THE NATIONAL WORKPLACE WELLNESS GUIDELINES

HEALTHY AND SAFE EMPLOYEES ADVISORY TASKFORCE

State of Qatar
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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Doha, Qatar

CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

BMI	-	Body mass Index
FIFA	-	Fédération Internationale de Football Association
HCW	-	Health Care Workers
HSE	-	Health, Safety & Environment Dept
H.R.	-	Human resources
HSED	-	Health, Safety & Environment
MoPH		Ministry of Public Health
NCD	-	Non-communicable Diseases
OH	-	Occupational Health
T2DM	-	Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus
ToR	-	Terms of Reference
U.N.	-	United Nations
WHO	-	World Health Organization
WHP	-	Workplace Health Program

FOREWORD

The National Health Strategy 2018-2022 is a crucial step in the right direction which focusses on human development as one of the major criteria towards achieving the Qatar National Vision 2030. As part of this Health Strategy, under the directions and guidance of HE The Prime Minister of Qatar and the leadership of HE The Minister of Health, there are several Sub Task Groups working towards making this National Health Strategy a reality.

One of these Sub tasks groups is The Sub task group HE 05 which is focusing on establishing effective workplace wellness programs and this document elucidates the basic wor of workplace wellness programs – what is it, why is it important, what are the benefits and how it could be achieved. It is a step by step guide on workplace wellness.

It is hoped that these guidelines would invigorate and enthuse the thousands of people who work in Qatar and we sincerely to wish these guidelines are implemented at workplace for the benefit and wellness of the people in Qatar.

AUTHORS

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GENERAL AIM & BACKGROUND

The National Workplace Wellness Guidelines is one of seven projects led by the Healthy and Safe Employees Advisory Task Force. Healthy, motivated employees are essential to the workplace and can positively impact the national economy and development.

The National Workplace Wellness Guidelines intend to serve as a guide for employers and entities in Qatar wishing to establish effective workplace programs that sustain and improve workers' healthy lifestyles. It will help develop a general understanding of what constitutes an integrated approach to wellness programs at the workplace and identify strategies for integrating programs and resources for promoting programs that address workers' health in a holistic approach.

The document specifies key components and elements of a workplace wellness program. It offers senior management and entity leaders a means to choose a wellness program that meets their employees' needs and matches what services they can offer given their time and resources.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Definitions

Workplace wellness programs are employer-provided efforts to «enhance awareness, change behavior, and create environments that support good health practices.

A coordinated and comprehensive set of wellness strategies are implemented at the worksite that includes programs, policies, benefits, environmental supports, and links to the surrounding community designed to encourage the health and safety of all employees'.

A healthy workplace reflects today's approach, which acknowledges the multiple determinants of employee health, and is more holistic and integrative, addressing individual and organizational factors.

The combined efforts of employers, employees, and society to enhance workers' health and wellbeing are achieved by improving the work organization and the working environment, promoting employees' active participation in health activities, and encouraging personal development.

1.2. Importance and benefits Workplace Wellness Programs

A 2014 Towers Watson survey of 892 employers in 15 countries found a healthy workforce is becoming a global priority for employers.

A workplace wellness program can improve health outcomes and create a workplace culture and environment that promotes health and wellbeing. Indeed, workplace wellness takes advantage of employers' access to employees at an age when interventions can still change their long-term health trajectory, especially as employees spend a considerable part of their day in work or work-related activities.

In the same way, workplaces and many occupational structures can negatively affect physical and mental wellbeing: factors such as psychosocial work-related stress, shift work, and excessive physical workload can potentially affect employees' behaviors, such as smoking and lack of physical activity. Thus, it is the leadership's role to ensure the workplace environment itself supports these choices and mitigates the stressors that counter wellbeing at work.

One understudied potential outcome of wellness programs is improved safety records in the workplace, given enhanced employee health and wellbeing. Healthy employees should have an increased ability to focus on the task at hand and fewer risk factors for injury than unhealthy employees. If employees are physically and mentally healthy, their attention to detail should also be increased when working. Without the stress and limitations imposed by sickness, healthy employees should be positioned to contribute more to the organization's valued outcomes. The relationship between worker health and safety has been documented in the literature.

