

WORKSITE DIABETES EDUCATION PROMOTES AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

Employees benefit from education and changes in the workplace environment

Public Health Problem

- Diabetes is a serious and growing problem.
- Many working people don't participate in lifestyle change and education programs because it's difficult to fit them into a busy schedule.
- Worksite health programs have been shown to yield a high return on investment from results such as higher productivity, fewer missed days of work and happier, healthier employees.

Program

- The New York State Department of Health funds diabetes coalitions throughout the state to implement steps to prevent and control this condition.
- The Employee Assistance Program Coordinator of the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles expressed concern to the coalition about employees with diabetes and other workers at risk for this condition due to obesity.
- The Diabetes Resource Coalition of Long Island created a worksite wellness program plan that included education about diabetes & childhood obesity awareness and prevention.
- Employees were given an hour of the work day to attend educational sessions.

Impact

- This program made it easy for well over a hundred employees to get needed education on diabetes and obesity at work by supplying leave time during the work day.
- The education led to beneficial changes in the workplace environment initiated by the workers themselves including healthier foods at meetings.
- Employees also reported making changes outside of work such as consuming smaller portions, eating more fruits and vegetables, eating less fast food and sugary beverages, switching to whole grains and becoming more physically active.
- The positive results, presentations to additional Employee Assistance Program coordinators in other agencies and discussions with the Suffolk County Executive are promoting expansion of the program to other state and county agency employees.
- Educational seminars received high ratings in follow-up surveys, including, *"Your seminars were well received and staff is still talking about your presentation."*

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