Good Health is Good Business: New Website Promotes Healthy Workforce Culture

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Small and medium-sized companies seeking to promote a healthy workplace culture and help employees to pursue a healthy lifestyle will get support from a new website brought to you by the Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation (HWCF) with its partner the National Business Group on Health.

Today the two organizations launched YourWellnessAdvantage.com that will actively motivate employers to make it a priority to encourage health consciousness in their workplaces and healthy living among their employees, with a strong focus on reducing obesity. The site will be especially helpful to small and midsize companies. While 75 percent of large companies have implemented wellness initiatives, less than 10 percent of small and midsized companies have, faced with more scarce resources and fewer economies of scale.

"Wellness initiatives make sense for businesses of all sizes," said Helen Darling, president of the National Business Group on Health. "They can help reduce medical costs, absenteeism, workers compensation and disability claims, while also attracting the best employees and improving productivity. Good health is good business."

The relationship between employee health and business competitiveness becomes apparent every day in U.S. offices, factories and other workplaces. Obesity-related disorders alone are responsible for nearly 40 million lost workdays, 239 million restricted activity days, and 63 million doctor visits by employees across the country, according to the Department of Health and Human Services. As well as reduced medical costs for both employers and employees and reduced absenteeism, the benefits of a healthy workplace include improved productivity and tax incentives.

Many small and mid-size businesses underestimate their own ability to create a healthy workplace, citing their disadvantages of scale. YourWellnessAdvantage.com addresses such concerns. It serves as a one-stop website providing valuable information on how to promote a healthy workplace, including statistical data, guidance, and tools that offer employers the flexibility to pick and choose among practical turnkey solutions or to customize programs that meet the unique needs of their own company.
"You don’t have to be a big company to make a big difference," said Lisa Gable, Executive Director of the Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation (HWCF). "YourWellnessAdvantage.com gives employers the tools they need. Workplace wellness is for everyone, and the new website helps make the resources accessible to everyone."

The site also reinforces and supports initiatives by both the White House and the HWCF. The Healthy Weight Commitment Foundation is being led by CEOs and includes 80 retailers, food and beverage manufacturers, sporting goods, insurance, trade associations and NGOs.

Member companies – who represent a combined 14 million employees worldwide – and their supply chains will be encouraged to include links to the website. In addition to the workplace, the Foundation also combats obesity through initiatives in the schools (including developing new models for integrating nutrition education and physical education) and in the marketplace (including product reformulation and redesigned packaging and labeling.)