

**Well Workplace Award
Executive Summary**

**Grinnell Mutual
Silver Recertification Award**

Information in this publication is carefully reviewed for accuracy. Questions, comments, or ideas are welcome. Please direct to Dr. David Hunnicutt, Executive Editor, at the address below.

Information may not be reproduced, copied, cited, or circulated in any printed or electronic form without written permission from the publisher. ©2004 Wellness Councils of America, 9802 Nicholas Street, Suite 315, Omaha, NE 68114; Phone: (402) 827-3590; Fax: (402)827-3594; visit our website at www.welcoa.org.

All rights reserved. Information contained in this document was accurate at the time the award was designated. Due to changing business environments information is subject to change without notification.



**WELLNESS COUNCILS
OF AMERICA**

©2004

WELL WORKPLACE
Application for Recertification

Basic Information

Name of Organization: Grinnell Mutual

Contact Person: Sherry Leshen

Title: Wellness & Employee Events Coordinator

Work Telephone:

Fax Number:

E-mail Address:

Parent Organization: None

Number of sites covered by this application: One

Number of employees covered by this application: 730

Nature of business or industry: Insurance/Reinsurance

Name of CEO: Dan F. Agnew

Date of original application: July 15, 2001

Level of designation for which you are reapplying: Bronze **Silver**
(Please contact your Council for the appropriate information if you are reapplying for the Gold level.)

Preface: Organizational and Program Background

Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company is an insurance company that provides reinsurance for its member farm mutuals and direct insurance lines, including auto, liability and other personal and commercial lines insurance to customers in nine midwestern states. Since its founding in 1909, Grinnell Mutual Reinsurance Company has embraced a policy of working together with employees, member farm mutuals and its agent partners to provide superior products and services to consumers at the lowest possible cost. GMRC is the largest employer in Poweshiek County, employing more than 630 people.

On July 8, 1985, GMRC developed a Wellness program as a result of incentives offered by our health insurer, Blue Cross-Blue Shield. Once the Wellness program was officially formed, activities escalated. In 1996, a Wellness committee was formed and comprised of representatives from all divisions of the company. To document the company's commitment to wellness, its employees' efforts, receive recognition and obtain a blueprint for expanded wellness efforts, Grinnell Mutual applied for a Bronze Well Workplace Designation through WELCOA. In 1998, Grinnell Mutual received the Bronze Well Workplace Designation.

After Grinnell Mutual received the Bronze Well Workplace Designation, the Vice President of the Support Services Division evaluated the wellness program and the company's desire to improve and expand wellness efforts and recognized the need to either contract with an independent Wellness firm or hire a Wellness Coordinator. In June of 1999 a Wellness Coordinator job description was drafted and the position was posted. In August of 1999, a part-time (24 hours per week) Wellness Coordinator was hired to assume the duties once shared by members of the Human Resources Department.

Grinnell Mutual also recognized the need to align Wellness efforts with the company's strategic priorities and to increase the shift from event-based programming to results-oriented programming. The change in the program also would allow the company to attain the Silver Well Workplace. Hence, we began to use tools such as Employee Wellness Surveys and Counseling for High Risk Individuals to spur our Wellness efforts. We have continued to use these important tools, plus the Health Risk Appraisal. Grinnell Mutual also continued to increase monetary resources towards wellness related activities, and preventative care. In 2001, Grinnell Mutual applied for and received the Silver Well Workplace Designation.

At GMRC, the Wellness program is part of the Human Resources Department. (See attached organizational chart). The Wellness Coordinator reports to the Manager of Employee Relations. This reporting relationship enhances the Wellness Coordinator's ability to obtain easy access to reports about absenteeism, facilities, health insurance and other employee-based reports as needed.

There are no remote sites for the Wellness program. However, field employees are encouraged to participate in Wellness activities. This is accomplished by sending them the monthly publication, *Wellness Watch*, and by providing incentives to have comparable fitness testing at a local fitness facility. The 6-12 annual Wellness Programs are designed to facilitate field employee participation. GMRC also holds the annual health fair when field personnel are in the home office in October or November of each year.

The organizational mission statement is to provide quality reinsurance, insurance products and services in a profitable manner through a partnership with the Member Mutuals and agents. The organizational vision, accompanying this mission, is to conduct business in a profitable and efficient manner, while respecting the rights, dignity and value of our employees. To help Grinnell Mutual fulfill its vision, Wellness strives to control or reduce healthcare costs of its employees while making each employee feel valued.