At the organization level, employees who are given greater ability to handle stress and fatigue and are physically healthier can be more productive by working efficiently and consistently throughout the entire workday. Increased worker productivity is an associated benefit of wellness programs often sought by employers.

A study conducted in the United Kingdom has highlighted that employees involved in corporate fitness programs take five sick days less per annum than colleagues, not on a fitness plan. At Nordion (a medical supply company based in Ontario, the Annual sick days are four days per employee, whereas the Canadian average is eight days. At B.C. Hydro (a power company), an internal cost-benefit analysis after a ten-year program, showed a saving of 3$ for every dollar spent (23). In the U.K., the Health Development Agency made a review of workplace wellness program evidence and found that comprehensive programs combining screening and risk assessment with a choice of educational programs and environmental changes have been effective.

QATAR SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS
QATAR BASELINE SURVEY

The Healthy and safe Employees Advisory taskforce conducted a baseline survey in 2018 to assess Qatar's current workplace wellness programs. Health Promotion and Wellness programs refer to workplace wellness programs in the survey.

The survey received responses from 48 entities, of which 37 were from the government sector, and 11 were from the semi-government sector.

The organizations were asked if they had any workplace wellness programs. Out of the respondents, 33% had one, while another 17% responded that similar programs were being developed within the respective organizations (Table 1). Furthermore, 29% did not have any workplace programs, and another 21% were not sure whether such programs existed within their organizations (Table 1).

More Large organizations had a workplace HPW program or were developing one than small entities (Table 1).

TABLE 1: ORGANIZATIONS WITH WORKPLACE WELLNESS PROGRAM, BY SECTOR AND ENTITY SIZE

Status	Government		Semi-Government		Less than 250		250 or More		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
YES	12	32%	4	36%	3	20%	11	37%	16	33%
BEING DEVELOPED (NOT YET IMPLEMENTED)	5	14%	3	27%	2	13%	6	20%	8	17%
NO	5	14%	3	27%	2	13%	6	20%	8	17%
NOT SURE	11	30%	3	27%	6	40%	8	27%	14	29%
TOTAL	37	100%	11	100%	15	100%	30	100%	48	100%

Note: %6 (n=3) did not report workforce data, therefore, unable to classify them by entity size.

The organizations were asked about the components included in their wellness or general health programs. The survey identified six components: physical activity, nutrition, health promotion, mental health, tobacco use, and screening. Out of the respondents, 54% of the entities covered 3-5 of these six components, 25% of the entities covered 1-2 components, whereas another 21% covered all six elements.

The most common aspect of being covered was physical activity (46%), followed by nutrition (44%) and health promotion (44%) (Figure 1), whereas the areas least focused on were screening (21%) and tobacco use (27%) (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Elements Included in Organization Wellness/General Health Program (Preliminary Findings), Overall
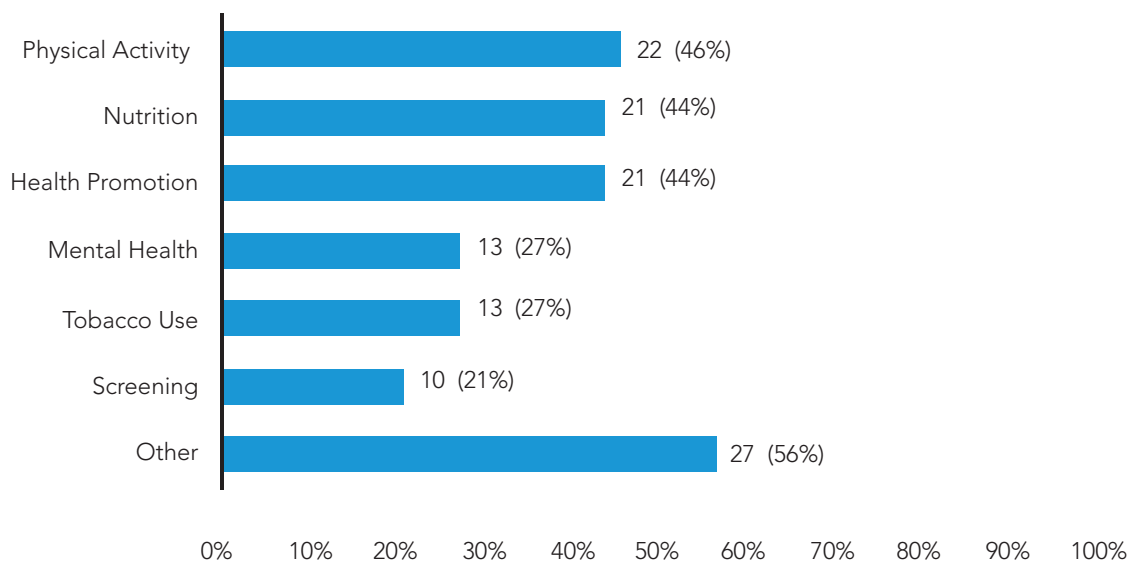
The survey included several questions to examine how entities promote healthy behavior, whether companies communicate with employees frequently, how healthy eating and physical activity were encouraged, and if counseling was offered for any other health risks.

