

## Steps to a Healthier US Workforce

### Session C-3: Promoting Productive Partnerships (on 10/28 10-11:30am)

Co-Chairs: Jane Roemer and Bonnie Rogers

Recorder: Maureen Gwinn

#### Session Summary

#### (Key Points in BOLD)

#### Partnering For A Healthier Workforce

Arlene Blix, DrPH, RN, CHES

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#### Objectives

- Describe the benefits/obstacles of integrating health protection and health promotion.
  - Benefits:
    - **Integration places responsibility on both the employee and employer**
    - Reduces “blame the victim” mentality
    - **Cost effectiveness**
  - Obstacles:
    - External pressure
    - **Competing priorities (money, time, demands)**
    - Differing value systems of health protection/promotion
    - Specialized expertise in respective areas
    - Lack of collaboration of skills (in healthcare professionals)
    - **Lack of trust between partners, workers, etc.**
- Discuss the importance of partnering to promote worker health.
  - Positive Aspects:
    - Mutual trust is key
    - Mutual goal
    - Good communication
    - Shared power
  - Negative Aspects:
    - Win/Lose
    - Compartmentalized
    - Manipulative
  - Potential Partners
    - Workers and their families
    - Management/Unions
    - Health Professionals
    - Community Members (public health, professional organizations, health agencies, government agencies)
  - Empowerment
  - Mentoring

- Role Modeling
- **Suggest strategies for partnering for health**
  - **Design a mentoring program**
  - **Use of incentives**
  - **Shared educational experiences**
  - **Collaboration skills**
  - **Joint development of educational materials**
  - **Joint research projects**

Staying Healthy—Stress Reduction and Employee Productivity

Judith Holder-Cooper, PhD

Director, Duke Occupational Mental Health Programs

Clinical Assistant Professor, Duke Community and Family Medicine & Psychiatry

Durham, NC

Objectives

- Discuss impact of stress
  - **60% employee absences related to psychological issues and job stress (NIOSH 2001)**
  - **Majority of short-term disability claims are related to depression (55%) and stress (30%) (MetLife 2003)**
  - **More than a third of American works (35%) say jobs are harming their physical or emotional health.**
  - The cost of job stress exceeds \$300 billion annually (NIOSH 2001)
  - Emotional health required to be productive
- Describe prototype models dealing with stress
  - Nowak Study (Organization Performance Dimensions)
    - Stress and health management for employees
    - Explore consequences of stress
    - Get a baseline of stress level and emotional health and work from there
  - Joal Bennett (Organize Wellness and Learning Systems)
    - Choice of health promotion
    - Needs assessment and customize to each worker
  - Duke (Employee Assistance Program)
    - A la carte professional development program
    - Calling centers to get assistance
    - Wellness centers alone do not look at stress and mental health
- **Suggest strategies for dealing with increased productivity**
  - **More workplaces need to use more systems as described above**
  - **Need to design training programs that promote employer enhancing models/programs**
  - **Need to change attitudes: employers are nervous about getting involved with personal lives of employees, and the lack of interest makes employees feel unappreciated**
  - **Need to look at preventive issues (training in stress management)**

## Staying Healthy: Stress Reduction/Employee Productivity

Wayne Lednar MD, PhD

Vice President and Director

Corporate Medical

Eastman Kodak Company

Rochester, NY

- Describe root issues of the problem
  - Work demands
    - Shift schedule
    - Multi-tasking
    - LEAN work systems (eliminate waiting time)
    - Total compensation – wages or benefits, cannot afford both
    - Need for changing skills
    - Stress of travel required for work
  - Life demands
    - Dual spouse working or single parent families
    - Rising cost of health care
    - Tighter family discretionary funds
    - Job relocation removing family support systems
- Describe all stakeholders roles and solutions
  - Employer Actions
    - Safe and healthy work systems
    - **Company culture values employees**
    - **Benefits design—health and financial**
    - Commitment and accommodation
    - Advocate for improved care with supporting health care plans
  - Health Plan Actions
    - Build a provider network that meets needs
    - Connect service offerings with members that benefit
    - **Quality of care**
    - **Increase prevention**
    - Recognize mental health aspects of common medical conditions
    - **Improved disease management programs which reach those in need**
  - Providers
    - **Accurate diagnosis**
    - Outcomes data (clinical and functional)
    - Eliminate waste (waiting time, etc)
    - **Access in both time and cost**
    - **Services that meet population needs**
    - Improve their effectiveness in achieving patient adherence
  - Government
    - **Health benefits coverage decisions**
    - **Oversee credentialing of providers**

- Convene ‘Quality Improving Initiative’
    - Promote partnerships (like NORA)
    - Public transport
  - Academia
    - **Develop screening tools to screen stress at work**
    - Develop methods to quantitate the full cost of stress to employees/families
    - Promote co-morbidity analytic methods to demonstrate contribution of mental health to delayed healing and full cost
    - Develop functional outcomes metrics for use by employees
  - Faith Groups
    - Social support to help deal with financial stressors, family stressors and ill advised coping strategies
- **Suggest strategies for increasing productivity**
  - **Get involved!**
  - **Health is not reflected only in medical/prescription drug claims—employers need to be aware of this**
  - **Prevention deserves more than 3 cents out of every dollar spent on health care**

#### Final thoughts/questions

- Job performance evaluations are now being manipulated to help downsize the workforce—they need to be used to get honest feedback from employees.
- Employers need to remember that workers do not end their day at 5pm—that family issues also lead to stress in the worker.
- **Employers need to recognize how important stress is at work, and integrate into the workplace mechanisms to identify causal agents and solutions.**
- Disconnect between the worker and management needs to be addressed
- Coaching on coping needs to be addressed in the workplace before a larger stressor occurs
- **Anticipating stressors in the workplace is needed to prevent future problems**
- Need to keep humor in the workplace to keep things from being too serious
- **Coping mechanisms need to be taught at the workplace and before!**