

TITLE: New approaches to employee wellness programs. Putting a spotlight on prevention.

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PRESENTER(S): Case Escher, Karla Thommen, Robin Halverson, Alexa Galluzzo (Moderator)

STUDENT SUBMISSION: No

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Public and private health professionals, including HR executives, CFOs and CEOs, that are responsible for coming up with new ways to manage health plan costs and keep their employee workforce healthy.

ABSTRACT: The health of employees matters to Oregon's growing workforce. Employers are looking for strategies to keep their employees engaged, retained, happy, healthy and productive. However, with the cost of healthcare continuing to rise and undetected health issues escalating to high-cost claims, what can employers do to influence insured employees to seek preventive care when they are otherwise healthy and without noticeable symptoms? Most adults in the United States have at least one elevated health risk and around half of them are unaware of it. Through health awareness and health accountability wellness programs, employers can arm their employees with the knowledge and resources they need to identify unknown and emerging health risks. Then, they can direct them to the right care at the right time early. Ideally, they can do this before a health risk becomes a health condition.

In this panel, we will hear from an experienced data analyst and seasoned wellness consultants who were tasked with building a workplace wellness program aimed toward improving the health of a population. They did this by using data to drive health improvements and compliance in preventive screenings and annual preventive exams.

OBJECTIVE(S): Share experiences from the employer's and the employee's perspective on how focusing their wellness efforts toward preventive health increased not only adherence to preventive health guidelines but also improved early detection and outcomes of previously undiagnosed health conditions. Describe the program elements needed to implement a health awareness program aimed at increasing both adherence to preventive health guidelines and improving early detection and outcomes of previously undiagnosed health conditions. Share results of key learnings from other employers asking the following questions: What percentage of my employees who complete a biometric screening will be in the high-risk range for blood pressure, total cholesterol, and glucose levels, and what can we do to improve their health? And, how many of my employees are unaware that they have out of range biometric values and thus, are not being treated for their condition?"

PANEL MODERATOR: Alexa Galluzzo

PANEL ABSTRACT 1: Using data to make more informed decisions about health improvement strategies can significantly improve the results of a wellness program and lead towards a healthier workforce.

Rising health plan costs and undetected health issues are continuously escalating to high cost claims. Employers are looking for new ways to manage health plan costs to keep up with increasingly competitive markets. If employers continue to do things the way they always have, they should expect the same results. New outcomes require new solutions.

Every year employers analyze the previous year's cost data and find that five percent of the insured population drove 50% of plan costs. What is driving their need for medical services? What can be done to manage their medical costs, while maintain or even improving their treatment and outcomes?

This panel will discuss and solve for how employers can possibly foresee large claims. Advanced population health management techniques are often used in the public health setting but there is application of population health in a traditional employer setting as well. Examples will be provided from employers as case studies.

PRESENTER 1: Case Escher

PANEL ABSTRACT 2: Employers need programs to help employees identify unknown and emerging health risks and direct them to the right care at the right time - early. Ideally, before a health risk becomes a health condition. One solution that was implemented for a large hospital system Employee Health Program was a preventive health screening campaign. The employer wanted to know how many individuals with a new cancer diagnosis were compliance with their age-gender HEDIS preventive screening guidelines for that type of cancer. Would early detection improve outcomes and cost? We know that detecting and treating cancer at an early stage can and does save lives, as well as money. One key component of a successful risk identification strategy is to cast a wider net for participation in a health screening campaign, one that includes the majority of their population. This can be accomplished by offering meaningful incentives associated with employee health benefit plans. Employers who invest in health plan incentives greater than \$550 per year per employee consistently yield the highest participation rates in preventive wellness programs. For each \$50 increase in value, health assessment completion rates increase by 4.2%.

PRESENTER 2: Karla Thommen

PANEL ABSTRACT 3: While an employee's specific referral, diagnosis, or care plan are confidential, supporting the health and productivity of our most valuable asset - our employees - is at the heart of the success of any business.

Employer sponsored health screenings, targeted communications and interventions and relevant health plan increases will increase adherence to preventive health guidelines and improve early detection and outcomes of previously undiagnosed health conditions.

This panelist will share experiences from the employer's and the employee's perspective on how to approach the challenges employers have of how they can influence employees to seek preventive care when they are otherwise healthy and without noticeable symptoms.

Building a culture of crawl, walk, run to ready the employees of the wellness program criteria is an important and often overlooked step in a successful wellness program that is aimed at improving adherence to preventive health guidelines.

Hear success stories from employers who have consistently achieved participation in health screening rates above 90%, even with first year programs.

PRESENTER 3: Robin Halverson
