

## **Wellness Inside: Intel's Health and Wellness Program**

**Catherine Elliott, RN, MN, COHN-S, CSP**  
**Health and Wellbeing; Americas Operations**  
**Intel Corporation**  
**Hillsboro, OR**

**Shannon Smith, BA, MBA**  
**Employee Communications Manager**  
**Intel Corporation**  
**Chandler, AZ**

### **Introduction**

Employee retention, rising health care costs, addressing an aging population, and a desire for employees to be “healthier because they work at Intel” all influenced Intel’s decision to create a company sponsored health and wellness program. Based on a vision of developing a culture where employees and their families are healthy, productive, and engaged in living wellness-oriented lifestyles every day, employees are now inspired and motivated to take action toward achieving their best possible health and quality of life.

Intel’s Health for Life wellness program includes onsite biometrics, annual health risk assessments, fitness programs, wellness seminars, flu prevention, and personal wellness coaching. This presentation shares how Intel used a process to pilot and deploy an effective global health and wellness program because “it’s the right thing to do”.

### **Pilot Study**

One of our main program components is a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) provided online by a major healthcare provider. Results of the HRA are used to drive health and wellness programs (all data reported to Intel from the HRA is in aggregate form, no individual employee information is given to Intel).

Upon close examination of the aggregate HRA results, we noted that those who participated in the HRA had several missing data points (e.g., blood pressure, blood lipids & glucose results, and body fat percentage) that are important in assessing lifestyle and medical risk factors. Therefore,

we did not believe the information we received from the HRA gave an accurate picture of the health risks of our employees.

We therefore had two assumptions:

1. We did not have accurate results from the HRA; and
2. Employees are interested in knowing about their health risks.

Our Health for Life program development began with a pilot study at our five main U.S. manufacturing sites. We provided free on-site lab work (fasting cholesterol, triglycerides, and glucose) and biometrics (blood pressure, pulse, weight, height, and body fat percentage) during hours that were convenient for employees. Employees received their lab results a few days later via interoffice mail. An e-mail was then sent to them with a link to the online HRA and directions to enter their lab and biometric data and complete their HRA.

After completing their HRA, employees were scheduled for their 30-minute confidential, one-on-one counseling session with an occupational health registered nurse. These sessions were used to review the employees' results and offer ways to manage their health risks. After the session we e-mailed employees links to additional resources and a link to a survey on the process. Of those who responded to the survey, 96% were satisfied or very satisfied with the pilot. We also asked employees for their comments on how to improve the process and incorporated their suggestions into overall program.

We compared the results of those employees who participated in the pilot study with those who did not participate and saw a statistically significant increase in risk factors of elevated blood pressure, serum lipids, and glucose. We confirmed our concern that employees who were not provided with lab and biometric results (non-pilot participants) did not have all the necessary data needed to completely fill out the HRA.

For our pilot program, we anticipated 25 employee participants at each site. Response to the pilot invitation (an e-mail blast) was overwhelming and the online lab-scheduling tool crashed. Rather than turn away several hundred employees, we adjusted our study time frame and enlisted more help. At the end of the pilot we had 50-200 participants at each site. The experience confirmed for us that employees are interested in their health and want to learn how to manage their health risks.

## **U.S.-wide Introduction**

To secure executive support and funding for U.S. wide implementation of the program, a Health for Life wellness program proposal was presented by Occupational Health to the Vice President and General Manager of Intel's Digital Health Group and Intel's CEO. The presentation included information and trends on rising health care costs for both Intel and the U.S., pilot study results, employee comments, a wellness strategy, the importance of risk management and reduction, and return on investment (ROI) calculations. Executive support and funding was unanimously secured.

Intel next established a cross-divisional team consisting of members from Intel's Global Benefit Design, Digital Health, Employee Communications, Occupational Health, Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, and Environmental, Health, and Safety (EHS) to begin development of the U.S. company-wide Health for Life wellness program. This core team aligned their strategic and tactical execution program objectives and assigned site level health and well-being nurses to manage local activities. With this infrastructure in place, the foundation was set to implement a strategic health and well-being program at both the corporate and local level.

