



**CDC Workplace Health
Resource Center**
Make Wellness Your Business

Strategies for Successful Partnerships to Enhance Workplace Health Programs

Partnerships between an employer and community partners can enhance a workplace health program and help to improve the health and well-being of employees, families, and the community at large. Consider the following for an effective partnership:



- **Ensure a common vision.** Although you may identify many free or low-cost community resources, it is important to choose community partners whose goals align with those of your workplace health program.^{1,2}
 - Review the websites and social media profiles of potential partner organizations to determine their employee wellness interests and goals.
 - Identify what each partner may offer your program, and what your organization has to offer them.
- **Approach organizations with a plan, but be flexible as necessary.**
 - Communicate the benefits of a partnership. Focus on what a potential partner values and how it matches your organization's values.
 - Discuss what motivates the potential partner in terms of employee wellness.
 - Present multiple opportunities for collaboration. Some organizations may want to start small. Others may be willing to get more involved from the beginning.
- **Develop a plan that clarifies expectations and shared values.**
 - Work together to establish clear expectations about roles and responsibilities, communication practices, and decision-making processes.
 - Determine how you will measure progress and outcomes.
 - ✓ Identify and agree on milestones and measures for participation in the offerings—whether a benefit or service—and for the partnership.
 - ✓ Define how progress and outcome measures will be collected (e.g., data source and frequency).
 - ✓ Clarify roles and responsibilities for documenting progress and outcomes.

- **Build and sustain the partnership.** As with any relationship, each party must remain engaged and communicative.
 - Take time to learn about each other's language and organizational culture as well as experience with workplace wellness programs.
 - Identify each other's strengths and capacities. Figure out how to work together to build on these.
- **Identify and solve problems jointly.** Be creative and don't give up.
 - If unable to address a problem all at once, brainstorm smaller steps that you can take to improve the health and well-being of your workforce.
 - Continue to identify connections, areas of interest, and future goals to pursue together.
- **Start small.** Begin with one or two partnerships to give you time to nurture those relationships, troubleshoot challenges, and process lessons learned for future relationships.

To help improve employee health and wellness and to reduce health care costs, ScanSource, Inc., a global provider of technology products and solutions based in Greenville, South Carolina, partnered with the Greenville Hospital System. ScanSource wanted to lower the cost of prescription medications but ran into challenges. Instead of giving up, ScanSource and Greenville Hospital System identified other ways, listed below, to lower costs and improve employee well-being and productivity.

- Greenville Hospital System began delivering the prescriptions to employees at ScanSource. Although the cost of medications did not change, employees did not have to take time off from work to pick up their medications.
- ScanSource reduced its laboratory testing costs by allowing Greenville Hospital System nurses to draw blood at an on-site clinic and send it to the hospital for analysis. This benefit also saved employees time—particularly those with conditions like diabetes that require frequent lab work.

The **CDC Workplace Health Resource Center (WHRC)** is a one-stop shop for organizations to find credible tools, guides, case studies, and other resources to design, develop, implement, evaluate, and sustain workplace health promotion programs. Visit the Workplace Health Resource Center website to learn more about developing partnerships.

References

- 1 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *The Value of Community Partnerships, Brief 3*. Atlanta, GA: US Dept Health and Human Services; 2018. <https://www.cdc.gov/workplacehealthpromotion/tools-resources/pdfs/issue-brief-no-3-community-partnerships-03062013.pdf>. Accessed July 31, 2018.
- 2 Pronk NP, Baase C, Noyce J, Stevens DE. Corporate America and community health: exploring the business case for investment. *J Occup Environ Med*. 2015;57:493–500.