

Bringing Work@Health to More Employers through NC Medical Society Employee Benefits Plan: Case Study



Participating in CDC's Work@Health® Train-the-Trainer Program

Jason Horay works with doctors in North Carolina to integrate a long-term, sustainable wellness strategy that includes lifestyle and risk-reduction programs; policy development; annual exams and preventive screening; biometric screenings; and healthy living presentations that link employee well-being with organizational performance.

With training and effort, employers of all sizes and types can plan and implement a workplace health program. Employers can learn from the experiences of Work@Health® trainers like Jason Horay about how to plan strategies and anticipate implementation challenges.

The NCMS Plan was finishing a successful worksite wellness grant program, distributing financial incentives to medical practices across North Carolina, when Horay learned about the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) [Work@Health®](#) program. The NCMS Plan was looking for ways to encourage more medical practices to start workplace wellness programs. Becoming a certified Work@Health® trainer

sounded like a good way to capitalize on the trusted CDC brand and its curricula to teach medical practices in North Carolina how to set up their own wellness programs. Horay attended the training session held in Atlanta, Georgia, in April 2014 with 28 other Work@Health participants.

Most of the Work@Health® Train-the-Trainer (T3) training workshop involved participants honing their knowledge and skills to deliver the Work@Health® Program to employers in their communities. They practiced talking about key messages and delivering the training modules in small groups, followed by peer and instructor feedback. Horay said the feedback he got from fellow participants reinforced the things he was doing well and helped him improve in other areas.

After the training, participants were asked to assess the workshop. Ninety-two percent said the training materials and discussions were useful, and 89% said they would be able to use what they had

Trainee Background

Certified Work@Health® Trainer:
Jason Horay, MS, ATC, CHES

Role: Health Promotion Coordinator, North Carolina Medical Society Employee Benefit Plan (NCMS Plan). The NCMS Plan has over 12,000 members from medical practices across the state.

Years of worksite health promotion experience: 15

Horay founded the Triangle Health Promotion Network with health promotion practitioners, providers, and consultants who help people thrive by promoting a healthy mind, body, and spirit. Horay was named one of the Top 100 Health Promotion Professionals by the Wellness Council of America (WELCOA) for promoting well-being among NCMS Plan members. Under Horay's direction, the NCMS Plan has awarded nearly \$500,000 in incentive grants to medical practices to develop and use health promotion strategies.





T3 Trainer Jason Horay.
Photo provided by Jason Horay.

learned on their jobs. Before the training and again about 6 months later, participants were also asked to assess their attitudes and knowledge about the training. Overall scores on the knowledge quiz improved from 64% to 69%.

Participants were asked to rate how confident they were in their ability to deliver a worksite health training program. Horay said he was “confident” in his ability to accomplish this task before the training and “extremely confident” 6 months later. The rating for the overall group was 3.9 before the training, on a scale of 1 point for “not at all confident” to 5 points for “extremely confident.” After 6 months, the rating improved to 4.1.

Participants were also asked to provide a rating of their own understanding of how to conduct a worksite health training program. Atlanta T3 participants’ average self-rating was 1.4 on a scale of 1 = “I fully understand how to conduct a worksite health training program,” to “4 = “I have no knowledge of how to conduct a worksite health training program”.

Participants also reported that they had provided the Work@Health® training to 69 other employers since their training.

According to Horay, a significant amount of time was needed to go through all of the materials in the Work@Health® core curriculum, but he thought the training was a worthwhile investment because he can now deliver T3 training to other employers.

Reaching Work@Health® Milestones

To become certified trainers for the Work@Health® program, participants have to reach certain milestones. These milestones include developing a plan to deliver training to five employers in their communities, delivering the core Work@Health® training curriculum, and getting feedback from peers and a Work@Health® Technical Assistance Provider on a videotaped portion of the training they deliver. Horay used his existing network of medical practices to set up training with employers who did not have a worksite wellness program but had expressed interest in developing one.

“Enhancing the well-being of the medical practice professionals we serve requires key leadership support, and I have found that support widespread across the state. My vision is to move beyond the traditional risk reduction model and focus on the vitality of our members. As health promotion professionals, we need to take a more holistic approach and offer solutions that fit with a person’s unique lifestyle.”

—Jason Horay, Health Promotion Coordinator, NCMS Benefits Plan

Using Work@Health® Resources

Participants in the Work@Health® T3 training were eligible for funding to support their efforts to train other employers. Horay used most of his funding to develop marketing materials, such as professionally printed posters and a banner to promote his training. He developed a marketing and recruiting plan well in advance of the training day, and his recruiting materials clearly outlined the reasons for and benefits of participating. Horay recruited six medical practices to participate, in hopes that at least five would be able to attend.

Horay’s training was based on the Work@Health® core modules, including the program’s slides and lecture notes. He used these materials as talking points and personalized his training for his audience. The training lasted 1½ days to allow enough time to deliver all eight modules.

Horay also brought in other speakers to talk about the importance of worksite health promotion and share specific ideas about how to set up wellness programs in medical practices. For example, Kelly Nordby, program coordinator and instructor at North Carolina State University, described [Eat Smart, Move More NC](#), a 15-week, turn-key and evidence-based workplace weight management program. All employers participating in the training were eligible for free access to this program because they are members of the NCMS Plan.

