

Making Preventive Care a Company Focus



**National
Business
Group on
Health**



**HEADQUARTERED:
PITTSBURGH, PA**

**NUMBER OF
EMPLOYEES:
32,400 GLOBALLY;
8,500 U.S.**

**INDUSTRY:
FOOD PRODUCTS**

In 2007, Heinz embarked upon a new five-year health care strategy to decrease health care costs and increase employee productivity. A key part of the new strategy has been to offer comprehensive preventive health benefits to its employees. Because Heinz understands that individual employees have unique health needs, the Company also made the decision to provide on-site health services to encourage participation among employees of all health, age and fitness levels.

Improving Preventive Health Benefits

Heinz has offered preventive care in its plans since 2003; however, analysis revealed that employees were not using the services provided. With an understanding that preventive benefits can not only improve an employee's health, but also reduce long-term health care expenses, Heinz sought to improve its benefit structure and utilization rates.

Heinz improved the preventive benefits offered to employees in the following ways:

- Making their covered services comparable to those recommended in the Purchaser's Guide;
- Eliminating age and frequency limitations (to make it easier for employees to do what they feel necessary to remain healthy); and
- Eliminating the \$20 co-pay for preventive care.

The Health & Welfare Strategy Team gained approval for the expansion of preventive services coverage by staying engaged with management and executives throughout the process. The Strategy Team stressed the need to "invest money to save money in the long term" and that investing in preventive care was the right thing to do.

Introduction of On-site Biometric Screenings

In order to improve preventive service utilization, Heinz also sought to eliminate those barriers to better health that may not be associated with cost (e.g. time, inconvenience). As a result, Heinz implemented voluntary on-site biometric screenings for employees at each factory location. The on-site biometric screenings include measurements for blood pressure, total cholesterol (LDL and HDL), fasting glucose and Body Mass Index (BMI). The program also gives employees the opportunity to meet with a counselor to review individual results.

Heinz is working to extend the free biometric screenings to its remote sales force, which is unable to take advantage of on-site services. A new voucher program will allow sales representatives to obtain a free biometric screening at various locations nationwide. The enriched data obtained from the off-site screenings will be pivotal for the future development and enhancement of programs. If successful, the voucher program also will be made available to employee spouses.

Building a Culture of Shared Responsibility

A second component of the new company strategy focuses on employee engagement and shared responsibility. The goal of this component is to foster a partnership for improving employee health by clearly defining employer and employee roles and responsibilities. As a company, Heinz is responsible for providing all of the necessary tools, resources and programs to help its employees pursue healthier lifestyles. Employees and their families are responsible for using those services to manage their health.

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To help promote the utilization of preventive services among its employees, Heinz has developed communication materials to educate employees about the advantages of preventive care and the value of the early detection of health issues. The communication materials also stress the importance of individual responsibility in improving health results.

Use of the Purchaser’s Guide

In 2006, Heinz attended a conference where *A Purchaser’s Guide to Preventive Services (the Purchaser’s Guide)* and its evidence supporting preventive care were presented. The *Purchaser’s Guide* provided Heinz with the information necessary to understand both the health and economic value of preventive services. As a result, the company felt it was important to emphasize preventive services in their benefits plans and at the workplace.

Heinz used the *Purchaser’s Guide* to determine the following:

- How the preventive services in its plans compared to those recommended in the *Purchaser’s Guide*; and
- If preventive services were being used.

To implement the services recommended by the *Purchaser’s Guide* and to eliminate the \$20 co-pay, Heinz supplied its health plan providers with the CPT codes presented in the *Purchaser’s Guide* for all the services the company wished to pay at 100 percent.

Heinz does not rely just on top-down communication. The Company also enlists the help of employees. It has identified more than 50 employee volunteers willing to be “health and wellness champions” at different locations throughout the organization. The grassroots effort has helped make factories aware of the services Heinz provides, as well as the Company’s willingness to find solutions that fit within the culture of each specific location.

