

2.7 Healthy Lifestyle Success Stories



Preventive Care Benefits Increase the people

Barber Foods is a manufacturer of value-added, poultry-based convenience foods. The company, founded by Gus Barber in 1955, currently employs approximately 750 associates with national origins from over 50 different countries. Fifty-six different languages are spoken at Barber's Portland-based production facility. Many associates came to America as refugees or immigrants. As a result, many have little or no preventive medical history or awareness of good health practices. To this end, management determined that a strong employee wellness initiative was warranted and created a formal company Wellness Team.

the need

In the past, few associates at Barber Foods utilized preventive services, such as annual exams and related lab work, mammograms, Paps, and PSAs, which are provided through the insurance plan. Preventive care services help employees maintain good health, so it is important for the company to increase the use of these benefits and services.

the idea

Barber Foods developed and implemented a variety of strategies to encourage associates to seek preventive care services.

the idea at work

Barber Foods associates have access to a wide variety of preventive care benefits, which include annual exams and related lab work, mammogram, Pap, and PSA screenings, and even well baby visits. In 2001 the company enhanced the range and coverage for these benefits through an amendment to our Group Health Plan. After the office visit co-pay, preventive services are covered at 100% to a yearly maximum of \$500.

Despite these enhancements, employee utilization of preventive care services remained low. To combat this, the Wellness Team developed a plan to increase awareness and utilization of these services in hopes of seeing a long-term improvement in employee health. The Team found a variety of ways to



accomplish this goal, including monthly “Lunch and Learns,” company-wide e-mails, presentations to students in our ESL (English as a second language) classes, postings at our Wellness Center board, and in our company newsletter.

Another creative way the Wellness Team promoted preventive care was in putting together its 2003 Health and Safety Calendar, in which the Team built in “Barber Benefits” and “Did you know?” sections for each month of the year. A brief summary of a particular benefit or health and safety issue was provided in an obvious, easy-to-read manner.

The Team also provided incentives through our Wellness Program. A program similar to the old “Green Stamp” program was developed to award associates points for participating in Wellness events or screenings. Each event has a different point allocation. Following are a few examples:

- Cholesterol Screenings 10 points
- March into May 10 points
- Quarterly Walking Programs 25 points
- Monthly Lunch & Learn 5 points
- Smoking Cessation 50 points

Associates accrue their points and redeem them to purchase items from a vendor who offers a selective gift program.

the costs

Our medical plan has approximately 1,400 covered lives. We determined our maximum claim exposure through our plan to be \$700,000. After a \$15 co-pay, we offer an annual benefit of \$500 per covered life. In addition to this, we allocate \$50 per associate to our Wellness Budget, which is separate from the Medical Plan.

the results

The following data shows a significant increase in preventive care benefit utilization from the 2000 plan year to partway through 2003. Further, each of the seven preventive service categories showed an increased utilization from

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Preventive Care (continued)

2002 to 2003. The Wellness Team has clearly raised awareness and contributed to increased preventive care benefit use by Barber associates.

Preventive Claims:

Plan year

2000 Preventive claims equaled 3.3% of total paid claims.

2001 Preventive claims represented 3.0% of total paid claims. Actual preventive claims dollars increased 17% over prior year.

2002 Preventive claims equaled 5.4% of total paid claims with a 40% increase in total preventive dollars over prior year.

2003 Six-month period (2/1/03-7/31/03) preventive claims represent 5.6% of total paid claims. Utilizing this information we project an increase in total preventive claims of 20% over prior year.

Preventive Utilization Services: Data provided by the MaineHealth® Information Center

<i>Type of Service</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>Change in Rate</i>
Preventive Visit/Male	(40-64)	18.3%	18.5%	increase 1.1%
Preventive Visit/Female	(40-64)	30.9%	38.9%	increase 25.8%
GYN	(18-64)	14.2%	17.0%	increase 19.9%
Mammography	(50-64)	29.8%	41.3%	increase 38.6%
Cervical Cancer Screen	(18-64)	20.8%	28.7%	increase 38.1%
Prostate Cancer Screen	(50-64)	15.1%	22.5%	increase 49.3%
Colorectal Cancer Screen	(50-64)	9.1%	13.0%	increase 42.4%

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