



# Supervisor NEWSLETTER

Employee Assistance Program  
January 2018

## Wellness in the Workplace: The 2018 Edition

Patrick Rice, MA, LMHC, CEAP

**You already know that many of your employees will be focusing on their health this year through exercise, dieting, or some other approach—you may, in fact, be anticipating doing the same yourself.**

But have you considered where the workplace fits into the wellness picture? Given that most employees spend 40 hours or more at their jobs, and that 80% of American employees report feeling stressed by their jobs (American Institute of Stress, 2001), the beginning of the year might be an ideal time to look at your workplace, and consider some ways that you can help meet your employee's wellness needs.

If the idea of making a change intrigues you, consider implementing some of the following trends and ideas in 2018:

- **Addressing the Aging Workforce**—The reality of the aging American workforce will likely hit your office this year. Consider ways to address their needs and the needs of your office at large, such as providing increased health information for your employees, or coordinating health screening initiatives with your health insurance or local health clinics.

- **Limiting Technology Use**—Technology has become so ubiquitous that it now seems to be eliminating the line between work and home—a trend that has contributed heavily to the rate of burnout in the workplace. As a role model at work, consider modeling good boundaries for the use of technology, and encouraging employees to take breaks throughout the day. As an added benefit, tech breaks will help your bottom line, as studies show that taking breaks actually increases productivity.
- **Getting Creative with Wellness**—Wellness programs have been in the benefits world for a while, which is why their benefits might be looking a little stale at this point. Since many of your employees will already be vested in getting fit in January, consider how you might bring their motivation into the workplace while also reinvigorating your wellness program.
- **Bringing Stress Reduction into the Workplace**—Research increasingly shows a complex picture of what creates stress. Furthermore, that same research shows that employees are bringing that stress into the workplace – to the tune of 30 billion dollars a year in lost time and wages, according to the Harvard Gazette. As a problem that's not going to disappear, consider how you can address overall wellness more directly this year. Solutions might include marketing your wellness offerings more, promoting walking groups at lunch, or starting up a discussion group to focus on ways to reduce stress in the workplace. What matters here is that the buy in comes from the top, and that it's consistent.

*Continued on the next page.*

**First Choice Health™**

Healthy Employees. Healthy Companies.™

(800) 777-4114



[www.FirstChoiceEAP.com](http://www.FirstChoiceEAP.com)



Your EAP service is free, confidential and available 24/7 to help you balance your work, family, and personal life.

*Continued from the previous page.*

One more theme to consider for 2018: workplace wellness isn't going away. For companies both big and small, your employees will always be bringing their health with them into the workplace, making it important to use every tool at your disposal. In addition to your other benefits and resources, don't forget that your EAP is also a fantastic resource for thoughts on wellness both physical and mental, and that your Account Executive is always available for consultation on the topic.

Because, when it comes to making a change, your organization and your employees deserve a hand.

**References:**

<https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2016/07/the-high-price-of-workplace-stress/>

