

Discussion Guide for Key Informants

1. Background on the employer

- a. When did your company start offering wellness programs?
- b. Why did your company make this decision?
- c. Has your wellness program ever been modified? If yes, what has been changed and why?
- d. Are you planning on changing it in the future? Why? Why not?
- e. If it is an award-winning program, what was the reason why your program won the award?

2. Health coverage

- a. Does your company offer health coverage to its employees?
- b. What plan types does your company offer? (PROBES: HMO, PPO, deductible, costs, etc)

3. Details of the wellness program

- a. Who developed your wellness program? Is it provided through a health plan (self-insured or fully insured) or directly through your company? If the program is administered by an outside vendor, what criteria were used to choose that program? If it is an internal program, how was it created?
- b. What are the main components of your current wellness program? PROBE: Make sure to ask about the following:
 - **Health awareness initiatives** (including health education, preventive screenings, and health risk assessments).
 - **Initiatives to change unhealthy behaviors and lifestyle choices** (including counseling, seminars, online programs, and self-help materials).
- e. Why were these components chosen? What are their goals?
- f. Could you please describe a typical participant in your wellness program? PROBE: Age, gender, health status.

4. Supportive environment

- a. What efforts, if any, have been made at the corporate level to support the implementation of your wellness program? PROBE: CEO encouragement, participation; new workplace policies to encourage healthy lifestyles, healthy eating, increased physical activity, and improved mental health.

5. Program satisfaction

- a. How happy/satisfied are your employees with your wellness program?
- b. Have you ever formally evaluated satisfaction with this program? If yes, what did you find out?
- c. Why do you think your employees are happy/unhappy with your wellness program?
- d. What can be done to further increase the level of program satisfaction?

6. Participation rates

- a. What do your employees have to do to participate in the program?
- b. How many people have participated in your wellness program this year?
- c. How does this number compare to program participation in previous years?
- d. How may program participation rates look in the future?

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7. Use, type and impact of participation incentives

- a. What strategies, if any, does your company use to encourage employee participation and engagement in wellness programs?
- b. Do you offer any financial rewards to incentivize participation? If yes, what are they and how they are structured? Are they tied to outcomes? If no incentives are offered, have you ever considered offering financial incentives? Why, why not?
- c. If yes: For an employee with employee-only coverage, on a percentage basis, how does the amount of the reward compare to the cost of employee-only coverage?
- d. Are dependents eligible to participate in the wellness program? If so, how does the award amount compare, on a percentage basis, to the cost of the total premium for the coverage under which the dependent is enrolled?
- e. If you incentivize based on outcomes, how do you handle a situation where an individual is not able to satisfy a health standard due to a medical condition? What is your alternative standard that the individual employee may meet to qualify for the incentive?
- f. If you have an alternative standard, how do you inform eligible individuals about it?
- g. What do your employees think about these incentives? Have you received any complaints about them?
- h. What are some of the downsides of providing incentives for wellness program participation?
- i. Have you ever changed your approach to incentives? If yes, when, why and how?

8. Program impact on cost and affordability of coverage and employee health status

- a. How effective is your wellness program in improving your employees' health and wellness? How do you know that?
- b. What impact, if any, did your wellness program have on cost and affordability of health care coverage for your employees?

9. Cost of program, perceived and—if available—documented return on investment

- a. How expansive is it to have a wellness program like yours?
- b. What are some financial and non-financial costs associated with your program?
- c. Some companies calculate return on investment to evaluate cost effectiveness of their wellness programs. Have you ever done this? If yes, how did you calculate ROI, is the calculation based on medical cost, productivity cost or both, and what were your findings?

10. Challenges encountered

- a. Implementation of a wellness program can be unpredictable. Have you encountered any challenges or difficulties while implementing the program? If yes, what? Why do you think you had these problems during the program implementation?
- b. How have you resolved these challenges?
- c. If you were to start a new wellness program, what would you do differently?

11. Plans for the future

- a. How does the future of wellness programs look like in your company?
- b. Are you planning on making any changes to your program?
- c. How frequently do you update your program or introduce new components?
- d. Are you planning on changing the way you incentivize your employees to participate in the wellness program?

12. Anticipated changes due to the Affordable Care Act

- a. Do you anticipate any changes in your wellness program as a result of the new health law?