

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### **Comprehensive Workplace Health Programs to Address Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Tobacco Use in the Workplace**

#### ***Questions and Answers***

**1. What is the Comprehensive Workplace Health Program to Address Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Tobacco Use in the Workplace?**

The Comprehensive Workplace Health Program to Address Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Tobacco Use in the Workplace will establish and evaluate comprehensive workplace health programs to improve the health of workers and their families. The program is called the National Healthy Worksite Program.

The National Healthy Worksite Program is designed to assist employers in implementing evidence and practice-based prevention and wellness strategies that will lead to specific, measureable health outcomes to reduce chronic disease rates. For most employers, chronic diseases—such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, obesity, and diabetes—are among the most prevalent, costly, and preventable of all health problems. The National Healthy Worksite Program seeks to maintain good health through prevention, reduce chronic illness and disability, and improve productivity outcomes that contribute to employers' competitiveness.

**2. What is the goal of the National Healthy Worksite Program?**

This program is designed to establish and evaluate comprehensive workplace health programs to improve the health of workers and their families. Specifically, through its contract with Viridian Health Management (based in Phoenix, Arizona), CDC will help up to 100 small, mid-size, and large employers create and expand workplace programs aimed at achieving three goals:

- Reduce the risk of chronic disease among employees and their families through science-based workplace health interventions and promising practices.
- Promote sustainable and replicable workplace health activities such as establishing a worksite health committee, having senior leadership support, and forming community partnerships and health coalitions.
- Promote peer-to-peer business mentoring.

**3. How will the National Healthy Worksite Program be evaluated?**

Under a separate CDC contract, Research Triangle Institute will coordinate and administer an evaluation of the overall program, including changes in employee knowledge, behavior, and health status and changes in employee productivity through decreased absenteeism. The national evaluation will capture best practices and models for implementing workplace health

programs more broadly. It also will document, through case studies, unique challenges and barriers experienced by employers and strategies to overcome them.

**4. How will the funds be used?**

Funds will be used to support the establishment of high quality workplace health programs that include health education and health coaching for employees, a supportive worksite support structure including the identification of senior level program champions, and assembling a wellness committee.

National evaluation funds will be used to gather quantitative and qualitative data using the RE-AIM framework to assess (1) the effectiveness of workplace health program activities that are implemented; (2) the potential of these strategies to be sustainable over time; and (2) the processes involved in supporting workplace health programs such as building a site-level infrastructure and engaging senior leadership.

**5. How were the contractors selected?**

The selections were made through a competitive process involving an experienced technical evaluation panel that reviewed, scored, and ranked all proposals received. The implementation contractor, Viridian Health Management, was selected because they demonstrated the expertise, capacity, and reach into the employee community necessary to engage and lead cohorts of employers through the process of building a core workplace health program in up to 100 worksites nationwide. The evaluation contractor, Research Triangle Institute, was selected because of their evaluation capacity and expertise in conducting similar evaluations in terms of scope and complexity.

**6. Will CDC issue grants or financial support directly to employers?**

No. CDC, through its contractor Viridian Health Management, will provide all programmatic support including staffing, equipment, materials, and education and training to support participating employers in developing their workplace health programs.

**7. Why is the National Healthy Worksite Program being conducted through contracts rather than grants directly to employers?**

CDC seeks to maximize the public health impact of limited resources by funding a contractor to work with participating employers. Using knowledgeable contractors will enhance the consistency and uniformity of program development and implementation among the participating employers.

A contractor also will be able to work closely with employers at the worksite locations. The ability to deliver technical assistance and build capacity at employer locations will be key to workplace programs being built and sustained over time.

**8. What is a comprehensive workplace health program?**

A comprehensive workplace health program:

- Is a planned, organized, and coordinated set of programs, policies, benefits, and environmental supports designed to meet the health and safety needs of all employees;
- Puts in place interventions that address multiple risk factors (e.g., overweight, poor nutrition, lack of physical activity, tobacco) and health conditions (e.g., diabetes, arthritis, heart disease and stroke) concurrently and;
- Recognizes that the interventions and strategies chosen to influence health will require work at multiple levels of the organization including the individual employee and the organization as a whole.

**9. What is CDC's involvement in administration or oversight of the National Healthy Worksite Program now that the contracts have been awarded?**

CDC will review and monitor the contractor's performance and progress toward meeting the goals and objectives of the program through regular communications with the contractors, providing technical assistance and support related to protocols and procedures, conducting site visits, and quality assurance.

**10. What type of information will the evaluation provide and how will they conduct the evaluation (e.g., self-reported from the companies, etc.)?**

A mix of qualitative and quantitative information will be collected to evaluate the program. Some information such as an employee health risk assessment will be self-reported. Other information such as organizational programs, policies, and practice assessments will be collected by the contractor staff. The RE-AIM model will be applied to the evaluation to determine the reach and adoption of the interventions, the process of implementing them, and how well they are maintained over time. The efficacy/effectiveness of the interventions will be measured by the impact of the program on employee knowledge, behavior, and health status and changes in employee productivity through decreased absenteeism at the employee level and changes in organizational practice and culture at the employer level.

**11. What metrics are going to be used to measure exercise, nutrition, and workplace wellness? Are there any baseline measurements taken at the beginning (i.e. assessment of employee health or workplace environment before the program begins)?**

Pre/post assessments will be conducted at both the individual and organizational level. The metrics that will be collected include changes in organizational policy and practice; changes in employee knowledge, behavior, health status primarily related to physical activity, nutrition, and tobacco; changes in employee absenteeism patterns and rates; and employee participation and satisfaction with program offerings. In addition, a pre/post comparison of biometric screening results will be analyzed on participating employees including body mass index, blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood glucose.

**12. How was the National Healthy Worksite Program established and how long will it last?**

The program was established through the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) Prevention and Public Health Fund and will last for 24 months with an additional 10 months of post intervention evaluation. The program may be continued or expanded if additional funds are appropriated.