Most of the organizations (50%) did not communicate with employees about workplace HPW and lifestyle behaviors, whereas only 31% shared with employees on the subject. Another 19% were in the process of establishing communication with the employees on HPW (Table 2). This trend was similar within both the government and semi-Government sectors and small and Large entities (Table 2). Nevertheless, the most striking observation was that 4/5ths of the smaller companies were not communicating with employees about workplace HPW and lifestyle behaviors (Table 2).

TABLE 2: ORGANIZATIONS COMMUNICATING WITH EMPLOYEES ABOUT WORKPLACE HPW AND LIFESTYLE BEHAVIORS, BY SECTOR AND ENTITY SIZE

Status	Government		Semi-Government		Less than 250		250 or More		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
YES	11	30%	4	36%	3	20%	11	37%	15	31%
BEING ESTABLISHED (NOT IMPLEMENTED YET)	6	16%	3	27%	0	0%	8	27%	9	19%
NO	11	30%	4	36%	12	80%	11	37%	24	50%
TOTAL	37	100%	11	100%	15	100%	30	100%	48	100%

Note: %6 (n=3) did not report workforce data, therefore, unable to classify them by entity size

Figure 2: Method of Promoting Healthy Food Options in Workplace Cafeteria/Canteen, Overall
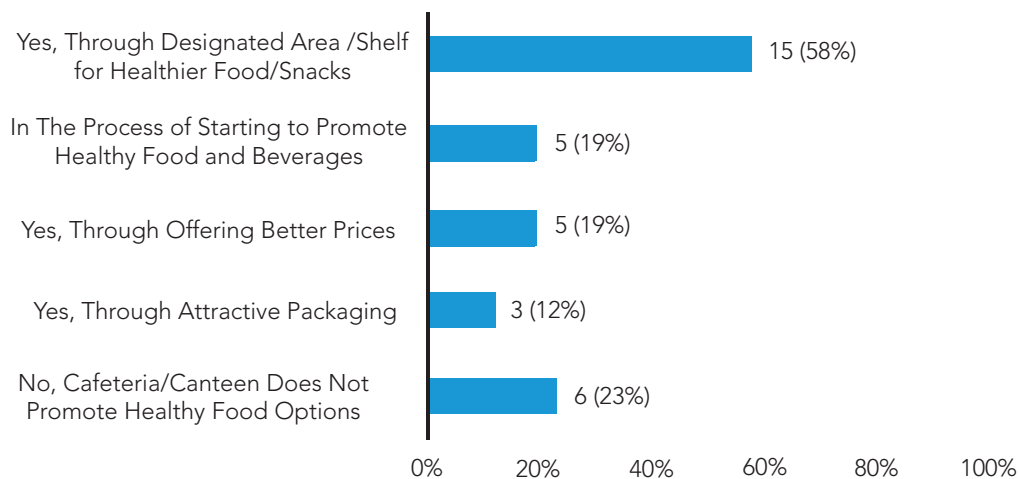
Note: As a percentage of those who offered healthy food and beverages choices at workplace cafeteria/canteen/events

PROMOTING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Out of the respondents, 50% either provided onsite physical activity facilities to employees or were in the process of developing such facilities (Table 3). Another 50% did not offer onsite physical activity facilities to employees (Table 3). Within the sectors, this trend seemed to be the same (Table 3). However, smaller entities did not provide on-site physical activity facilities (Table 3)

TABLE 3: ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING ON-SITE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FACILITIES TO EMPLOYEES, BY SECTOR AND ENTITY SIZE

