

Case Study Novartis

Company

Novartis provides healthcare solutions that address the evolving needs of patients and societies. Headquartered in Basel, Switzerland, Novartis Group companies employ approximately 121,000 full-time-equivalent associates and operate in more than 140 countries around the world.



Programme Name

Be Healthy is the first Novartis company-wide health and well-being initiative. It is an internal initiative for the benefit of Novartis associates.

Programme Objective

Be Healthy is a group-wide health promotion initiative for our affiliates worldwide to support healthy lifestyles, share knowledge and help associates to reduce injury and risk of disease that could impact associates' personal and professional lives.

This initiative builds upon a tradition of providing health and well-being programs for associates at Novartis. The health and well-being of associates is a top priority for the Novartis Group and a natural extension of the company purpose to "care and cure."

Programme Overview

Be Healthy supports our belief that our people are an integral part of our success, and a healthy workforce underpins business growth, innovation and productivity. Executing Be Healthy successfully will potentially reduce the burden of chronic illnesses for associates and their families as well as reduce overall healthcare costs.

Launched in April 2011, Be Healthy is based on four pillars:

- (1) Move: increase physical activity and decrease sedentary behaviour,
- (2) Choose: healthy foods and eat appropriately to keep in top shape at work and at home,
- (3) Know: know your numbers so that you can take control of your health,
- (4) Manage: provide support for associates with disabilities or illnesses to maintain or regain their ability to perform at home and at work

Sites participating in Be Healthy introduce a range of health and well-being activities to encourage associates to exercise regularly, choose healthy food offerings in canteens and participate in free screenings to learn important numbers such as blood pressure and cholesterol levels. In addition, support programs are available for those managing an illness or condition.

Be Healthy Celebration Week

The Be Healthy Celebration Week annual campaign is one of the highlights of the new Be Healthy initiative. The first Novartis Be Healthy Celebration Week took place company-wide from September 19-23, 2011, with each day focusing on a different aspect of the initiative – Move, Choose, Know and Manage. Sites carried out a minimum level of activities each day, i.e.:

- Day 1: Move: sample exercise classes on site
- Day 2: Choose: free healthy meal or snack
- Day 3: Know: free measurement of key health numbers

- Day 4: Manage: Employee Assistance Program awareness-raising
- Day 5: Novartis sport cup competition

During the whole week, Group Company associates were encouraged to take the stairs using signs, competitions and small incentives to point out that even making a small change in their daily routine can have a big impact on their health. However, participation in these activities is voluntary for associates.

Programme Components

Be Healthy is based on four pillars that gives our associates a platform to become more involved in their personal health and live healthier lives.

Move – Exercise

Participating in physical activity is a key component of good cardiovascular, respiratory and emotional health. Incorporating moving and exercise in your routine reaps benefits for overall health: healthy weight, normal blood pressure, cholesterol and blood sugar, resistance against infections and heightened resilience.

Novartis associates at participating sites should have access to a gym or fitness area and the company will subsidize membership. Participating sites are requested to establish at least one sport team formation and to hold a tournament as part of the global “Be Healthy Celebration Week” in September.

Choose – Eating

Food is not simple fuel but essential for a healthy life. A balanced diet fulfills a body’s need for vitamins, minerals and nutrients, contributes to overall wellness and reduces the risk of disease.

In line with the food pyramid, which suggests daily servings for different food groups, Be Healthy encourages participating sites to strive to ensure associates have the option of selecting a healthy meal on site. That meal is the lowest priced full meal option on the menu.

Participating sites are encouraged to arrange for healthy food options at Novartis on- and off-site events. To help associates make healthy choices, site restaurants and canteens have put in place a clear food labelling system.

Know – Health promotion and awareness

Prevention starts with awareness. Be Healthy introduced a “Know your numbers” card and iPhone/iPad app for associates and encourages participating sites to offer annual checks to track vital health indicators (blood pressure, blood sugar, body height and weight (Body Mass Index (BMI)), cholesterol). This helps associates understand their state of health, the factors they have control over, and what actions to take if any of these measures requires intervention.

Knowing these key indicators can detect many diseases considered “silent killers” because they affect people before they detect any symptoms. Where appropriate, these annual tests should cover selected infectious diseases. Under Be Healthy, sites should also provide seasonal flu vaccinations for associates and their families and at least one additional health screening per year. Novartis Companies should provide support for smoking cessation because smoking is the single most important risk factor for several diseases, including heart and lung disease.

Manage – Your health at work

Participating sites should establish programs to assist associates with chronic illness, injuries or disabilities who seek additional support. Each site should offer an Employee Assistance Program that includes free,

confidential and short-term counselling as well as referral assistance to all associates when faced with problems affecting their health and performance.

Further affiliates should set up a system , consistent with local legal requirements, to create a return to work plan for associates who experience an individual absence longer than 10 days, and where the associate needs accommodation to assist him/her to perform the essential functions of his/her job or an alternative job.

Results

Be Healthy has broad reach within the Group. In 2011, 76 of the largest Novartis sites across 32 countries launched the program which means that the initiative reached 80% of affiliates' associates. In 2012, the initiative will expand to 100 additional sites and reach 95% of associates.

In addition, a monitoring and evaluation plan has been put in place to track implementation and improve program offerings. In 2011, 55% of the participating sites were audited in person by a member of the Corporate Be Healthy Team who tracks compliance as well as offering support and best practice to site implementation teams.