

Participating in the CDC's National Healthy Worksite Program

Getting Started

Carrie Adams, human resources wellness coordinator at Hillyard, learned about the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) National Healthy Worksite Program (NHWP) while attending a business roundtable discussion in St. Joseph, Missouri. An attendee who was involved with the NHWP encouraged Adams to apply. As a company with a mission to "help people deliver clean, safe, healthy facilities," Adams wanted to learn how to promote wellness for Hillyard's employees. Hillyard's senior managers believed that employees would

Hillyard applied principles of implementing a comprehensive health promotion program learned during the NHWP by putting in place a combination of programs, policies, and environmental supports to address multiple areas of employee health.

be healthier if they had access to wellness interventions at work, which would, in turn, help them be more productive and have lower medical costs.

Before participating in the NHWP, Hillyard had never used an organized approach to worksite wellness. Its efforts had focused on areas tied to the company's health plan, such as offering tobacco cessation counseling. Hillyard had tried to put more focused

wellness activities in place, but had struggled without proper planning and structure.

To set up a program that was comprehensive and evidence-based, Adams felt she needed additional knowledge and support. She was particularly interested in the tool kits and resources available to help her develop a structured wellness program. With support from CDC, Adams believed Hillyard could create a sustainable wellness program that would meet employee needs.

To reach this goal, Adams participated in all of the NHWP technical assistance and training sessions as well as monthly calls with a CDC worksite health advisor. Adams said she appreciated the monthly technical assistance calls because they helped to keep her on track, reinforced Hillyard's efforts, and provided new ideas and resources.

Organization Background

Hillyard Companies

- « Established in 1907
- « Industry: Manufacturing
- « Location: St. Joseph, Missouri
- « 200 Employees at headquarters (St. Joseph)

Hillyard has manufactured and distributed cleaning and hygiene solutions for more than 100 years. The company focuses on helping people deliver clean, safe, and healthy facilities. It's famous for its patented wood sports floor care systems, which are used in NCAA college basketball tournaments. Hillyard also is known for developing and using products that are efficient, environmentally friendly, and safe for workers. Hillyard's headquarters includes office staff and factory and distribution center workers.

Completing a Baseline Assessment

One of the first NHWP activities that participating employers completed was a baseline assessment in 2013. The results were used to develop an employee wellness program tailored to specific staff needs. The NHWP assessment included employee surveys covering health conditions, healthy behaviors, and perceptions about the work environment, as well as biometric screenings. Like all of the employers participating in the NHWP, Hillyard also completed the [CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard](#), a validated organizational tool designed to help employers assess the extent to which they have implemented evidence-based health promotion interventions in their worksites.



Headquarters of Hillyard Companies located in St. Joseph, Missouri.
Photo provided by Hillyard.

Setting Goals

The assessment highlighted priority areas for Hillyard to address. Adams used the results, as well as principles from NHWP training and technical assistance materials, to set goals for nutrition and weight management and specific, time-bound objectives to help achieve the following goals:

- Goal: Encourage employees to make healthier food choices and improve their nutritional status.
 - Objective: Increase the percentage of employees who eat at least 5 daily servings of fruit and vegetables from 7% to 9%.
 - Objective: Reduce the percentage of employees who are at high or moderate risk for high cholesterol from 79% to 76%.
- Goal: Improve weight management among employees.
 - Objective: Reduce the percentage of employees who are obese from 45% to 43%.

Program Overview

Hillyard branded its new program “Live Healthy Hillyard” and created a logo that incorporated the company’s colors and checkerboard logo. The company used multiple strategies, including programs, new policies, and environmental changes to reach its nutrition and weight management goals. Hillyard promoted programs, activities, and tips for healthy living in the employee newsletter and on television screens located in high-traffic areas of its buildings.

Changing the Environment to Promote Healthy Eating

To address the nutritional objectives, Hillyard focused on improving environmental supports for healthy eating at work. The company worked with its vendors to increase healthier, lower-cholesterol options in its vending machines. Unhealthy items like pastries and candy bars were replaced with healthier items

like baked chips and trail mix. Healthier options were increased by 30% as a result of this effort.