Status	Government		Semi-Government		Less than 250		250 or More		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
YES	15	41%	5	45%	4	27%	14	47%	20	42%
BEING ESTABLISHED (NOT IMPLEMENTED YET)	3	8%	1	9%	0	0%	3	10%	4	8%
NO	19	51%	5	45%	11	73%	13	43%	24	50%
TOTAL	37	100%	11	100%	15	100%	30	100%	48	100%

Note: %6 (n=3) did not report workforce data, therefore, unable to classify them by entity size

DISCOURAGING SMOKING

The organizations were asked if they took measures to discourage smoking among employees, specifically, if smoking was banned within the organization premises. A majority (44%) responded that smoking was prohibited at all times within the workplace building, and another 8% banned smoking in the organization premises, such as the parking lots (Figure 3). Furthermore, 38% responded that although there was no smoking ban within the organization, it was only allowed in designated areas. Only 4% of the organizations did not impose a smoking ban within the organization premises (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Organizations Banning Tobacco Use Within the Organization Premises (Preliminary Findings), Overall

- Yes, Not Permitted Within the Organization Building at Any Time
- Yes, Not on the Organization Premises
- No, Only Allowed in Designated Smoking Areas
- No, Does Not Ban
- Other
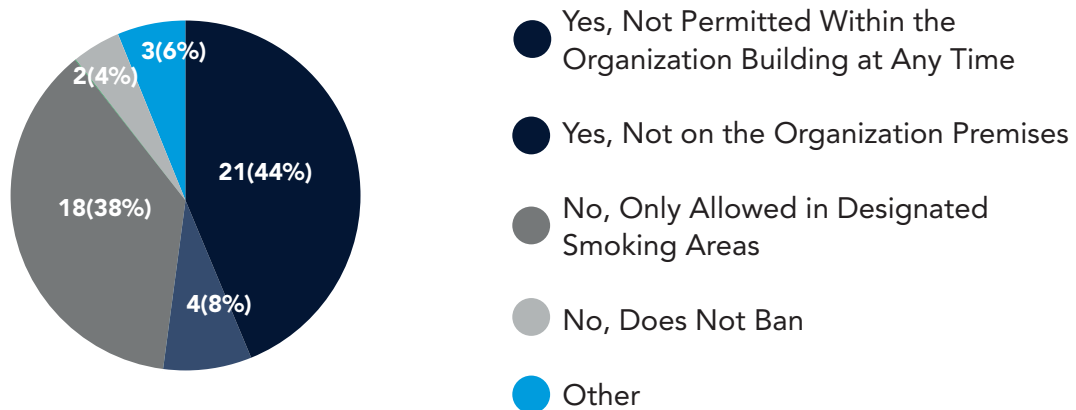
MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

The survey examined the type of mental health support offered by the responding organizations. A majority of the respondents, 88% and 92% respectively, did not provide mental health counseling or return to work support to employees who suffered from mental health issues (Figure Figure 4). Only a small percentage of organizations were providing mental health support to employees (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Organizations Providing Mental Health Support to Employees, by Type of Support, Overall
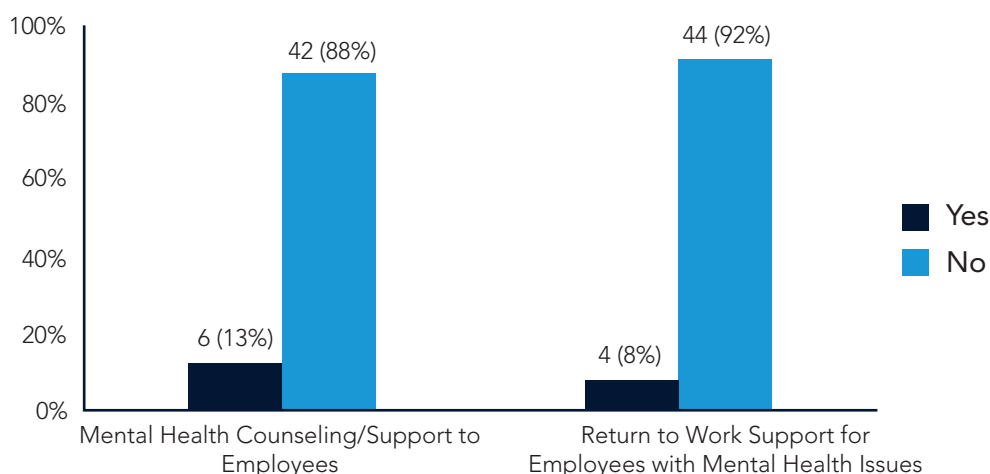
The majority of the respondents did not provide mental health support in mental health counseling or return to work support to those suffering from mental health issues (Figure 4).

