

Seventh Award

for Excellence and Innovation in Value Purchasing

Presented to Catherine Baase, MD, and Pamela Hymel, MD

March 12, 2009



**National
Business
Group on
Health**



Dr. Catherine Baase (right) accepts the Seventh Award for Excellence and Innovation in Value Purchasing; Helen Darling, President, the National Business Group on Health, and Dr. Martin Sepulveda, Awards Committee Chair, made the presentation at the March 12 ceremony.

Two dynamic women who have transformed their companies' health programs, Dr. Catherine Baase of The Dow Chemical Company and Dr. Pamela Hymel of Cisco Systems, received the National Business Group on Health's Seventh Annual Award for Excellence and Innovation in Value Purchasing. The awards were presented to the medical directors in March at the Business Group's Business Health Agenda conference in Washington, D.C.

"Both individuals are prominent researchers, leaders, innovators and visionaries in the health and productivity field," said Martin Sepulveda, MD, FACP, IBM Vice President for Global Well-Being Services and Health Benefits, Business Group Board member and chair of the Awards Committee. Dr. Sepulveda also recognized as "synergistic" the work they have done jointly that has "helped in making advances in this extremely important field."

Dr. Baase, who has served on the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, provides the leadership for Dow's Occupational Health, Epidemiology and Health Promotion programs in its locations worldwide. Dr. Hymel, who was a C. Everett Koop Honorable Mention award recipient, developed the strategy for Cisco's HealthConnections program and created its LifeConnections Health Center at the company's corporate headquarters.

Although Dow and Cisco are in two different industries—the former is a chemical manufacturer, the latter an Internet technology firm—both companies believe in integrating all aspects of workplace health-related programs, with a heavy emphasis on prevention, to create a completely health-oriented consumer experience; and they perceive money spent on health programming more as an investment than as a cost.

Dow's Four Pillars Strategy

In 2003, under Dr. Baase's leadership, Dow conducted an analysis of all aspects of the financial impact of the health of Dow people, including medical claims and other relevant data such as projections from internal studies on "presenteeism." The estimated total financial costs of employee health (both direct and indirect costs), including internal department dollars as well as external expenditures, exceeded \$750 million. So in 2004, the company launched the integrated Dow Health

Strategy, targeting overweight, physical inactivity, tobacco use and stress. Dr. Baase and her team developed the Health Strategy to address these challenges from the following four perspectives:

- **Prevention.** Dow has established a global comprehensive core prevention program. Dow's benefits design encourages use of preventive medical services, such as age-appropriate screenings and inoculations. The company also has developed site-based actions that individual locations can take, such as ensuring access to healthy foods at the work site and offering physical activity options. This may include providing an on-site fitness center; subsidizing employee membership in a community center; allowing for stretch breaks; or creating a walking trail in proximity to the work site.
- **Quality care and effectiveness.** This is an effort to implement the most effective programs and services for Dow employees, dependents and retirees. One initiative that has had a great impact is the Mid-Michigan Health Information Alliance (MiHIA), with Dr. Baase serving as the chairperson of MiHIA's executive committee. One of the first of 24 such groups in the country, this collaborative of businesses, civic leaders, health advocates, as well as the medical and academic communities, has been designated as a Chartered Value Exchange by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ).

"Dow believes that prevention is one of the best opportunities for long-term impact," said Dr. Baase. "By shifting our current system focus from treating disease—which, in the past, has accounted for 95 percent of medical expense—to preventing disease in the first place, we have started delivering better long-term outcomes at a much lower cost."

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- **Health care system management.** The company is committed to sophisticated purchasing practices and to establishing health outcome measures with each of its health-related service vendors (referred to as “partners”). The intent is to create more of an interactive approach among partners to achieve greater value from their services for patients.
- **Advocacy.** Through its government affairs staff, Dow partners with various coalitions and acts independently in providing health-related advocacy at both the federal and state levels.

At Cisco, Blending Health Programs onto One Platform

Under Dr. Hymel’s leadership, two major health and productivity initiatives were designed and implemented at Cisco. HealthConnections makes it possible for Cisco employees and their families worldwide to enhance their well-being through a network of health care providers, disability management, workplace programs, food services, fitness centers and other resources.

The LifeConnections Health Center, under the umbrella of HealthConnections, is a state-of-the-art integrated child care, health and fitness facility at the company’s main campus in San Jose, CA. The center includes primary medical care, pediatrics, immunizations, laboratory services, health coaching and even acupuncture.

In a recent interview, Hymel said, “We’re really trying to make a difference in how we blend all of the health-related programs we provide onto one platform. That includes the wellness aspect and the work we do in health screenings, as well as our efforts to provide good, solid medical, pharmacy, dental and vision plans.” She added: “But it also includes looking at where disability management comes in, and how the fitness center and even our cafeteria play a role.”

Cisco’s HealthConnections offerings include the following:

- Employees who complete the **Personal Health Assessment (PHA)** receive a \$100 health incentive, with an additional \$200 in incentives for completing the suggested actions on the PHA.
- Cisco offers free **on-site health screenings** to determine blood pressure, glucose, cholesterol and body mass index levels. On-site **flu shots** are also available.



Dr. Pamela Hymel (right), recipient of the Seventh Award for Excellence and Innovation in Value Purchasing from the National Business Group on Health.

- Cisco's **Health Coaching and Condition Management programs** support employees in managing their weight, becoming smoke-free, getting in shape, managing stress, maintaining a healthy heart and fighting diabetes, as well as in providing education on asthma, musculoskeletal problems and coronary artery disease.
- The six-week online **Healthy Living Program** is designed to help employees make lifestyle changes in diet and exercise. The program is tailored to each employee's individual health profile, goals, risks and preferences.
- The **Cisco HealthPresence Virtual Clinic** offers San Jose members innovative Cisco HealthPresence technology, state-of-the-art telemedicine equipment and experienced health care professionals. Subscribers can receive expert medical advice without ever having to leave the San Jose campus.
- Cisco increased awareness of its **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**, thereby increasing usage of the services to above industry benchmarks. Cisco's EAP continues to be available to extended family members who live in the same household as the Cisco employee.
- The **Circle of Responsibility** initiative helps Cisco employees make healthy choices in the Cisco café. Menu items are labeled, and healthy eating is promoted through table tents, seminars and the program's website.
- Each month the **Food for Your Well-Being** program promotes a food high in vitamins, fiber or other nutrients.
- Each café offers a daily **HealthConnections Meal** that meets strict nutritional requirements: under 600 calories, low sodium, reduced fat, and balanced proportions of protein, complex carbohydrates, and healthy fats.
- **Nutritional information signage** has also been added to some meals to help customers make better decisions and healthier choices.

“The achievements of Dr. Baase and Dr. Hymel for their companies’ health programs illustrate that prevention is the linchpin for workplace health care,” said Helen Darling, President of the National Business Group on Health. “And, as demonstrated by Dow and Cisco, for programs to be cost-effective and productivity to be maximized, all elements—from choices about health plans to the food sold in the cafeteria to opportunities for physical exercise—must be seen as interconnected parts in a seamless package.”



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