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Learning to live well—but not for revenge

Living well is the best revenge” is an aphorism that dates back half a millennium. But by turning the concept of “living well” on its ear, Dr. Robert McLellan and his team at Dartmouth-Hitchcock have devised a program for employees—called Live Well/Work Well (LW/WW)—with a less misanthropic premise. Instead of a lavish lifestyle, the program promotes a sensible diet, moderate exercise, diligent monitoring of health signs, and counseling. Not only does such a regimen benefit individual employees, but their better health results in improved efficiency and productivity in the workplace.

Word: Jody Barna, an early disciple of the program and a 15-year veteran of DHMC’s Blood Bank, spread the word among her coworkers at the very start of LW/WW. Her typical lunch shows her dedication: it’s a mix-and-match combination of items brought from home (iced coffee and bulgur salad) plus a chicken Caesar salad purchased in the DHMC cafeteria.

She thinks the best feature of the program is the free on-site exercise opportunities, including a fitness room with showers. Although she faces an hour-long commute home every evening, she puts in a 45-minute workout before hopping in her car.

Marion Cate, a fitness/lifestyle coach, is the manager of LW/WW’s Health Improvement Program (HIP). She spends half of her time on physical fitness coaching and half managing HIP. HIP’s offerings range from yoga classes to gatherings called Laughter Club. In addition, HIP personnel are available to discuss almost any aspect of an employee’s health.

Fitness and nutrition are important components of LW/WW, but it has other aspects, too. Another of its initiatives is the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which is managed by Sara Koury. It provides support for employees facing psychosocial difficulties, such as smoking addiction, stress, weight reduction, grieving, or family relationship or behavioral

health issues. The EAP also offers counseling for financial and legal problems and is open to dependents and retirees as well as employees.

Benefits: New to LW/WW is the Workability Program, which helps employees while they’re recovering from an illness or injury and upon their return to work.

Each component of LW/WW has care managers who can provide information about employee benefits and advise employees on the overall coordination of their care.

According to McLellan, the medical director of LW/WW, and Karen Gollegly, its administrative director, parts of the program precede their involvement. When McClellan joined DHMC in 2003, there was already a Section of Occupational Medicine focused on workplace illnesses and injuries and safety in the workplace; the EAP was already well established, too.

But in 2009, LW/WW became one of DH’s five strategic initiatives. Many of the earlier efforts and some new ones were merged under a single umbrella. As McClellan puts it, “If we cannot improve the health of our own workforce, how will we be able to improve the health of the community?”

Data: McLellan’s team is already hard at work collecting the data that they are certain will eventually show improved employee health—and increased productivity.

ROGER P. SMITH, PH.D.

Worthy of note: Honors, awards, appointments, etc.

Three members of the DMS faculty were recently appointed to endowed professorships, one of academe’s greatest honors:

James Weinstein, D.O., copresident of Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, director of the Dartmouth Institute for Health Policy and Clinical Practice, and a professor of orthopaedics, was appointed to the Peggy Y. Thomson Professorship in the Evaluative Clinical Sciences. Established in 1994 by Dr. Andrew Thomson, DC ’46, in honor of his wife, it was the first endowed chair in the U.S. devoted to this health services field. For more about Weinstein, see the feature beginning on page 32 and dartmed.dartmouth.edu/sp10/v03.

Elliott Fisher, M.D., a professor of medicine and director of the Center for Population Health and Policy, was named to the James W. Squires, M.D., Professorship. It was established to honor Dr. Squires, director of the New Hampshire Endowment for Health and founder of the Matthew Thornton Health Plan. For more about Fisher’s work, see dartmed.dartmouth.edu/su09/f02 and dartmed.dartmouth.edu/w07/v01.

And **Jason Moore, Ph.D.**, a professor of genetics and director of bioinformatics, was appointed to the Third Century Professorship. This chair was established to recognize excellence in teaching and scholarship and to enable the incumbent to develop inno-

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Marion Cate, second from the right, pictured with some of her LW/WW colleagues, is a fitness/lifestyle coach.