Abstract

ProClub: Multi-Year Assessment of the City of Gainesville’s Comprehensive Wellness Program on Physical Activity

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Background:
Worksite wellness programs (WWP) are increasingly being incorporated in various organizations and businesses. WWPs can positively impact health behavior, reduce healthcare costs, and create a healthier and more productive workforce. Within the City of Gainesville, ProClub is a comprehensive, incentive-based wellness program which promotes health, proper dieting, and physical activity at no cost to city employees.

Objective:
The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of physical activity over time from the City of Gainesville’s WWP incentive program, ProClub, years 2007-2010.

Methods:
Participants in each cohort recorded physical activity throughout their respective year, in addition to completing a fitness evaluation that included cardiovascular, strength, and flexibility tests. Data was analyzed for each cohort and demographics of gender, age, and body mass index (BMI) were compared over time. Additionally, an impact evaluation questionnaire was developed to measure general health, attitudes and behaviors of health, self-reported health care costs, and beliefs toward ProClub.

Results:
Gender was found to be significantly associated with number of pushups (p<0.001) and sit and reach distance (p<0.01). Age was highly, significantly associated with number of pushups (p<0.001). BMI was only associated with sit and reach distance (p=0.02) in 2007 and pulse (p=0.02) in 2009. Trends for gender showed that males had higher means for pulse and number of pushups, and lower means for sit and reach distance compared to females. Individuals over 40 years of age had lower means for pulse, pushups, and sit and reach distance. BMI levels over 25.0 (overweight and obese) were indicative of a lower number of pushups and sit and reach distance. Self-reported compliance of minimum requirements for aerobic and resistance exercise were each over 70%, and as high as 84%; a significant finding compared to local and state physical activity recommendations of 39% and 35%, respectively.

Conclusion:
One-year worksite wellness programs can be an effective way of increasing population rates of physical activity, specifically among older adults. Incentive WWPs, like ProClub, can significantly increase compliance rates in both aerobic and resistance exercise. ProClub and similar comprehensive programs, can positively impact health behavior, create a healthier workforce, and reduce healthcare costs for both employer and employee.