

Promoting Worksite Wellness

During the 2008 legislative session, IWP will be supporting tax credits for employers who have worksite wellness programs for things like smoking cessation, weight loss, and chronic disease management. IWP supports initiatives that will provide incentives for employers to implement wellness programs. Many employers in the state are already doing great things, such as paying for smoking cessation treatments, weight loss classes, and chronic disease management.

Employers can help their employees strive toward being healthier and increase their quality of life by providing education, screenings and working to ensure that benefit plans encourage proper health management and recognize the importance of wellness and prevention. Because we have an employer-based insurance system, it is fitting for employers to be involved in wellness and prevention. Employers not only must deal with the increased health care costs associated with poor health, but they also see lower productivity, and increased absenteeism and presenteeism when employees are not healthy.

Facts about Worksite Wellness:

- Poor health is expensive for employers – it leads to increased medical costs, higher absenteeism and presenteeism, and decreased productivity.
- Aspirin therapy, tobacco cessation, and childhood immunizations are tied as the number one cost-effective health care benefits
- The CDC estimates that smoking employees cost their employers almost \$4,000 every year in health care costs and decreased productivity.
- Worksite wellness programs led to an average reduction in sick leave absenteeism of 28%, according to the Partnership for Prevention
- According to the CDC, individuals with diabetes on average take 8.3 days of sick time each year, compared to 1.7 days for individuals without diabetes; and the medical costs of those with diabetes is 4 times higher than for those without diabetes or other chronic diseases.