Challenges

Although employees are appreciative of the preventive benefits offered at 100 percent, Heinz has found that few physicians understand the benefit. Heinz is working to educate physicians through a variety of means:

As a company, Heinz is responsible for providing all of the necessary tools, resources and programs to help its employees pursue healthier lifestyles.

- Developing communication materials to educate consumers on the preventive services covered and what 100 percent coverage means. Heinz hopes this education will improve its employees’ ability to communicate with their physicians.
- Labeling beneficiaries’ ID cards “Preventive—\$0” to help ensure they are not being charged for preventive care.
- Asking its health plans to educate providers and disseminate information about preventive care at \$0 co-pay.

Another challenge facing Heinz is the presence of union contracts. The Company set a goal to have all employees eligible for preventive services at no cost to them by 2011. In January 2008, all salaried employees’ health plans had 100 percent coverage for preventive services. Heinz is working to realize its goal at union facilities by taking the following steps:

- First, Heinz ensured that the preventive services recommended in the Purchaser’s Guide were incorporated into the union health plans. All union facilities now have preventive services in their health plans.
- During the next series of union negotiations, Heinz will increase coverage of preventive services at union facilities to 100 percent. Currently, about 50 percent of its unions have preventive care at no cost to employees.

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Evaluation and Next Steps

Although it is too early for Heinz to determine the effects of these efforts, the Company has noticed a cultural shift among the employee population. Through on-site focus groups, Heinz has found that its employees now view health primarily as a personal responsibility. Heinz feels this is a testament to its ongoing communication efforts and its culture of health platform of shared responsibility.

In addition to the changes noted in the company culture, Heinz will define future success in two ways:

- First, the Company plans to track preventive service usage among the adult population each year. Although Heinz continues to negotiate with the unions to add these benefits at \$0 co-pay, Heinz has already started to see increased utilization. It plans to continue annual tracking and would like to see the numbers steadily increase.
- Second, Heinz will begin to determine the percentage of its beneficiary population considered high risk, medium risk and low risk by analyzing data obtained from the newly implemented health risk assessment (HRA) and biometric screenings. The data will be tracked annually with the hope of shifting individuals to lower-risk categories (from high risk to medium risk and medium risk to low risk).

Company Profile

Founded in 1869 by entrepreneur Henry John Heinz, H.J. Heinz Company has grown into a worldwide corporation employing about 32,400 people, with 8,500 based in the United States. Health benefits for most of the U.S. population are managed through Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield. Where efficient and effective, local health management organizations (HMOs) are provided.

CASE STUDY

November 2009



Making Preventive Care a Company Focus: An Employer Case Study of H.J. Heinz Company

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About A Purchaser's Guide to Clinical Preventive Services: Moving Science into Coverage

A Purchaser's Guide to Clinical Preventive Services: Moving Science into Coverage is a comprehensive reference for employers on clinical preventive service benefit design. This document provides guidance for the selection of 47 clinical preventive services shown to be effective by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF); the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and other authoritative organizations. The Purchaser's Guide aims to improve the design and delivery of preventive health benefits by translating clinical recommendations into benefit language for self-insured employers. For more information, visit <http://www.businessgrouphealth.org/preventive/index.cfm>

About the National Business Group on Health

The Business Group is the only non-profit organization devoted exclusively to representing large employers' perspectives on national health issues and providing solutions to its members' most important health care and health benefits challenges. The Business Group fosters the development of a safe health care delivery system and treatments based on scientific evidence. Members share strategies for controlling costs, improving patient safety and quality of care, increasing productivity and supporting healthy lifestyles.

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About the Center for Prevention and Health Services

Mission: Educate large employers about diseases and health issues in order to protect and promote health and well-being among their employees and beneficiaries as well as control costs.

The Center:

- Identifies strategies and develops tools to address health and benefits issues.
- Translates health research into practical solutions for large employers.
- Provides the national voice for large employers and links them with national.

For more information, e-mail healthservices@businessgrouphealth.org.

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