Delivering the Work@Health® Training

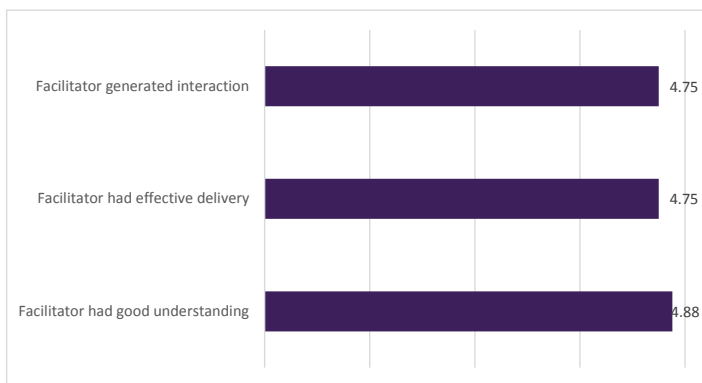
"This was one of the best wellness presentations that I have attended, and I thank Jason for a great class."

—Nurse and training participant

Eight employees from five medical practices across North Carolina attended the training in Raleigh. They participated in group discussions and asked questions during Horay's presentation, which included stories about his experiences working with medical practices to make the material more relevant. Horay noted that he had not always been a model of healthy behaviors, which helps him relate to others who are trying to change their behaviors and adopt healthier lifestyles.

Like all T3 participants, Horay was required to record a segment of his employer training session and submit it for review by his peers and a Work@Health® Technical Assistant Provider. Horay said this feedback was helpful and reinforced his confidence level. He also received positive ratings from the participants in his training.

How Employers Rated Horay's Work@Health® Training



Rating scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree or disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

A nurse who attended the training said, "Jason's presentation of Work@Health® was clearly and thoughtfully planned. The time frame of the planned seminar over a day and a half was beneficial to me in networking, learning, and retaining information that I will put to use in my organization's program. Jason was very knowledgeable in his research and presentation of the material. He was well-prepared to answer the questions of the [diverse] levels of wellness participants in his audience."

Horay stays in contact with his trainees and provides technical assistance for their wellness programs. Employers have reported the following examples of how they are using what they learned:

- One medical practice applied for the NCMS Plan's incentive grant program to help them put into action components of the wellness plan they developed after the training.
- One employer trainee has used the Work@Health® training materials to create an employee wellness incentive strategy at her workplace.
- One trainee said the training confirmed that her current activities were appropriate, and it helped her think about next steps. She is now working with Horay to integrate medical claims data with employee biometric screening data for a better understanding on the health needs and issues of their employees.
- A trainee from one of the largest participating employers consults with Horay regularly about how to apply what she learned. She has used strategies from the Building Leadership Support module of the Work@Health® program and worked with Horay to identify the best data and metrics to build the business case for an employee wellness program.

Factors Contributing to Success

The Work@Health® T3 program is designed to put a comprehensive training curriculum in the hands of experienced trainers and health educators. The training curriculum, materials, and technical assistance allow T3 participants to conduct the training efficiently. Funding from CDC helped the first group of participants develop materials, and market and conduct the training program in their communities. Horay said the program's required milestones also helped him stay on schedule, which aided in make his training a success.

Other factors also contributed to the success of Horay's training. His employer paid for overnight accommodations for out-of-town participants and provided meeting space and meals. Horay's decision to conduct the training over 1 ½ days gave participants time to discuss the material in-depth and get comfortable with each other during dinner and breaks. Horay said he also thought the training was enhanced by the variety of speakers who supported worksite wellness, including leaders in the North Carolina medical community who welcomed the participants and endorsed worksite wellness.

In addition, because all of the trainees participate in the NCMS Benefits Plan where Horay works, he was able to suggest relevant activities and examples for their wellness programs. They shared common ground and jargon, and understand each other's work because they all work in medical practices. Horay was already known to these employers, and they knew they could continue to reach out to him to ask for technical assistance. They were also pleased to learn that he can give them aggregate medical claims data to help them evaluate their health promotion efforts.

Challenges

One common challenge was logistics and scheduling conflicts among participants. Horay knew he had to be prepared for a participant not showing up on the day of the training, and he made certain he had a backup plan to ensure favorable group dynamics.

Another challenge he noted about delivering training like Work@Health® is accounting for the various stages of program planning and implementation among participants. Every employer came to the training with a different level of experience with worksite wellness programs. A T3 training should not assume that everyone is coming to training with no wellness experience and no workplace health program.

What's Next?

Horay and the NCMS Benefits Plan are continuing to deliver the Work@Health® training to medical practices across North Carolina. Their goal for 2015 is to deliver the training to twice as many medical practices as he did the first year.



The Work@Health® Train-the-Trainer (T3) model is focused on developing the skills of participants to train others on workplace health promotion. Participants must complete the employer Work@Health® program or demonstrate knowledge of the curricula before enrolling in the T3 training. The knowledge and skill-based T3 training is delivered by a professional instructor and has resulted in a team of certified trainers who are capable of providing basic comprehensive workplace health training to a broad audience of employers.