The Health for Life wellness program provides employees access to resources that encourage health and wellness lifestyle choices. The team's strategies to support employees and encourage a culture of healthy lifestyles include:

- The three-step Health for Life wellness program.
- Alignment of strategic and tactical program objectives where health and well-being nurses are assigned to manage local activities and set the foundation for implementing a strategic world-wide health and well-being program.
- Onsite clinics to improve the integration of wellness programs with other convenient health services.

We partnered with a nationally known health provider company to administer the Health for Life wellness program services for two reasons. One, they are experts in providing health risk coaching and two, to increase employees' comfort of the privacy and confidentiality in the program. The program elements consist of the same 3 steps as our pilot with one major change. Rather than registered nurses meeting and educating employees as to what actions they can take to decrease their risk factors (a "take charge and command" approach), certified wellness health coaches meet with and assist employees to develop their own strategies to decrease risk factors. Control is 100% given to our employees.

## Health for Life Wellness Program Overview

To participate in the voluntary Health for Life wellness program, which includes taking the HRA, employees are asked to follow three steps. Employees who complete all three steps receive \$50 in American Express gift cards.

- Step 1:** Employees schedule an initial health check appointment at their local onsite Health and Wellness Center. During the appointment the employee meets with a certified health professional who measures blood pressure, height, body weight, body fat percentage, and body mass index (BMI). A blood sample is taken to test total cholesterol, HDL cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, triglycerides, and blood sugar (glucose) levels. Upon completion of this step employees receive a \$25 gift card.
- Step 2:** Employees use their health check results to complete the online HRA.
- Step 3:** Using their health check and HRA results, employees meet privately with a wellness coach to develop an action plan based on personal health needs. After this step, employees receive another \$25 gift card.

Employees receive results of their health check (Step 1 of the Health for Life wellness program) within a week via an encrypted email that can only be opened on their Intel account e-mail.

Once an employee completes the HRA (Step 2) they immediately receive a comprehensive Personal Health Report. This report includes information tailored to their identified personal health risks, strengths and directs employees to programs and resources that can help them address their risk factors.

During Step 3 of the Health for Life wellness program, an employee can share their Personal Health Report with an on-site wellness coach. The coach and employee work together to develop a wellness plan to address any identified health risks. If the employee has one or more risk factors they are invited to participate in the telephonic advisor program as an adjunct to their on-site session. This benefit provides access to counselors for up to six months in their selected program (e.g., weight management, exercise, nutrition, stress management, and tobacco cessation).

## **Communications**

Communications are very important to every program's success. Reaching nearly 50,000 U.S. employees requires creativity, consistency, and perseverance. Intel's Health for Life communication campaign is an ongoing effort that involves a number of tactics and channels to reach a diverse employee audience. The Health for Life communication campaign aligns with the look, feel, and tone of Intel's corporate brand communication style by including colorful images of individuals participating in healthy activities, informal conversation, and meaningful messages.

Communications connect the employee to Health for Life by answering the question "what's in it for me?" Communications are informative, engaging, and memorable to employees. This communication style is important because it effectively captures the employee's attention, increases their receptiveness to important messages, and increases employees' recognition and identification of the importance of health and wellness.

Given the diversity in Intel's population, several established communication channels are used to build awareness for health and wellness among employees and their families. Intel's multi-channel approach – print, virtual, and face to face – is designed to reach 100% of the employee population and their families. Each channel is described below:

### **Intel's Intranet site**

Intel's intranet site is the central communication vehicle and gateway to Intel's health and wellness program. The Health and Wellness web site is a "one-stop-shop" for employees. The web site provides information on:

- Health for Life wellness program
- Employee health benefits
- Location of onsite fitness centers
- Dates for upcoming wellness seminars
- Extensive wellness resource information.