QATAR HEALTH PROFILE

Among the Qatari adult population, chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases are highly prevalent health issues. Mental Health is also very prevalent amongst the adult population and thus in the workforce.

These health problems are associated with several behaviors, including inadequate consumption of healthy foods (70.1 % of adults are overweight), use of tobacco products (31,9 % of male adults smoke), and insufficient physical activity (45.9% have a low level of physical activities).

Therefore, the workplace represents an opportunity to create social support and direct communication with employees to support and encourage healthy lifestyle choices. Workplace wellness can also support physical and mental wellbeing during a difficult time and crisis such as a pandemic or any other emergency.

GUIDELINES OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this guidelines document is to assist Qatari-based entities in implementing effective and sustainable wellness programs in their organizations.

The objectives are the following:

- To promote and encourage healthier lifestyles in the workplace, therefore making a positive impact on the general health of the workforce in the state of Qatar
- To provide guidance on workplace wellness activities that are suitable and easily accessible for employees in Qatar
- To provide employers with the proper guidance to plan appropriate workplace wellness programs
- To encourage employers to consider wellness as an organizational priority
- To endorse the nomination of Workplace Wellness Champions as key stakeholders in the implementation of workplace wellness programs and communication with the Ministry of Public Health
- To support the performance monitoring of workplace wellness programs and evaluation through regular communications with the assigned Workplace Wellness Champions

SCOPE

These Guidelines apply to all individuals employed at a Qatari-based employer entity.

CONSIDERATIONS

These guidelines constitute national recommendations and do not replace national laws nor regulations. Workplace wellness programs are increasing in popularity worldwide; however, they are not mandatory in most cases despite the recognition that occupational health and safety legislation emphasizes the need for a workplace to be not only safe but also healthy. Employers must also respect individuals' rights not to share confidential information if they do not wish to.

KEY ELEMENTS FOR AN EFFECTIVE WORKPLACE WELLNESS PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Although there is no single ‹correct' approach to develop a workplace wellness program, there are generally key elements that enable the proper implementation of any program.

THE WORKPLACE WELLNESS CHAMPION

Wellness champion networks are deemed an important component of workplace wellness programs. By encouraging colleagues to engage in healthy behaviors, champions can help improve employee health and wellbeing outcomes while reducing healthcare costs and increasing productivity. Whether formally or informally assigned to this role, champions are considered an important social support to others and have a powerful voice among all employees.
 It has also been noted that peers can have a powerful influence on health behaviors and outcomes. This peer support approach does not encourage mandatory peer support assignments but rather peer supporters that are encouraged and allowed to volunteer and serve. Spoonheim & Pronk (2016) note the importance of a multilevel leadership approach (the wellness champion network), ensuring that employees from all levels are heard, and bottom-up efforts are recognized and nurtured.
Nominating one or two employees from participant organizations to act as champions is a key component of the program. These people will serve as a focal point with the MoPH so they should have a certain level of seniority, be energetic, knowledgeable, and able to serve as a role model for healthy behavior. Because they will act as a coordinator, they must be able to work well with

others, advocate for change and be creative in program development and implementation. (Refer to Appendix 4: Workplace Wellness Champion)

The wellness champion will be able to attend one training course offered by the Ministry of Public Health. This step is critical to the success of the program, as it will help ensure effective communication, support and success.

The Ministry of Public Health will provide initial introductory training for at least one staff member (preferably 2) from each organization. The champion(s) will then regularly collaborate with the MoPH, providing technical guidance whenever requested. And to ensure sustainability, a learning module will be shared with all entities and employees at a later stage of the program.

