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-
- Bridget Moore, Executive Director**

**CCCSIG HEALTH BENEFITS PROGRAM
SPRING WELLNESS ACTIVITIES!!**

by Bridget Moore, Executive Director

Due to last year's success, CCCSIG Health Benefits Program Wellness committee members voted to hold combined health screenings and flu vaccine shots at each member district in the fall, as part of the CCCSIG Wellness Fund program. These services will be free to employees that are Blue Cross participants and at-cost to non-Blue Cross employees.

Remember, for informative articles on a full spectrum of health issues, access www.bluecrossca.com.

Health focus for:

- April - Cancer Control Month**
- May - High Blood Pressure Month**
- June - Vision Research Month**

eat sleep live
healthy

CCCSIG LINK

*Contra Costa County Schools Insurance Group
Your Workers' Compensation and Health & Safety Services Provider*



DISTRICT SPOTLIGHT: SAN RAMON VALLEY USD

By Erica Williamson, Human Resources Manager

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Suzi Reynolds started working at the San Ramon Valley USD as a substitute teacher in 1979. After a few years of substitute teaching, she happened to notice an ad for a vacancy in the Human Resources Department and the rest is history! Suzi's primary role with the district is coordinating benefits and workers' compensation, in addition to many other duties that she tackles.

One of the many areas that San Ramon Valley USD excels in is coordination of workers' compensation and thanks to Suzi's dedication, is returning employees to work in a modified or bridge capacity after a work related injury. Suzi has injured employees spend a day or two working with her so she can have an understanding of their work restrictions, as well as a sense of their background and skills. Suzi is then able to make an educated decision as to where to place the employee until they can be transitioned back to their usual and customary duties.

Suzi's respect and appreciation for injured employees truly makes a difference in their healing process. She understands the importance of having the employee not only continue to work, but to do work that is important for the district. She also works with the employee on scheduling and hours so the impact to their normal schedule is minimal. Suzi also uses open communication with payroll, the employee's supervisor and any other district members that need to be involved in the Return-to-Work process in order to keep everyone informed and the transition smooth. She has created structured email notices to immediately provide necessary information for efficient and timely monitoring and processing of the employee's work status.

San Ramon Valley USD has made a concerted effort to be dedicated to the program because it recognizes the impact the program has made on reducing the cost of lost time (which comes directly from dollars that could be spent in the classroom). Top management, from the Superintendent to the School Board on down supports the program, which along with Suzi's dedicated efforts, truly makes a difference to the district and the injured employee.



WINTER 2007

SAFE SITTING!

By Jeremy Hatch, Health & Safety Services Specialist



Keeping the spine healthy requires periodic changes in posture, and dynamic movement helps to promote circulation and reduce muscle fatigue. Sitting in any static posture for a prolonged period eventually will become uncomfortable. This means that there isn't a fixed posture that's best for everyone, all of the time, whatever the task at hand. Rather, there is a desirable range of movement that works well for most people doing most of the kinds of tasks performed when sitting.

The preferred way of sitting involves the following:

- * Make sure the seat height is correctly adjusted so that your feet are on the ground or on a solid surface like a footrest.
- * Recline back in the chair, with the chair backrest angled between 100-110-degrees, so that the chair back can help support the weight of the torso.
- * Make sure that the chair has good lumbar support in the right area for your shape and size of back. If there is an adjustable support, use this to get the best position. If not, use a rolled towel or a cushion to improve your lower back support.
- * Make sure that the seat pan is the right size for you and doesn't press behind your knees.
- * Look for a chair that doesn't tip up the seat pan when you recline because this can put pressure under the thighs and behind the knees.
- * If the chair has arms, make sure that these are correctly adjusted for height so that your shoulders are relaxed, not hunched or raised when you rest on the armrests.
- * If the chair has a high neck/headrest make sure that this can be used in different sitting positions.

NEW CLAIM REPORTING SYSTEM—COMPANY NURSE!

By Michael Clark, Claims Manager

Following the CCCSIG Executive Committee's approval of the use of *Company Nurse*® all workers' compensation claims reporting will soon be completed telephonically. *Company Nurse*® is a telephonic claim reporting system whereby registered nurses receive and triage each incident as it is reported. The registered nurse is able to recommend the initiation of immediate treatment options such as ice or heat and will make recommendations to seek medical treatment at designated medical facilities when necessary. In addition, most of the paperwork currently associated with filing a workers' compensation claim will be eliminated.

(continued on page three)

BYRON USD: WALKING PROGRAM RESULTS!

