

## 2019 PSE Impacts from the *Get Moving Get Healthy NJ Workforce Program* Case Study Abstract

Joanne Kinsey, Associate Professor/County Agent II, Atlantic & Ocean Counties

Rachel Tansey, Senior Family & Community Health Sciences Extension Associate, Monmouth County

Department of Family and Community Health Sciences, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey

### DESCRIPTION OF ORGANIZATION

Rutgers Cooperative Extension is within the School of Environmental & Biological Sciences at Rutgers University. The *Get Moving Get Healthy NJ Workforce* program has been conducted in numerous NJ worksites (County, municipal, and private worksite settings). Monmouth County Employee Benefits Department & Rutgers Cooperative Extension have partnered to provide evidence-based programs to employees since 2013. In 2019 a closer look at the Policy, Systems and Environmental (PSE) impacts of the program were studied.

### OBJECTIVES

The goal is to empower employees to live healthier lives & reduce the risk of chronic disease. Weekly wellness topics enable employees to gain a better understanding of healthy lifestyle issues, such as:

- 1) Eating healthy foods,
- 2) Stress reduction,
- 3) Increase physical activity, well-being & self-esteem, and
- 3) Managing time, work/family & finances.

### TARGET AUDIENCE

Adults employed by Monmouth County and Monmouth County Dependents. This audience consisted of diverse socio-economic employees and their families within the community.

### METHODOLOGY

This online program provides information and resources regarding personal and family health, physical activity, and financial education. Employers register their employees for the program at the link provided on the Rutgers University website or by direct contact with the program coordinator. The delivery method consists of a series of focused wellness messages delivered weekly, available for 12-weeks via *Constant Contact*. The targeted weekly wellness message includes links to:

- The *Get Moving Get Healthy On The Job Worksite Wellness Newsletter* (with a focus wellness topic each week).
- Evidence-based USDA and other resources related to the weekly topic.
- Brief articles and web links to related resources.

A Pre-survey was administered prior to the intervention, and a Follow-Up Survey was administered after the final weekly message using *Survey Monkey*.

### FOLLOW-UP SURVEY RESULTS

#### Follow-Up Evaluation Surveys

(*n= 251 County employees*)

*Program completion rate:* 89% of participants completed the full 12-week online wellness program.

- \* 88% increased their number of steps
- \* 85% monitor their number of steps daily
- \* 60% take time to exercise more than 3 times per week
- \* 58% increased consumption of vegetables
- \* 55% increased consumption of fruits
- \* 54% decreased sugar consumption
- \* 49% reported healthier eating habits
- \* 50% rated their physical condition as 'good' & 28% 'very good/excellent'
- \* 39% of participants have improved their overall physical condition
- \* 38% have reported to fit better in clothing
- \* 31% have improved their level of energy
- \* 48% lost some weight
- \* 44% decreased their personal debt
- \* 30% increased their savings

### PSE IMPACTS

Linkages between the County administration and RCE have been strengthened. Monmouth County offers incentives (completers are entered into drawing for a free 'personal day-off'). The county makes employee wellness a priority. Employees expressed an interest in their health/wellness by setting personal goals for the program.

In 2019 the County has:

- \* Hired a full-time Wellness Coordinator
- \* Established a Wellness Committee
- \* Devised a portal for all employee wellness events
- \* Offers employee incentives (completers enter drawing for a free 'day-off')
- \* Changed 25 vending machines at 20 worksites to include healthy options
- \* Identified 80 Wellness Champions at various worksites
- \* Established a Wellness Newsletter
- \* Celebrates employee Success Stories

### EVALUATION COMMENTS

#### Comments from County Benefits regarding Return on Investment (ROI) from Health Care Provider, Horizon

*The county's healthcare plan premiums have increased a modest 14.2% since 2014 to present.*

***That's less than 3% annually.***

*The county's pharmacy plan had a \$157.36 Per Member Per Month cost in 2014. Five years later the county's PMPM for its pharmacy plan is \$160.17. That represents a 1.76% increase in the last five years.*

*Just to put that in perspective, public entities in the northeast average \$190.91 PMPM currently."*

#### Employee Wellness Spotlight-Kimberly Earl

Meet Kimberly Earl. She has worked for the County for five years in the Board of Elections. Kimberly started her health journey in November and has lost over 31 pounds. She signed up for a gym membership and works out with a trainer two times a week. She also walks on her two 15 minute breaks and cut her meal portions down so they are the actual serving size. She has more energy which is great since she has three children from ages 6 to 11 years old.

She admits that the struggle of cutting down her food intake was hard at first. She loves food too much because it tastes so good! Once she got used to not consuming as much as she was, the challenge became easier for her. She has a lot of support making the changes from her mom, friends from work and her trainer. She states her sister is her number one supporter and is also doing the journey along with her.

Her advice is "Don't give up! It is a slow process but you will get there and get to where you want to be. It is all up to you and your willingness to want it."



### CONCLUSION

The *Get Moving Get Healthy NJ Workforce* program has been successful at reaching a challenging adult population for Cooperative Extension. By engaging employees we are able to expand their knowledge of health/wellness issues and empower those employees to adopt healthy lifestyle practices.