Supporting Weight Management and Physical Activity

Hillyard sponsored an 8-week class on weight management and covered the \$25 cost for the 10-15 employees who participated. The company also sponsored a 5-month weight-loss challenge, with each participant putting in \$10 and Hillyard matching the total. Employees stayed on track with weekly weigh-ins, and small prizes were awarded monthly. The 12 employees who participated lost a total of about 70 pounds.

To boost weight loss and general health through physical activity, Hillyard also encouraged employees to walk, run, and bike. It organized regular on-site exercise classes, generally using a fitness DVD. In October 2013, Hillyard launched a “Walktober”

program to get employees outside and walking. The centerpiece was a weekly 3-mile walk, in which employees met on a nearby trail along the Missouri River to walk together after work. Hillyard provided information about local trails and events related to physical activity and encouraged participation by giving away T-shirts and small prizes. An average of 25 employees participated in each of the Walktober walks.

Adams organized other group walks, including a virtual walk to the North Pole. The walk took place between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve, a time notorious for holiday eating and less physical activity. The time employees spent walking or participating in other types of exercise was converted to miles, and Adams mapped the miles to show how close employees were to reaching the North Pole. All participants were invited to a healthy celebration lunch afterwards and received T-shirts. Adams estimated that 20 to 40 employees participated in the various walking events.

Working with Local Wellness Vendors

Hillyard also contracted with a local health care system, Mosaic Life Care, to provide expertise and support in reaching its nutrition and weight management goals. Dietitians provided on-site cooking demonstrations, like Healthier Comfort Foods, Smoothie Class, and Healthy Recipes Using a Mason Jar.

Mosaic Life Care also ran the 8-week weight management class at Hillyard and encouraged employees to sign up for its biweekly health coaching sessions. About 20 to 30 employees usually attended these classes and other wellness activities.

Program Success

At the completion of the NHWP in 2015, Hillyard did a follow-up assessment with its staff, using the same measures collected at baseline (e.g., questions about health conditions, risks and behaviors, and perceptions about the work environment, biometric screening data). Employees also were asked to share feedback on the NHWP and their satisfaction with employee wellness activities at Hillyard.

Results showed that employees were aware of Hillyard's wellness efforts and were receptive to the

Experts also provided classes on a range of other health topics, including

- Heart health.
- Mindful stress reduction.
- Healthy options and weight management after the holidays.
- Getting the most from your workout.

During each class, Adams provided handouts and discussed useful websites and tools.

Working with the Community

Hillyard worked to coordinate activities both on-site and off-site to help its employees increase their physical activity levels. For example, Hillyard is an active member of health and wellness events in the St. Joseph community, and the company encourages its employees and their families to participate in these events, including a 12-week "Pound Plunge" challenge. In 2015, 15 Hillyard employees participated in the challenge and lost a combined 110 pounds. Employees can also use the weight room at the St. Joseph "REC" (recreation, exercise, community) Center at a discounted price.

Hillyard also promotes staff involvement in St. Joe Fit, an annual program sponsored by several community partners, including the City of Joseph Parks, Recreation and Civic Facilities Department and the state and local health departments. The program includes weekly walking and cycling groups, healthy eating and exercise classes, and participants log their activities and miles to win prizes. Hillyard also sponsors local charity walks, like the St. Joseph's Color Vibe 5k run, and pays registration fees for employees to participate.



*Employees of Hillyard, Companies.
Photo provided by Hillyard.*

new nutrition policies, classes and coaching, and the physical activity events.

