



Study Shows Incentives and Employee Communications Linked in Driving Health Promotion Programs

MARIETTA, Ga. (November 24, 2008) – Employers now have empirical evidence to guide them as they determine the best ways to drive participation in their health promotion programs.

A recent study, published in the *Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine* and titled “Incentives and Other Factors Associated with Employee Participation in Health Risk Assessments,” examines the various factors that influence employee participation in health risk assessments (HRAs). It represents the largest study on this topic including data from 124 employers in a variety of industries with 882,275 eligible employees who completed 344,825 health and productivity assessments.

According to the study, the strongest predictors of HRA completion are “the monetary value of incentives” and the employers’ level of “communication and organizational commitment.” The study also includes an exhibit that employers can use to estimate participation rates in their health promotion programs.

“The results show that a healthy corporate culture with good communications, employee involvement and leadership support, a concept we refer to as Com/Org, is essential if employers want to achieve high participation rates in their programs,” says Michael S. Taitel, Ph.D., vice president of the Alere® Center for Health Intelligence and lead author of the study.

Com/Org (Communications & Organizational Commitment) is a metric created by the research team to represent the employer characteristics supporting their health promotion programs. This includes communications, the level of employee involvement through committees and internal champions, and visible executive management leadership support through advocacy, program participation and allocation of resources.

“Interestingly, the type of incentive did not predict HRA participation rates. What this means for employers is that the type of incentive employers choose may not matter as



much as the value of the incentive,” says Dr. Taitel. “This will allow employers to be more creative in designing and tailoring incentives to their populations because they will have a wide range of options.”

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