### Wellness Ambassadors

Intel believes that co-workers are the most influential source for building a health and wellness culture and changing behavior. Health and wellness-minded employees are selected as Wellness Ambassadors to promote health and wellness programs and serve as a role model to co-workers. Wellness Ambassadors can share their personal stories of how they have integrated health and wellness into their lives. In addition, Wellness Ambassadors provide employees relevant and actionable information as a trusted personal source.

### Managers

Intel reinforces its corporate culture of health and wellness by utilizing a monthly online publication, *Manager Actions*, targeted to 16,000 people managers. *Manager Actions* provides a forum to share key communication messages and tactics with managers. This approach gives managers directions and tools to take health and wellness messages to their individual divisions and work groups.

### Print Material

Intel uses multiple types of print material such as posters, flyers, and guidebooks to reach employees and their families. Posters and flyers provide important and concise promotion messaging and direct employees to the intranet site for more information. Posters and flyers are strategically placed in high visibility areas such as, break rooms, hallways, conference rooms, cafes, and bulletin boards. Guidebooks provide detailed information about health and wellness programs and benefits. Guidebooks are mailed to employees' homes so that they can review the information with their families.

### Health Fairs and Road Shows

Site-wide health promotion efforts utilize a face to face approach whenever possible through on-site health fairs and road shows. Intel health and wellness representatives and medical experts are available at health fairs, benefit road shows, and at monthly table set-ups in the cafes to spread the word and put a face to a campaign or program. The expertise of the professionals and the face to face opportunity draws large crowds and makes the events extremely popular with employees.

### New Employee Orientation

New Employee Orientation takes place on the first day of work for all newly hired employees. New Employee Orientation is designed to educate new employees about Intel as a company and provide resource tools to encourage new hires to be healthy and successful in the Intel environment. A portion of the training is dedicated to health benefits and wellness education, allowing new employees to become familiar with health resources on their first day at work.

### Benefits Blog

The benefits blog is an online forum that allows employees to have a real-time conversation with other employees regarding the value of Intel benefits, including health and wellness programs. Human Resource representatives help facilitate information and answer questions about benefits and programs. The forum promotes engagement with employees through open discussion and feedback.

### E-mail

Intel utilizes e-mail to reach employees in a timely manner with messaging that is generally action oriented or informative. E-mails received by employees do not contain personal health information but rather information about on-site or virtual programs available to the employee. In addition, employees have the option to opt-in to receive a variety of health and wellness e-mail newsletters.

### Flat Screen Monitors

Intel utilizes flat screen monitors which are strategically placed in high traffic employee only areas. These monitors feature important health promotion messages and direct the employee to more information on the health and wellness intranet site.

## **Results**

Intel's Vice President of Digital Health and our program champion, set a Health for Life wellness program participation goal of 50%. The response at the beginning of the program was phenomenal. We added two additional coaches and Health and Wellness Centers to keep up with employees' interest. As the year progressed the Health for Life program teams at both the corporate and site level met biweekly to make sure we continued building awareness for the program and reached employees who had not yet participated.

In Year I, 17,014 employees participated in the Health for Life wellness program, or 34% of our U.S. population. While we did not reach our goal of 50%, our program champion said, "I am thrilled with what you have achieved. Because of this program over 17,000 Intel employees now know more about their health and how to care for themselves than did last year. Good job".

Intel compares year-to-year participants' risk factors in aggregate form. Results show a strong trend of participants reducing their number of risks over the previous years. In the October 2006-September 2007 (Year I) campaign 55% of the participants had a low to moderate number of risk factors. Presently for the October 2007-September 2008 (Year II) campaign, cohort data is showing a positive movement to 66% low to moderate number of risks.

Survey results suggest employees are satisfied with the Health for Life wellness program and show a desire for a continued culture of health and wellness:

- 96% of survey respondents said they were very likely or likely to recommend this program to a co-worker
- 94% of survey respondents said they were very committed or committed to taking further action to either maintain or improve their health

## **Lessons Learned and Future Plans**

- Strong senior leadership support and commitment is critical for program sustainability.