The GMRC Wellness Program mission is to promote behavioral change that results in healthy and productive lifestyles. Because GMRC values each and every employee the vision of the Wellness program is to reduce or keep overall health care costs lower than the industry average by encouraging and promoting healthy and productive lifestyles, and to have all employees participate in Wellness.

The Wellness Committee, Sherry Leshen, Wellness Coordinator and Dan Agnew, CEO play a large role in the Wellness initiative at Grinnell Mutual. The Wellness Committee suggests programming options and encourages participation. The Wellness Coordinator leads the wellness initiative through programming and the CEO is an avid supporter (see attached quote from Dan Agnew which is on the company intranet).

Grinnell Mutual does focus on the 7 critical benchmarks. Senior Level Support starts with the CEO, Dan Agnew. We have an Intranet site for Wellness, where the CEO has written a personal letter endorsing wellness. We also have a very popular Executive Wellness program for Senior Level executives. The next benchmark is the Wellness Team. The Grinnell Mutual Wellness Team is made up of thirteen members representing various company departments. The team assists the Wellness Coordinator with planning, brainstorming, promotion, implementation and evaluation. The Wellness Team meets on a monthly basis. This team has proven to be highly effective in assisting with the development and implementation of various programs. Data collection is also very important to Grinnell Mutual and we use several different tools for data collection. The tools we use most frequently are demographic information for our organization, the employee health risk appraisal, employee needs and interest survey, facility assessment, and the health screening. The operating plan details our annual Wellness objectives. Our 2004 operating plan includes:

Reducing the number of employees who are greater than 10% above their ideal weight from 75% to 70 % by December 31, 2004; increase participation in the Confidential Health Screening during the Benefit Fair from 75% in 2003 to 80% in 2004; increase the number of employees who participate in the cardiovascular fitness testing from 30% in 2002 and 2003 to 35% in 2004; increase the use of our Employee Assistance from 6.1% in 2003 to 7% in 2004; and give employees at least one self-help coping mechanism in 2004. Our programs and interventions are based on our data collection and operating plan. In 2004, we have plan on having several different programs to meet our objectives.

Grinnell Mutual has a supportive environment. Grinnell Mutual has written policies in place for Tobacco Restrictions, Emergency procedures, seatbelt policy, Disability Prevention, incentives to promote program participation, maintenance of accessible wellness materials, recognition and rewards for success in wellness program activities. Grinnell Mutual also has benefit policies in place via the intranet for all employees to view.

The last critical benchmark Grinnell Mutual demonstrates is evaluation. We regularly track participation by use of the Wellness Database. We also monitor participant satisfaction with programming through the use of surveys at different intervals during a program. We compare the needs assessments and health risk appraisals from year to year, compare pre and post surveys to document participant's change in knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviors.

Lastly, we also monitor the impact wellness has on key productivity indicators by comparing the net claim cost per employee of the Industry to Grinnell Mutual.

Three unique strengths the wellness initiative offers for the employees are monetary backing, time during work to participate in the various programs and a variety of programs. Grinnell Mutual annually spends over \$200 per employee towards Wellness. This amount continues to rise annually. The needs and interest survey indicated employees want to participate in programs during work hours and if they cannot do so, they are at least 30% less likely to participate. Therefore, all programs ran to date are on or could be participated in during work hours. Examples of flexible working schedules to prompt wellness include the fitness testing on-site, massages; learn over lunches, Wellness Expo, and other 6-12 week programs, which are performed during work hours. The variety of programs includes the Wellness Expo, any type of walking program, and Weight Watchers. The Wellness Expo includes a yearly blood draw, hem occult test, and HRA. This testing is free of charge to the employee and during work hours. So the price and convenience are right. Grinnell Mutual had 75% participation in 2002 and 2003. The needs and interest survey in 2001 indicated walking programs were one of the top 10 programs employees wanted to see. Therefore, we implemented programs such as Step-by-Step, Reaching for the Stars and Walking Across America. We had more employees join these walking programs than any other programs. Weight Watchers is another popular program. We have been hosting Weight Watchers on-site for more than four years. We have over 20 employees join each 20-week session and over 25 lifetime members. The meetings are always held on site every Wednesday. The reason why these programs are so popular is because they are held during work hours and subsidized or paid for by the company.

Our organization is continuing to strive towards results oriented goals in Wellness. We continue to distribute literature, have lunch and learn, and plan awareness type of Wellness activities. With continued support we hope to go for the Gold Well Workplace Award.