



Selected Case Studies: Workplace Policies & Practices

The National Alliance for Caregiving “Best Practices in Workplace Eldercare Study” was conducted for ReACT to identify current trends and innovations in workplace policies and practices that support employees with eldercare responsibilities. The report includes case studies of 18 companies and agencies, ranging from 35 to 118,000 employees, supporting caregivers in the workplace.



Selected Case Studies: Suncoast Hospice, 800-1,000 employees

SUNCOAST HOSPICE

Clearwater, FL

Number of Employees: between 800-1,000

www.thehospice.org

Program

Suncoast Hospice began to identify support options for their employees who were caregivers at the beginning of their organization in 1977. They implemented a formal flexible work schedule for employees which is continued today. In addition to flexible work schedules their programs include:

- Employee Assistance Program;
- Yoga and exercise programs at all of their service centers;
- Pilgrimage program—holistic spiritual approach to supporting caregivers: includes aromatherapies, massage, and energy work;
- Annual health and wellness fair;
- Caregiving coffee breaks;
- Caregiver support conference calls (facilitated); and
- Team support meetings.

Marketing/Utilization

Marketing is done in-house and utilization rates are unknown.

Evaluation

No formal evaluation of the eldercare program components. However, they did a formal survey of employees and convened a worklife wellness committee to review and plan for program elements. Feedback from the employees is informally assessed through demand and comments made by employees.

Benefit to Employer

Programs help with retention. There is a very low turn-over rate compared to other hospices and health care providers and they believe it is due to the supportive environment they have created.

Other Program Information

The holistic program of yoga and energy work is considered to be the most innovative of their programs. Suncoast has also made some of their programs available to community residents, as well as their employees.



FANNIE MAE

Washington, DC

Number of Employees: over 6,000

www.fanniemaec.com

Program

Fannie Mae's eldercare program began in 1999 and consists of the following services:

- Eldercare consultations (in-person or remote).
The consultation service can be used for any care situation facing the employee including care for in-laws and grandparents. Consultations can also include conference calls with siblings and joint consultations with spouses;
- Information, resource and referral service;
- Supportive/crisis counseling;
- Lunch-time education seminars (in person, online or dial-in); and
- Elderkit. This is a binder with planning tools and sample documents. A CD is also available.

Most of the elements were started in 1999. Newer additions included the development of the Elderkit in 2000, and the addition of a CD version of the kit in 2007.

The consultation service is unique in that it relies upon a geriatric care manager/licensed clinical social worker who is housed at Fannie Mae, but is employed by Iona Senior Services, a non-profit service agency. The social worker oversees the program and provides consultations directly. As an employee of the independent agency, this professional has true independence in her work and is able to avoid any competing demands or interests that may arise when the consulting professional is employed by the employer.

Marketing / Utilization

The marketing of the program is managed by the HR department and is ongoing, including an eldercare fact sheet and "frequently asked questions" page on the intranet. In addition, word of mouth has been an important component of the marketing. Between 5% and 6% of the workforce use some element of the program annually; a rate that exceeds the average. As of FY 2011, 2,446 employees have accessed the program.

Evaluation

Employees are surveyed regarding the program. In one dependent care survey, 92% reported that the program saved them time, 100% reported that they would use the program again and 100% reported they would recommend the services to a co-worker. More than 25% of the respondents reported that the program helped them with a situation that, if left unresolved, might have caused them to leave their job.

Benefit to Employer

The employer benefits from the program due to increased retention and productivity, improved morale of workers and a decrease in caregiving anxiety and absenteeism.

Other Program Information

This program was one of the first in the country to use the services of a full-time on-site eldercare consultant to support employees. By giving the caregiving professional autonomy and not limiting the access to the service by care recipient type or number of hours, the program is flexible enough to help and support all employees.

Source: The original report and other resources are available from the National Alliance for Caregiving at: www.caregiving.org/research/impact-of-caregiving/.

Please contact us to request a free presentation, or find more information and free resources:

www.CaringTogetherLompoc.org