Training and technical assistance opportunities include:

- Introduction to Workplace Wellness Program
- Planning skills for wellness programs
- Health behavior change
- Workshop and practical experience of supporting staff and action planning to take the work forward
- Technical guidance on program implementation.
- Provision of awareness materials

LEADERSHIP ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

To begin the process of healthy workplace planning, it is important that all levels of the organization support the program. Higher management commitment is critical for the success. Here are some key organizational "players" who need to support the program:

- Senior management
- Health and safety department
- Human Resources (H.R.)
- Facility Management
- Other key stakeholders in the company, e.g., occupational health, training, and development departments.

Below are some strategies to help to secure management support:

- Submit an action plan: a clear, concise, and comprehensive action plan is important to convince decision-makers to invest into a wellness program.
- Conduct formal presentations to management: presentations should include information on the importance of developing wellness programs and plans for promoting wellness within the organization.
- Proposal of the corporate wellness policy, adoption of such an approach will enhance the commitment and support of senior management to the program. (Appendix 1. Workplace Wellness Policy Sample)

ESTABLISH A HEALTHY WORKPLACE COMMITTEE

Establish a committee at the workplace that responsible for planning, overseeing, and executing the workplace health program. This will serve to optimize employee engagement and foster a sense of program ownership.

Selecting members to serve on a wellness committee can be just as important as choosing the right wellness champion; it is an important step in building a healthy work environment.

The committee structure and meeting frequency will depend on the size of the organization. In some companies, the health and safety committee will provide the same functions and act as a wellness committee.

The committee will be responsible for planning and steering appropriate health activities. It is suggested that new members be appointed every 1-2 years, and be provided with the required training, allocation of work time, and resources to conduct their role effectively (26).

It is important that this committee establish terms of reference (ToR). This helps the committee function efficiently and prevents potential future problems. (Appendix 2. corporate wellness committee ToR sample).

SCREENING ACTIVITIES: NEED ASSESSMENT

Employer-based wellness programs often include screening activities to identify health risks, most commonly the Health Risk Assessment (HRA) and biometric screening. An HRA (or health risk questionnaire) is a self-administered questionnaire used to collect information about common modifiable risk factors about behaviors and characteristics, such as nutrition, physical activity, smoking, cholesterol levels, weight, and blood pressure. Biometric or clinical screening collects data on height, weight, resting heart rate, blood pressure, blood glucose levels (for diabetes), and blood lipid levels (e.g., cholesterol). These screenings can be conducted at the workplace, in occupational health or primary care clinics, or partnership with health plans through the employees' regular physicians and to be linked to PHCC cernor to esnure effectiveness.

Before implementing workplace wellness programs, an organization needs to assess what common health concerns and needs employees may have. If a workplace wellness program is going to be successful, it must reflect employees' wellness needs, interests and concerns. For example, there is no point in arranging for a speaker on stress management if employees aren't interested and will not attend. (Appendix 2. Employee Health Assessment Survey).

DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN

The action plan should be done in collaboration with experts in health and nutrition will include both:

- preventive interventions to address manifest health risks (e.g., weight-reduction counseling)
- health promotion activities to further healthy lifestyles (e.g., healthy food options in cafeterias) and changes in the physical and environment

Developing an action plan for preventative interventions and health promotion activities is the key to successful initiatives. During this stage, the wellness committee should review the information collected and must develop a workplace wellness activity plan. The program should identify key issues or findings (based on the data collected), make recommendations, identify needed resources, and establish a timeline for the implementation. The plans should address issues related to the three pillars of workplace wellness programs.

The program should provide a variety of activities, and the MoPH will provide technical guidance to companies on focus area when applicable such as:

1. raising awareness,
2. building employees' skills,
3. creating health policies,
4. and (a) supportive environment.

COMPREHENSIVE WORKPLACE WELLNESS APPROACH

A comprehensive wellness program offers a combination of these four types of activities.
Awareness Raising
This involves activities aimed at raising employee awareness about a wellness topic. Employees must have accurate information to make informed choices. Awareness-raising activities may include printed materials, Information posters, and leaflets, or electronic wellness newsletter or email tips.

Skill Building

Includes the provision of skills and tools necessary to make positive health and lifestyle choices and the skills needed to change and support positive behavior.
Examples of skill-building activities:

- Fitness instructor and personal trainer courses.
- Providing seminars on stress management and conflict resolution.
- Offering healthy cooking classes.

