



Cardiovascular Disease Screening and Referral by Small Worksites: A Positive Return on Investment

Heart Disease and Stroke are Bad for Business

Cardiovascular Disease is America’s costliest disease.¹ Heart-Healthy Employees have better morale, miss less work, and are more productive than less healthy employees. Fortunately, employers can help their employees maintain their heart health.^{2,3}

On average, an employee with CVD costs his or her employer over a week in absences and \$1,100 more on lost productivity each year than an employee without CVD.¹ However, a recent study showed that 40% of employees were not aware of the level of at least one of their CVD risk factors, (high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and obesity).⁴ Furthermore, in another study it is estimated that 36% of the US adult population with uncontrolled blood pressure (about 13 million people) are neither aware of their hypertension nor taking medications to control it.⁵

Workplace Health Screenings and Referrals are Good for Business

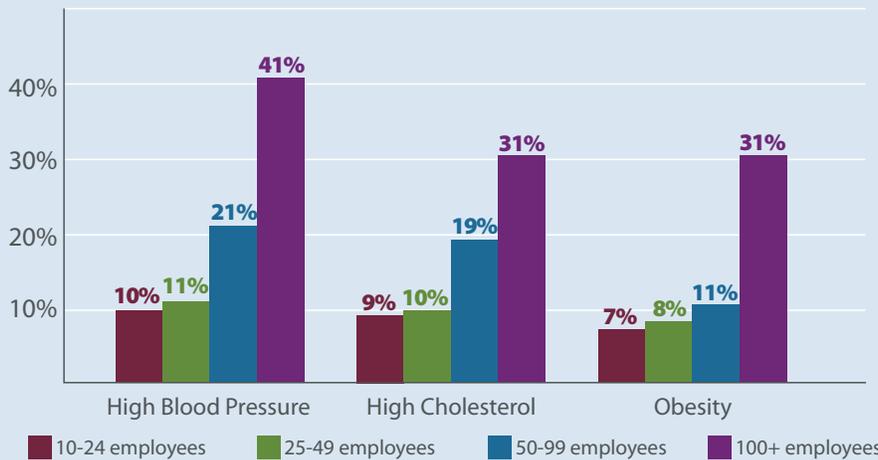
Conducting health screenings and referrals in the workplace is a promising strategy for early detection of CVD risk factors, with the goal of preventing the onset of CVD, or managing CVD for those who have been diagnosed. In particular, screenings may motivate employees to seek healthcare if they were previously unaware of their risk factors.⁶ Employer healthcare costs can be avoided through worksite-based health screening. Employers can achieve a positive return on investment when employee health screening is offered with a well-designed comprehensive health and wellness program, estimated at approximately \$2.50 - \$10.00 saved due to reduced absenteeism and medical costs per \$1 invested in wellness activities.⁶

Small Worksites Can Conduct Screening and Referrals

Because 98% of all employers are small, the collective impact of small worksites to identify CVD risk factors and refer individuals to healthcare professionals is immense.⁷ Nationally, there are opportunities for more screening and referral within small worksites.

Table. Screening and Referral to a Health Professional for Employees Found to Have High Risk* for Cardiovascular Disease

*High Risk is having one or more of the following lifestyle risk factors: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, and/or smoking



Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Workplace Health in America Survey, 2017

A Low Cost Way to Help Employees with High Blood Pressure

In addition to screening and referral, 25% of all employers provide self-measured blood pressure monitoring devices to employees⁸; this low-cost strategy can help employees with high blood pressure to monitor their health condition while at work. Self-measured blood pressure monitoring can improve blood pressure outcomes in employees.⁹

For a complete version of this document including references [click here](#).

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MERIL Screens Employees for CVD Risk Factors

Midland Empire for Independent Living (MERIL), of St. Joseph, Missouri, empowers people with disabilities by providing a range of independent living services to clients. Their staff of approximately 50 employees is offered on-site biometric screening for obesity and high blood pressure as part of their worksite’s comprehensive wellness program. The workplace uses results to set wellness goals for the coming year.