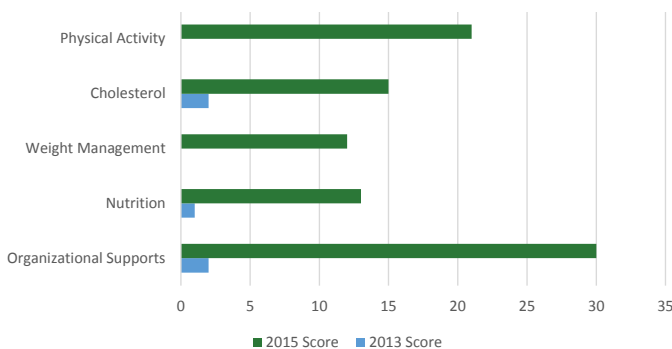
Adams also completed the CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard as part of the follow-up assessment. Hillyard increased its total ScoreCard score from 65 to 230 out of a possible 264 points. The company made improvements in several areas, including its use of evidence-based strategies for weight management, nutrition, physical activity, and cholesterol control.

Some examples of the evidence-based strategies Hillyard received points for in its 2015 ScoreCard, that it did not have in place originally, include:

- Identifying healthier food and beverage choices with signs or symbols.
- Having a written policy or formal communication that made healthier food and beverage choices available during meetings when food was served.
- Providing free or subsidized self-management programs for cholesterol or lipid control.
- Providing free or subsidized one-on-one or group lifestyle counseling for employees who are overweight or obese.
- Providing organized group physical activity programs for employees.

Hillyard made the largest gains in its score in the Organizational Supports module, which assesses the extent to which organizations have a foundation and infrastructure in place to support and maintain a workplace health promotion program. The company now has organizational commitment and support at all levels of management, and a paid health promotion coordinator whose job it is to implement a worksite health promotion program.

CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard Overall Score in Wellness Programming, 2013-2015



In 2013, 128 Hillyard employees completed the baseline health assessment. In 2015, 70 employees completed the follow-up assessment, including 50 of the original 128. The follow-up assessment showed that Hillyard had met several of its objectives for improving the health conditions and behaviors of its staff.

2013 Employee Health Issues and Lifestyle Risks Profile (Employees = 128)	
Self-Reported Health Assessment Survey	
Health care provider diagnosed cholesterol	24%
Eat at least 5 daily servings of fruits and vegetables	5%
Engage in little or no physical activity	61%
Current smoker	22%
Biometric Screening	
Body Mass Index: % overweight (BMI between 25.0-29.9)	29%
Body Mass Index: % obese (BMI >30)	45%
High cholesterol (>240 mg/dL)	7%
Diabetes (blood sugar >126 mg/dL)	7%
Elevated blood pressure (systolic >140 mmHg or diastolic ≥90 mmHg)	16%

2015 Employee Health Issues and Lifestyle Risks Profile (Employees = 70)*	
Self-Reported Health Assessment Survey	
Health care provider diagnosed cholesterol	29%
Eat at least 5 daily servings of fruits and vegetables	11%
Engage in little or no physical activity	33%
Current smoker	10%
Biometric Screening	
Body Mass Index: % overweight (BMI between 25.0-29.9)	36%
Body Mass Index: % obese (BMI >30)	26%
High cholesterol (>240 mg/dL)	3%
Diabetes (blood sugar >126 mg/dL)	4%
Elevated blood pressure (systolic >140 mmHg or diastolic ≥90 mmHg)	13%
<i>*Percentages include all employees who provided data in 2015, including those who did not complete the 2013 assessments.</i>	

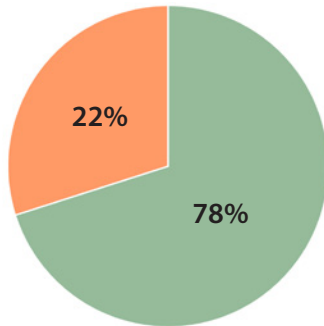
When the data were analyzed for just the 50 employees who completed both health assessments, Hillyard found that the percentage who were eating at least 5 daily servings of fruits and vegetables had increased from 6% in 2013 to 16% in 2015. The percentage with high cholesterol stayed the same (4%), but the percentage who were obese decreased from 38% to 34%. The percentage who said they engaged in little or no exercise decreased from 48% to 34%.

For employees who have been diagnosed with high cholesterol or high blood pressure, keeping those levels in a healthy range usually involves lifestyle changes and taking medication. Increasing the

number of employees who comply with their doctor's instructions to be treated with medication increases the number of employees with their conditions under control, reducing the risk of health problems and complications.