Building Supportive Work Environments

Supportive environments reinforce and encourage employees to develop skills and practice healthy behaviors. Supportive work environment initiatives include:

- Providing healthy options in worksite cafeterias (Healthy Cafeteria Guidelines available at MoPH)
- Providing preventative safety equipment (e.g., ergonomic chairs and computer stations, weight-lifting belts)
- Ensuring easy and safe access to available staircases at work
- Providing onsite fitness clubs or subsidized gymnasium memberships
- Installing a bike rack, a secure space to lock up bicycles
- Offering shower facilities at work to encourage active transportation to work

Policy Development

An employer who develops wellness policies and strategies shows their commitment to employees' health and wellbeing. Policies that give direction and support the work environment include:

- Establishing flexible working hours policies
- Healthy snacks for meetings
- Creating policy prohibiting tobacco use within the entity premises

SETTING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE WORKPLACE WELLNESS INITIATIVES:

The goals will define what the program is trying to accomplish broadly, and the objectives describe the specific changes it hopes to achieve.

Some examples:

GOAL 1 – Educate employees about the importance of exercise and the types and use of our equipment at the company gym. Objective – Increase the number of employees who engage in regular physical activity in the company gym (>150 minutes physical activity per participant per week) by 10% in 1st Quarter 2018.

GOAL 2 – Decrease dependency on tobacco products by offering programs on smoking cessation at least quarterly. Objective – Decrease staff dependence on tobacco by 10% within 12 months of program implementation.

GOAL 3 – Educate employees about the importance of maintaining a proper weight and maintaining a healthy diet through programs and initiatives. Objective – To have 20 employees reduce their BMI by 10% within six months of program implementation.

The action plan should define the timeline in each year or phase of the plan. The program and timeline are not «fixed. It should be revisited periodically to check on progress and if any modifications need to be made.

It is recommended that the wellness committee creates a new action plan each year and must reflect on the progress for that particular year, and must make the necessary modifications. Once the work plan is prepared, the senior management of the organization must approve it. This is to guarantee their support and approval for any financial or human resources that may be required.

IMPLEMENT THE PLAN

The purpose of this step is to put the plan into action. The detailed work plan should guide the program's implementation in terms of timing, content, strategies, monitoring, and evaluation. An essential step in this stage is communicating with employees, promoting the health initiatives, receiving and responding to feedback. Putting a workplace wellness program into action may require a phased approach, such as conducting a pilot with a small portion of the emplyees before initiating a full program launch.

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

To implement a sustainable and effective Workplace Wellness program, the World Health Organization recommends a cyclic process through its WHO Healthy Workplace Model that continually plans, acts, reviews, and improves the program's activities. The process consists of 8 steps: 1. Mobilize, 2. Assemble, 3. Assess, 4. Prioritize, 5: plan, 6. Do, 7. Evaluate, 8. Improve.

RECOMMENDED WORKPLACE WELLNESS INITATIVES

Successful activities are meaningful to employees, easy to manage, efficient, innovative, and flexible. The list below is an example of wellness initiatives recommended on implementation. This list is not exhaustive, and the wellness committee will decide on the appropriate initiative for the organization.

1. Healthy weight and weight loss challenges
2. Smoking cessation program
3. Healthy eating and healthy snacks
4. Physical exercise and fitness activities
5. Stress management
6. Heat-related illness awareness
7. Sleep health promotion and shift work
8. Patient education activities and chronic diseases prevention
9. Biometric screenings and periodic checkups

EXAMPLE 1: DIABETES AWARENESS & PREVENTION

An important aspect of wellbeing is supporting employees with health conditions and preventing those at risk to remain healthy at work.

Diabetes is one of the most common chronic diseases and one of the most important health challenges in the State of Qatar. In 2015, whereas the global rate of diabetes was 8%, it reached 17% in Qatar and if all necessary actions are not taken to prevent diabetes, this proportion will double in the 35-60 age group by 2.5 by 2045.

Early detection of diabetes through risk assessment and screening can prevent serious employees' health issues. A study published in the University of Michigan in 2017 shows that implementing the Diabetes Prevention Program in workplaces may be an effective strategy to prevent Diabetes Type 2 among employees. Workers with controlled blood sugar had fewer days lost to absenteeism and fewer days of restricted activity.