By Abbie Place, Health & Safety Services Specialist



Byron Union School District employees recently concluded a 13-week district-wide walking program competition titled, "Kickin' Down the Coast." This incentive program was designed primarily to get employees in the habit of incorporating physical activity into their workdays by being physically active on breaks during their work days. Increasing physical activity yields many benefits which include more energy, increased morale and reduced stress.

73% of total district staff signed up for the program. First and second place winners were Excelsior and Discovery Bay with participant completion rates of 81% and 80%, respectively. Excelsior received a perpetual trophy and \$50 Trader Joe's gift card and all participants received a program t-shirt. **36% of total participants completed an evaluation at the end of the program, with 54% of them reporting that the program provided stress relief; 42% reporting increased energy and 21% reporting weight loss.**

A great big thank you to Byron Superintendent Tom Meyers and the principals of each school for visibly supporting the program, as well as site coordinators Sherri Cline, Stacy Lynn and Rebecca Coleman for their valuable assistance in coordinating it at the individual sites under the direction of CCCSIG's Health and Safety Services Specialists Abbie Place and Steve Webber.

Please consider offering these positive, energizing and morale-boosting programs to employees of any occupational group in your district. Programs can be adapted to meet the unique needs of the various occupational groups and include: Kickin' Down the Coast, Trek Across America and Summiting Mt. C-Sigley (our newest one).

Check out www.cccsig.org for more health and safety employee programs available to all districts!

KEY STAKEHOLDER SURVEY RESULTS

By Erica Williamson, Human Resources Manager



In late 2006, a CCCSIG Key Stakeholder Survey was issued to member districts. CCCSIG would like to thank all the member districts who took the time to complete and return the Key Stakeholder Survey.

As key stakeholders in the success of the *Contra Costa County Schools Insurance Group*, feedback from member districts on our effectiveness is very important. The input provided by CCCSIG's Key Stakeholders was very positive, and will help guide CCCSIG's future direction as well as how we develop and communicate our programs and services to members. District responses to the survey will also help identify the challenges facing

CCCSIG and assist us in moving forward.

Full results of the Key Stakeholder Survey will be presented to the Board of Directors at their annual meeting in April 2007, and specific additional programs and/or services suggested as a result of the survey will be discussed with the Executive Committee during strategic planning.

A big CONGRATULATIONS to Andrea Gonzales-Lewis with the Contra Costa Community College District who was the winner of the Key Stakeholder Survey drawing!!

NEW CLAIM REPORTING SYSTEM—COMPANY NURSE! (continued)

By Michael Clark, Claims Manager

Medical facilities will immediately be notified by *Company Nurse*® when an employee is directed to that clinic. Following the medical visit, any work restrictions will be provided to CCCSIG and the district designee for coordinating return to work in a temporary work assignment. Immediate notification of claims are anticipated to save money from the perspective of less TTD and fewer lost time days due to increased return to work efforts and appropriate medical referrals.

For an overview of *Company Nurse*®, visit the News section of our website at www.cccsig.org.



EMPLOYERS PLAY A ROLE IN PREVENTING WORKPLACE REPETITIVE STRAIN INJURIES

By Steve Webber, Health & Safety Services Specialist

It is estimated that repetitive stress injuries cost employers over \$80 billion yearly! According to the National Council of Compensation Insurance, the average compensation for an injury resulting in Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is **\$33,000!**

Additionally, there are numerous "indirect" costs to employers, which include:

- * Low employee morale
- * Lost time from work
- * Retraining expenses
- * Decreased productivity
- * Increased health care costs



What can districts do? The disabling effects of repetitive stress injuries, which develop gradually, can be prevented or at the very least, substantially diminished by early detection and treatment. Examples of what can be done:

- * Arrange for all new employees who will be using a computer 50% of more of the time to receive an ergonomic assessment of their workstation. Studies have shown that by arranging for and providing this service, employers can reduce the incidence of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome and other repetitive stress injuries by as much as 70%!
- * Sponsor and support worksite health and wellness activities that provide employees with lifestyle information and skills surrounding nutrition, stress management and fitness, all of which can play a role in the individuals' risk for ergonomic injury.
- * Visibly and audibly support employees taking their breaks, standing up and stretching every 20-30 minutes.
- * Be a role model—make sure YOU are taking your breaks and stretching intermittently throughout the day! If they see YOU doing it, they are more likely to follow suit.

Where can districts find these services? CCCSIG! CCCSIG provides onsite, no cost ergonomic assessments, as well as health and wellness activities for all member districts. Our "New Employee Workstation Ergonomic Assessment" service is available to all member districts. Please take advantage of this service with your next new hire(s). Be sure to contact us within the first two weeks of the new hire's start date.

Contact: Steve Webber, CCCSIG Health and Safety Services Specialist, at 1-866-922-2744 Ext. 273 or swebber@CCCSIG.org for an appointment.