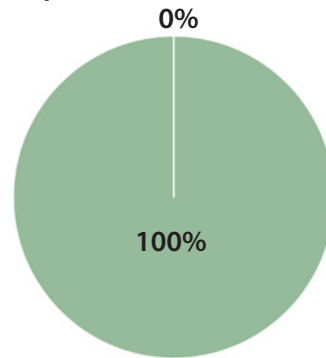
The percentage of Hillyard employees treating diagnosed high blood pressure with medication reached 100% in 2015. The percentage of employees treating diagnosed high cholesterol with medication was lower in 2015 (75%) than in 2013 (81%). However, among the 50 employees who participated in the 2013 and 2015 assessments, the percentage taking medication for diagnosed high cholesterol increased to 79% in 2015 from 62% in 2013.

Percentage of employees treating diagnosed high blood pressure with medication in 2013



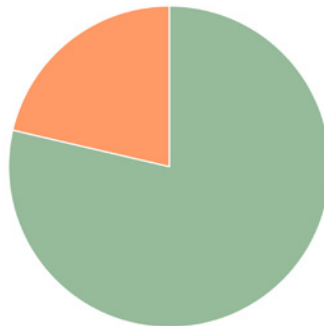
- Diagnosed and currently taking high blood pressure medication
- Diagnosed and not currently taking medications

Percentage of employees treating diagnosed high blood pressure with medication in 2015



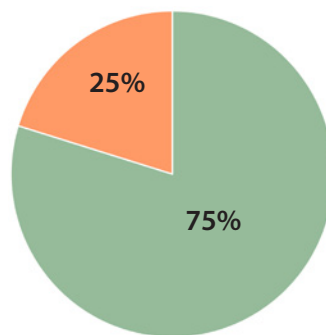
- Diagnosed and currently taking high blood pressure medication
- Diagnosed and not currently taking medications

Percentage of Employees Treating Diagnosed High Cholesterol with Medication in 2013



- Diagnosed and currently taking cholesterol medication
- Diagnosed and not currently taking medications

Percentage of Employees Treating Diagnosed High Cholesterol with Medication in 2015



- Diagnosed and currently taking cholesterol medication
- Diagnosed and not currently taking medications

Challenges

One challenge for Hillyard's efforts was that employees at its factory and distribution center had a harder time participating in wellness activities because of multiple shift schedules. The company worked to overcome this by delivering some wellness demonstrations and classes during the second and third shifts. Adams also identified a wellness champion at the factory who helped get other employees to participate in the weight-loss challenge and other wellness programs. This employee had recently quit smoking and was working to lose weight. Although many factory employees were skeptical of Hillyard's wellness activities at first, they decided to take advantage of what the company had to offer when they saw the changes their coworker was making.

Adams also found that she had to identify when events and classes would draw the most people. Physical activity classes were offered year-round at first, but attendance was highest at the beginning of the year and lowest during the summer. As a result, Hillyard began offering classes only from January to April. Hillyard has made great progress toward their goals and learned a lot in the process, building its capacity for future efforts toward creating a healthy work environment.

"There is power in champions who look like and act like the staff the program is trying to engage."

—Carrie Adams, Human Resources Wellness Coordinator, Hillyard

What's Next?

Adams said she wants to continue to develop an active wellness community at Hillyard. The company will continue to offer classes, special challenges, and health coaching. It is considering adding programs designed to increase fruit and vegetable consumption, like promoting a vegetable of the month. Hillyard will also continue to take advantage of its collaboration with community agencies to participate in larger community events, like the St. Joe Fit program.



The National Healthy Worksite Program was designed to help employers put into action science- and practice-based disease-prevention and wellness strategies that would lead to specific measurable health outcomes to reduce chronic disease rates. From 2013-2015, each participant received support, training, and technical assistance to put in place a combination of program, policy, and environmental interventions to support physical activity, good nutrition, and tobacco-use cessation.