- A core team with cross departmental membership ensures all issues are addressed at the highest level.
- Having on-site facilities with convenient hours for employees' increases participation.
- Develop, track, and communicate Critical Success Indicators to stakeholders, partners, and customers.
- Perception of confidentiality and privacy is very important to employees.
- The message that "Intel cares" is important to employees.
- Focus on improving the process based on employee survey results and comments.
- Ensure continuous improvement processes are in place, e.g., a vendor scorecard to measure performance against business requirements
- Include all vendors/providers in partnership meetings
- Ongoing communications to keep the message fresh for employees is critical to program success, e.g., electronic newsletters, posters, health fairs, café promotions, and other "meet and greet" opportunities.

Due to the success of the U.S. Health for Life wellness program, we are expanding the program in 2008 to Intel's Costa Rica, Malaysia, and Israel sites. The HRA will be available in the local languages.

The Health for Life wellness program is now the gateway for all employees to access health promotion resources that focus on health and wellness lifestyle choices. And our Health and Wellness Centers are on their way for becoming the integration point for improving the health of employees and therefore the productivity of Intel.

## References

- "Case Study with Jackson Kelly, PLLC." *Wellness Matters* Wellness Council of America Interview 2006 24-29.
- "Results of a Survey of Employer Decision-making for Health & Productivity" *American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. 2005.
- Berger, M., Howell, R., Nicholson, S., Sharda, C. "Investing in Healthy Human Capital." *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*." 45 (12), December 2003.
- Burton WN, Chen CY, Conti DJ, Schultz AB, Edington D. "The Association Between Health Risk Change and Presenteeism Change." *American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. 48 (3). March 2006
- Chapman, L. "Choosing the right HRA." *WELCOA Absolute Advantage*. 2005
- Chapman, L. "Meta-Evaluation of Worksite Health Promotion Economic Return Studies." *American Journal of Health Promotion* 17 (3) 1-10 Jan-Feb 2003

- Collins JJ, Baase CM, Sharda CE, Ozminkowski RJ, Nicholson S, Billotti GM, Turpin RS, Olson M, Berger ML, JOEM,: "The Assessment of Chronic Health Conditions on Work Performance, Absence, and Total Economic Impact for Employers." *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. 47 (6), June 2005
- Edington, D. How Health Risk Appraisals Can Take Your Program To The Next Level Wellness Council of America Interview interviews 2006 ([www.welcoa.org](http://www.welcoa.org)).
- Edington, Dee. W. "Emerging Research: A View From One Research Center." *American Journal of Health Promotion*. 15(5) 2001. 341-349.
- Goetzel, R,: "The Cost of Wellness." Wellness Council of America Interview May 5, 2004.
- Goetzel, R., Ozminkowski, R., Baase, C., Billotti, G. "Estimating the Return-on-Investment from changes in Employee Health Risks on The Dow Chemical Company's Health Care Costs." *American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine* 47 (8):759-768 August 2005
- Molella, R. "The Economic burden of excess risk." *International Health Promotion Management*. 2(1) October 2005.
- National Business Group on Health ([www.ngbh.org](http://www.ngbh.org)). "Improving Health. Improving Business. A 4-Part Guide to Implementing Employee"
- Serxner, S., Gold, D., Grossmeier, J., Anderson, D. 2003. The Relationship between health promotion program participation and medical costs: a dose response, *American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*. 45(11), November 2003 1196-1200.
- Sullivan, Sean. "Healthy Human Capital and Business Competitiveness." *International Health Promotion Management* e-ditorial Vol. 1, No 2 February 21, 2006.
- Sweeney, K. "Wellness Programs Must Be Properly Constructed and Marketed for Maximum Return on Investment." *Employee Benefit News*, March 2005, p. 46.