

Creating a Culture of Employee Health at Jefferson Through Partnership with HealthNEXT

It's no secret that people immersed in a culture of health and wellness "pursue and achieve higher levels of health and wellness than the general population does."¹ Jefferson is committed to ensuring that every employee has the opportunity to make choices that lead to healthy lifestyles. To that end, Jefferson has partnered with HealthNEXT^{*}, to provide recommendations on additional initiatives to help employees improve their wellbeing.

This is the second year of the partnership with HealthNEXT, with the goal of helping Jefferson to implement and nurture a lasting culture of health. This shift, away from simply managing health care costs to actively working to improve the health of employees, is becoming more mainstream as the health care industry focuses more on population health management.

HealthNEXT will work with us to identify programs that help employees and their families lead healthy, happy lives. These programs may involve providing better access to care, supporting their efforts to break tough habits like smoking or making healthier food and lifestyle choices every day.

The process starts by benchmarking how we work to improve employee wellbeing as compared to similar organizations that are seeing improvements in through their wellness-centric cultures and environments. Using evidence-based clinical and behavioral programs, HealthNEXT is working with us to develop a roadmap specifically tailored to fill any gaps noted during their analysis of our results. The HealthNEXT team also provides guidance regarding

how to implement the programs and set measurable goals so that we can stay on track and monitor success. A fundamental part of the Jefferson-HealthNEXT partnership includes high-touch and high-continuity cross-functional teams.

"In a health care environment, employees focus on taking care of their patients, and they don't always prioritize their own health. HealthNEXT emphasizes that those employees need to be in an environment where they are empowered to take care of themselves, too," says Erin Rizzotte, Wellness Coordinator at Jefferson.

HealthNEXT analyzes organizations' wellness cultures and assigns an initial score, which serves as the baseline for their future-facing recommendations, which are ideally implemented over the course of three years. To achieve a true "culture of health," an organization must score 700 or more points.

Joann Piechowski, Senior Director of Benefits at Jefferson notes, "HealthNEXT really looks at whether employees are getting the message, and if Jefferson is measuring the results of wellness initiatives. Wellness isn't a one-off activity, it should be all around us and present in every aspect of our environment."

Jefferson's collaboration with HealthNEXT began with an assessment of Jefferson's commitment to wellness through a thorough review of our work and learning environments, benefits design and wellness program communications. After touring various facilities and work environments to look at what is available in the vending machines, hospital cafeterias, break rooms,

and signage across Jefferson's campus, HealthNEXT representatives spoke with Jefferson's senior executives and CEO, Stephen K. Klasko. HealthNEXT used the information gleaned through these activities to inform their organizational analysis and arrive at a score.

Jefferson received an initial score of 364, which is the second-highest starting score of any HealthNEXT client to date. "We were very pleased to see our commitment to health and wellness as an organization reflected in the score," notes Piechowski. "We still have work to do to achieve a complete 'culture of health,' but an initial score that is more than halfway to 700 points is a great place to start."

HealthNEXT advised Jefferson to align corporate, departmental and local wellness efforts to create an easily recognizable and immersive culture of health. Based on these recommendations, we are working with the facilities team to implement a stairwell initiative to encourage employees to use the stairs instead of elevators where possible. HealthNEXT also encouraged Jefferson to implement a case management program to help employees with chronic conditions, which may roll out as early as next year. They also advised Jefferson to investigate the possibility of opening an employee clinic, and recommended we work to enhance the organization's data warehouse and data analytic capabilities.

A study published by HealthNEXT in 2013 notes that employee population health can be linked to a company's performance.²

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As noted in its press release, “This research delivers a much-needed dose of quantitative proof to support the notion that a healthy workforce is a competitive advantage in the marketplace,” said Raymond Fabius, MD, the lead author of the study and vice chairman of HealthNEXT.³ “At a time when many corporations are looking for ways to cut healthcare expenses, in some cases even dropping coverage for their employees, our results suggest that real path to savings is not dropping health

benefits, but rather improving them. Quite simply, we’ve proven that a corporate focus on health and safety is good business.”³

Jefferson eagerly awaits the results of its annual evaluation from HealthNEXT, which will determine the organization’s progress on implementing the initial recommendations and other wellness-focused programs. Results and updated recommendations are expected in late 2016.

*HealthNEXT was acquired by digital health company HealthRight in July 2016.

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