It is highly recommended that workplace wellness programs include diabetes prevention and support activities and there are several ways in which an employer can assist the employees accordingly:

- Provide employees with health education and information about self-managing common health conditions.
- Provide employees with access to interventions, support groups – availability and accessibility to diabetic clinics
- Interactive Health Talks by healthcare professionals – engaging and supportive talks to employees and companies on the latest health, lifestyle and diabetes prevention and care
- Organize screening campaigns and periodic medical checkups
- Support employees at risks and adapt their work environment (e.g. provide flexible working arrangements that allow employees to take time off for treatment or more frequent rest breaks)

EXAMPLE 2: STRESS MANAGEMENT AT WORK

- Employee wellness is important for employers, and stress at work varies from role-related, interpersonal-related, task-related, or organizational/ environmental related stressors.
- By conducting a comprehensive needs assessment of the health risks and interests of the employee population, the organization can assess the modifiable risk factors (e.g., high-demand, low-control jobs, sedentary jobs, insufficient breaks, unrealistic deadlines, poor communication, etc.) that are impacting employee health.

Armed with this information, the worksite can identify the most promising strategies that will help to improve the employees' health while also contributing to improved employee morale and productivity.

Below is a list of effective initiatives that helps improve stress management at work:
- Design jobs to provide meaning, stimulation, and opportunities for workers to use their skills.
- Give workers opportunities to participate in decisions and actions affecting their jobs.
- Provide opportunities for social interaction among workers.
- Survey employees to assess their needs and interest in a relaxation space and eventually create or utilize an already existing space for employees to use for relaxation or meditation as a stress management tool.
- To provide employees with materials on stress and stress management to help build a basic knowledge base around stress and stress management techniques.

INCENTIVES

Incentives and rewards are increasingly used in workplace wellness programs; they can play an important role in getting employees engaged in wellness programs.
Providing the right motivating incentive strategy for the organization can help ensure good population engagement. Incentives can increase participation in activities and encourage learning about health and begin changes in behavior, regular participation should also be promoted and encouraged.

COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTION

Effective marketing and promotion will help ensure high levels of participation within the organization.
The following are some methods to promote wellness initiatives to target a considerable amount of audience.
- Use a variety of media, such as posters, email, letters, and web information.
- Use of new media like social networks and groups
- Create attractive and professional materials to capture the attention
- Promote the overall wellness program as well as individual interventions
- Design and distribute monthly health newsletters

EVALUATION

The evaluation will ensure that workplace wellness programs have been effective and will help building a rationale for continuing them. Ideally, evaluation plans should be developed as part of the workplace wellness planning process.

The processes of measuring and evaluating workplace wellness programs includes the activities taken in implementing a program and the outputs they generate, such as the number and type of educational collaterals developed and disseminated, and the number of employees reached. On the other hand, the outcomes that can be divided into short, mid and long term and are required to measure the program efficiency and impact and, most importantly, to ensure the program continues to meet the needs of both employees and the organization . Short and mid-term outcomes include the intermediate steps necessary to achieve the long-term outcomes, such as individual employee reductions in healthy lifestyle risks such as tobacco use. Long-term outcomes include long term impact indicators such as the reductions in disease or injury and the costs associated with them.

Finally, a baseline assessment can be performed to determine where the organization currently is on a given health problem (e.g., the percent of employees who use tobacco) or issue (e.g., the percent of employees who are aware of recommended physical activity guidelines) and inform the benchmarks/targets against which program managers and decision makers will assess program performance.

CONCLUSION

Workplace wellness programs have emerged as a common employer-employee benefit that is available and accessible to implementable entities. The workplace wellness programs also tend to offer plans with a greater variety of options according to each entity's needs and resources. The MoPH has guided employers to develop and implement the most suitable program within their premises. Employers should commit to long-term support of wellness programs, regarding them as a viable and sustainable strategy that is clinically meaningful. It helps to contain health care costs, reduce risk factors, such as smoking, and increase healthy behaviors, such as exercise.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. SAMPLE, WORKPLACE WELLNESS POLICY

APPENDIX 2. EMPLOYEE HEALTH ASSESSMENT SURVEY

APPENDIX 3. CORPORATE WELLNESS COMMITTEE, TOR SAMPLE

APPENDIX 4. WORKPLACE WELLNESS CHAMPION

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