

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?

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0990-. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, OS/OCIO/PRA, 200 Independence Ave., S.W., Suite 336-E, Washington D.C. 20201, Attention: PRA Reports Clearance Officer.

[Type text]

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 employee health status

- a. Has your company evaluated the impact of your wellness program on your employees' health and health behaviors? *{if yes, go to (b); if no, go to (d)}*
- b. Please describe this evaluation effort:
 - i. Who performed the evaluation?
 - ii. How was the health impact of the wellness program measured? How were changes to health status attributed to the program? What data were examined?
- c. What impact, if any, was your program found to have on employees' health and health behaviors? *{go to Q9}*
- d. What is your management's perception of the impact the wellness program has on employee health and wellbeing? Why do you think so?

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

- a. Has your company evaluated the cost or cost-effectiveness of your wellness program? *{if yes, go to (b); if no, go to (d)}*
- b. Please describe this evaluation effort:
 - i. Who performed the evaluation?
 - ii. How did you measure the financial benefits of the program? Did the calculation include reduction of medical costs (either direct payments or insurance premiums), reduced absenteeism, and/or increased productivity? How were these benefits attributed to the program?
 - iii. How did you calculate the costs of the program? What costs were identified?
- c. What did your evaluation find in terms of the net cost, cost-effectiveness, or "return on investment" of your program? *{go to Q10}*
- d. What is your managements' perception of the cost or cost-effectiveness of your wellness program? Why do you think so?

[Type text]

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?