

2.3 Physical Activity Success Stories



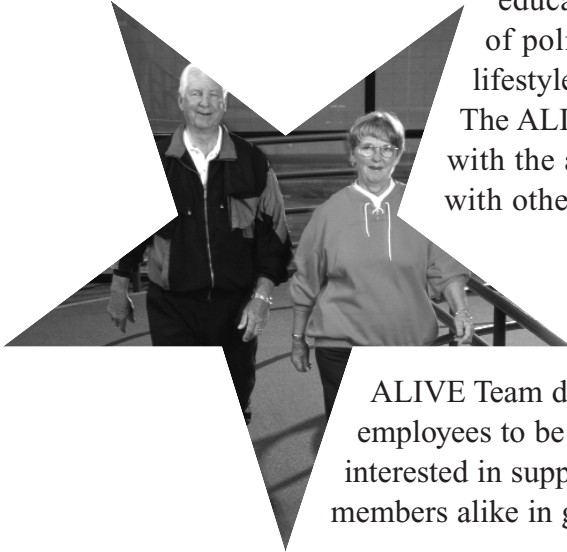
Walking Path

the people

The ALIVE Team is the internal wellness committee for Seabasticook Valley Hospital, which employs approximately 260 people in the Pittsfield area. The focus of the ALIVE Team is to encourage employees and community members to have “A Lifetime Interest in Vitality and Energy,” thus the ALIVE name.

The Team strives to provide opportunities for employees to engage in wellness activities by planning outings, educational programs, and assisting in the development of policy and environmental changes that promote healthy lifestyles and, ultimately, lower healthcare insurance costs.

The ALIVE Team participates in ongoing wellness initiatives with the affiliates of Eastern Maine Healthcare, as well as with other local businesses on a worksite wellness group.



the need

Following an employee opinion survey, the ALIVE Team determined a need to increase the opportunities for employees to be physically active during the workday. The Team was interested in supporting hospital employees, visitors, and community members alike in getting regular physical activity.

the idea

The Seabasticook Valley Hospital (SVH) Wellness Committee constructed a walking path where hospital employees and visitors can enjoy a comfortable quarter-mile walk around the campus. Along this walk there are several signs indicating path length, calories burned, and healthy lifestyle tips, as well as opportunities for employees to rest during breaks, plant flowers, and enjoy SVH’s rural location.



the idea at work

The walking path is viewed as an excellent wellness resource and is promoted in a variety of ways, including:

- New employees receive a “tour” of the walking path during their orientation.
- Managers were led on a “management walk” to familiarize themselves with the trail and promote the path to their staff.
- A map of the path is also available in patient waiting areas and at the registration desk for visitors to pick up and utilize.

Creating this walking path took about nine months from inception to completion. The planning phase was by far the most time-consuming, with nearly seven months spent drafting plans and gaining appropriate administrative approval. The actual creation of the trail took several volunteers four days to complete. Jack May, President/CEO of SVH, strongly supports the initiative, stating, “This walking path is a physical testament to the importance we place on worksite wellness. The uses this creates for employees and visitors to SVH is measured by its popularity and will continue to unfold throughout the year.”

the cost

The project was made possible due to a pocket grant from the Maine Cardiovascular Health Program’s Worksite Wellness Pilot Project. Funds from the grant were used to purchase:

- Crusher Dust (A local contractor was able to provide a great discount on this.)
\$75 per truckload x 4 loads = \$300
- Landscape Fabric
\$63.89 per 3x300 ft. roll x 3 rolls and \$21.41 per 3x100 ft. rolls x 3 rolls = \$255.90
- Park Benches
\$218 (2 wooden benches for around the path)
\$36 (polyurethane for benches and sign posts)
- Signage (The local Healthy Maine Partnership assisted with this expense)

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Walking Path (continued)

\$149 (6 signs purchased at Finyl Vinyl by Healthy Living)

\$60 (6 sign posts purchased at Walpole wood outlet)

Other materials needed include:

- Sod Cutting Device or Rototiller

Tractor rental at \$150 per day x 1 day = \$150

- Stakes to Identify Underground Wires and Pipes (Dig Safe was a great help.)

\$5.40 (6 stakes purchased at Hancock Lumber)

- A map identifying the walking path for employees and visitors

the results

Collaboration played a key role in the success of this project. The Team secured in-kind support from the local Healthy Maine Partnership, Healthy Living, in purchasing the signage. This partnership helped both groups to meet strategic initiatives around worksite wellness and environmental change to increase physical activity options. A partnership of SVH staff and ALIVE Team members completed all manual labor at no charge, and worked with SVH marketing to promote the new path. Local vendors were chosen to purchase necessary materials, and, after the project was described to them, most were willing to provide a reduced rate. SVH hopes to continue these collaborations in maintaining and further promoting the path, and in building further resources to improve worksite wellness at SVH and throughout our communities.

SVH plans to work with area businesses and organizations to connect the path to others in the community. Plans are also in place to continue promoting the path to staff and visitors in a variety of ways.

contact(s)

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