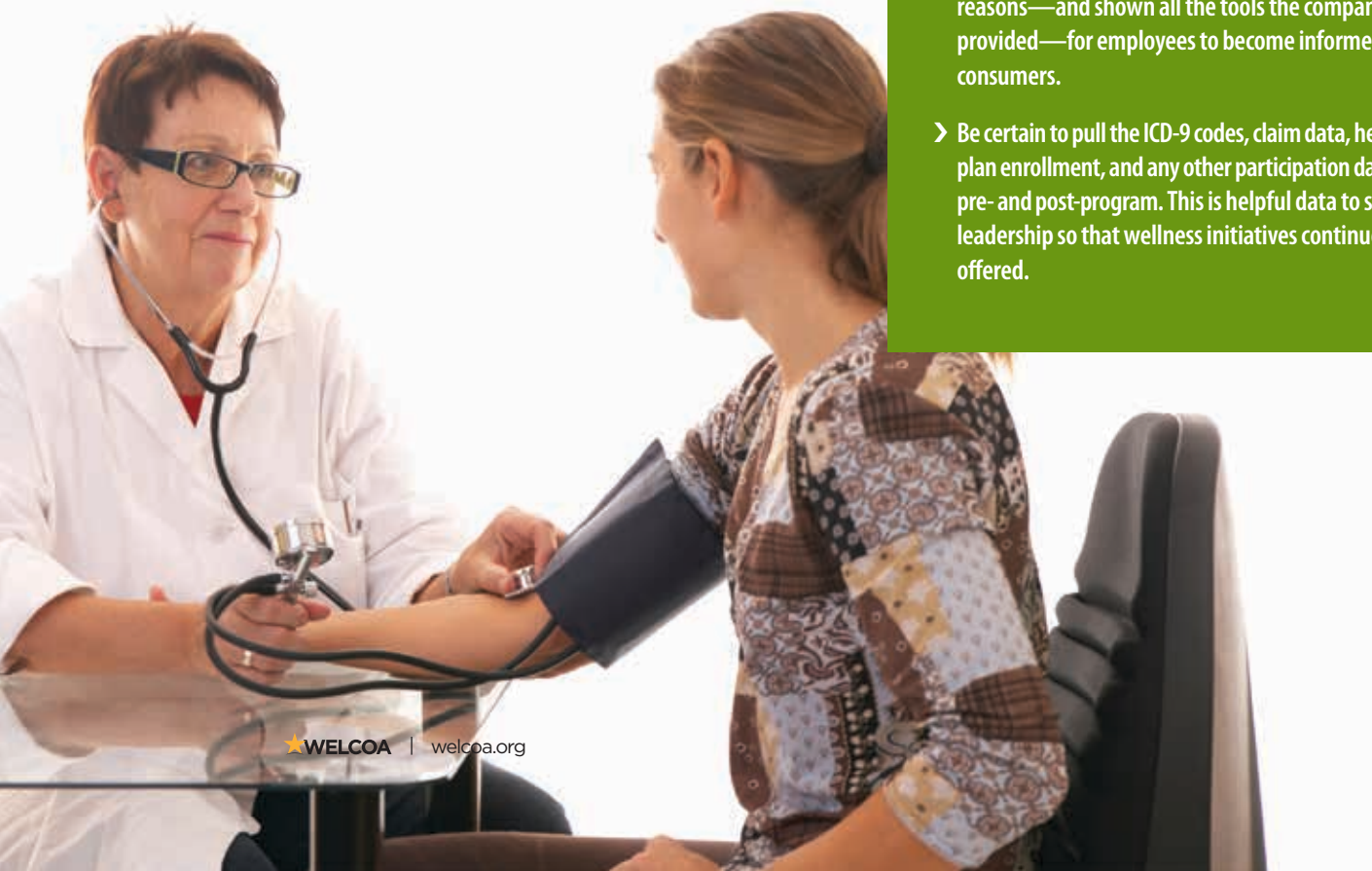


- › The program was implemented just 2 ½ months prior to the onsite health screening. If we had the chance to change this we would have implemented this self-care program after the health screening.
- › We would have utilized the online health portal to implement the self-care utilization surveys via an online challenge. Travel Right employees responded well to online and computer-based wellness programming but not as well to the paper surveys.
- › We would have pulled the ICD-9 codes pre-and post- program to show leadership the impact long past the initial program implementation. [SCCS](#)

TIPS FOR PRACTITIONERS

Here are three pieces of advice from Travel Right's Wellness Team concerning the design and implementation of a results-oriented, medical self-care program:

- › Engage senior leadership support. Visible senior leadership support (not the passive approval of a key leader) makes a wellness program successful. The visible leadership support makes the wellness program a business initiative, not just a program pushed out of HR.
- › Link the program to the overarching benefits and wellness strategy. Travel Right's self-care program came right on the heels of the implementation of a high deductible health plan and just before an onsite health screening. In an ideal world, the program would have been implemented after the onsite health screening. This program would have been much more successful had the Wellness Team explicitly connected the dots between the HDHP, self-care program, and onsite screening. This would have emphasized the reasons—and shown all the tools the company provided—for employees to become informed health consumers.
- › Be certain to pull the ICD-9 codes, claim data, health plan enrollment, and any other participation data pre- and post-program. This is helpful data to show to leadership so that wellness initiatives continue to be offered.





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