

A strong sense of well-being

A new program in Puerto Rico helps Pfizer employees take control of their health

Rising health care costs are one of the most urgent business issues facing employers today. One solution is to help employees not only achieve better health but also become more active and involved health care consumers. Pfizer, one of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies, is implementing this approach through a program called Healthy Pfizer, which provides employees with easy-to-use health services and a state-of-the-art way to manage and improve their own health. It also allows Pfizer to quantify employee health and measure improvements and return on investment over time.

Following the successful launch of Healthy Pfizer in the U.S., the company chose to launch the program in Puerto Rico. Not only did Pfizer need to create a strong, recognizable brand and drive employee and dependent participation in the program, it also needed to facilitate a difficult behavior change—one that motivates employees and dependents to manage their health more actively. All program design and communication had to be customized for the unique culture and needs of the Pfizer Puerto Rico population as well.

The primary audience for this campaign included more than 3,800 Pfizer Puerto Rico employees and 10,000 dependents.

Goals and objectives

Pfizer's measurable objectives included:

- **Obtain health information** from employees and their dependents to establish a baseline for measuring future health improvements, and to identify individuals with health risks who would benefit from participation in Healthy Pfizer programs. Pfizer expected 80 percent of employees and 50 percent of spouses to receive health screenings.

- **Enroll individuals** with health risks in



Pfizer's team customized Healthy Pfizer program materials for Puerto Rican employees.

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appropriate Healthy Pfizer health risk management programs. Pfizer expected 40 percent of employees identified as eligible to enroll in year one of the program.

Solution and implementation

Pfizer hired Mercer Human Resource Consulting to support the project strategy, implementation and communication.

The program's success depended primarily on employee and dependent participation. To drive participation, the team needed to adapt the program and communication to make them culturally relevant and appealing to the Pfizer Puerto Rico population. The strategy had four distinct phases.

Phase 1: Discovery/strategy (December 2005–March 2006)

The team began by researching Puerto Rican culture and the work environment at each of six Pfizer Puerto Rico sites. Research, including feedback from employee and dependent focus groups and on-site interviews, revealed several guidelines for adapting the program for the Pfizer Puerto Rico audience. These included:

- Involve dependents and families.
- Emphasize visual, high-touch and face-to-face communication.
- Customize branding and visual identity to Puerto Rican culture and language.

Phase 2: Awareness (June–September 2006)

The team worked to engage key stakeholders to obtain their crucial support for the program. As part of the phased rollout, the team promoted an initial awareness campaign among employees and dependents in advance of the official launch.

- **Preparation for leadership**, communicators and health teams (program champions at each site): Separate resource guides that

provided a program overview, key talking points, answers to FAQs, and a communication schedule and inventory were created.

- **Prelaunch communication**: Small-scale events were held at each site one month before the official launch to showcase leadership endorsement, introduce health teams and coaches, and distribute program information and invitations to launch events.

Phase 3: Launch (October–November 2006)

The formal program launch events were designed to make it easy for employees and dependents to get information about their health and take action.

- **Employee launch events** were held on-site during the workday, and were designed to register, screen and provide consultations to as many employees as possible during each shift.
- **Family launch events** were held on weekends and promoted as health celebrations for the entire family.
- **Health team members** and health coaches were present at the events to introduce themselves to participants and answer questions. Program representatives described participation incentives. The weekend family events featured health-themed games and competitions.
- **1-2-3 Activities** at the launch events were designed to allow all eligible employees and dependents to complete three activities:

1. Get informed (health questionnaire and screenings). Participants filled out a questionnaire to assess their health status and potential risk areas, and underwent screenings to assess their blood pressure, glucose and hemoglobin levels.
2. Get counseled (discuss results one-on-one with a health coach). Employees would then immediately sit down to discuss their questionnaire and screening results

with a health coach face-to-face, identifying any potential risk areas or recommended actions.

3. Get enrolled (enroll in a lifestyle management program if eligible). Participants were referred to a lifestyle management program by the health coach if their results showed that they were eligible.

Phase 4: Ongoing promotion (November–December 2006)

To keep momentum going after the launch events, communications were issued congratulating each site for their participation and publishing their participation rates.

Measurement and evaluation

The initiative exceeded all strategic objectives and was considered a resounding success by Pfizer leadership.

- **Ninety-two percent** of employees and 34 percent of dependents received health screenings, compared with the goals of 80 percent of employees and 50 percent of eligible dependents. Pfizer also offered an incentive to dependents who completed the health questionnaire online and spoke with a health coach by phone outside of launch events, and many dependents chose that option. (Dependents who participated online or by phone were not included in the 34 percent statistic.)
- **More than 90 percent** of identified participants ultimately enrolled in a health risk management program, dramatically exceeding the goal of 40 percent enrollment. This number includes active eligible employees and eligible dependents. •

about the author

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