

Well Workplace Award  
Executive Summary

**Swedish  
Covenant Hospital  
Gold 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.

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**WELLNESS COUNCILS  
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## **General Information**

### **2004 Well Workplace - Gold Application**

Name of Organization: **Swedish Covenant Hospital**

Address:

Council Affiliation: **National WELCOA membership – No local council**

Contact Person(s): **Michelle Aronson, Manager, Human Resources**

**Dorene Jordan, Director, Employee Health**

Parent Organization: **Evangelical Covenant Church**

Number of sites covered by this application: **One**

Number of employees covered by this application: **1,600 employees**

Nature of business or industry: **Health Care Facility**

Name of CEO: **Mark Newton**

Date of Application: **July 2004**

## ***Preface - Organization and Program Background***

### **Organization Background**

Swedish Covenant Hospital is an independent 320-bed, urban community hospital serving the community on Chicago's north side. Swedish Covenant Hospital founded in 1886 by missionaries of the Swedish Evangelical Covenant Church employs more than 1,600 budgeted employees and over 500 affiliated physicians. Mark Newton, President and CEO, leads Swedish Covenant Hospital in providing a continuum of excellent healthcare services. Rooted in the Evangelical Covenant Church, the hospital is dedicated to serving the physical, spiritual, and psychological needs of our culturally diverse community. The hospital is located in a multi-national community in which more than 50 languages are spoken by patients and employees.

### **History of Health Promotion**

Physical, spiritual, and psychological wellness are at the heart of our organizational mission. In 1991, Swedish Covenant Hospital built the LifeCenter, Chicago's first hospital-based wellness facility. Over the past 10 years, employee wellness was shared among Employee Health Services (EHS), Human Resources, Education, and the LifeCenter. EHS recognized the need to unify our initiatives. The hospital's Executive Team approved a Wellness Council of America (WELCOA) membership. WELCOA's approach would ensure strategic development and measurable results. A Wellness Team merged the independent efforts into a comprehensive LifeWORKS program. Employee interest surveys, free health risk appraisals, benefit enhancements, and opportunities to earn incentives captured employee enthusiasm.

## **Vision / Mission**

### Swedish Covenant Hospital's Vision

*Swedish Covenant Hospital's vision is to excel as the independent hospital of choice.*

### LifeWORKS Vision

*LifeWORKS' vision is to help our employees improve physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing at home and at work.*

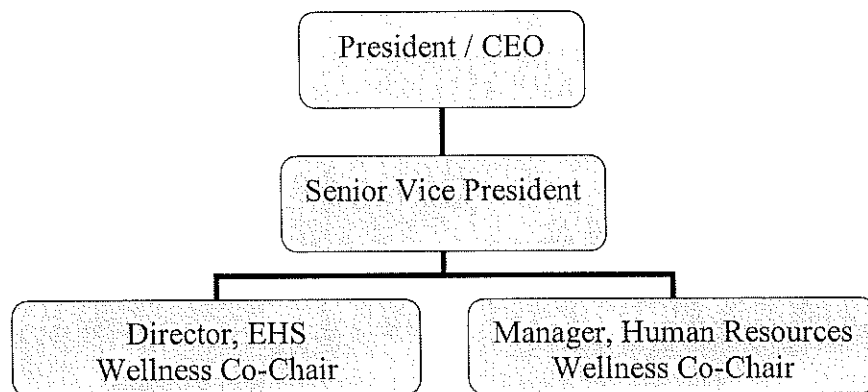
### Swedish Covenant Hospital's Mission

*Our mission is to provide a continuum of excellent healthcare services. Rooted in the Evangelical Covenant Church, the hospital is dedicated to serving the physical, spiritual, and psychological needs of our culturally diverse employees and community.*

### LifeWORKS' Mission

*LifeWORKS' mission is to help our employees maintain health, balance personal and career priorities, and build solid futures based on physical, spiritual, and psychological wellness.*

## Organizational Chart



### 7 C's Overview

Swedish Covenant Hospital elected to partner with the WELCOA because we appreciated the organization's comprehensive approach to program development based upon seven critical benchmarks. The LifeWORKS program is focused on supporting the strategic priorities of Swedish Covenant Hospital according to the organization's strategic plan.

The LifeWORKS Team has regular dialog with the hospital's Executive Team to gather program ideas and share strategies and feedback. The Executive Team completed health risk appraisals, participate in LifeWORKS programs and has promised the LifeWORKS Team 100% support for wellness programming. LifeWORKS' enjoys regular support and participation from the hospital's Management Team. The LifeWORKS Team is aware that Senior Leaders and Managers must support the LifeWORKS program in order for program momentum to continue.

The LifeWORKS Team is comprised of a talented group of professionals from a variety of positions and departments at Swedish Covenant Hospital. The Team is fortunate to have the internal expertise from EHS, Cardiac Rehab, Intensive Care, Community Health, Educational Programming, Marketing, LifeCenter, Dietary Services, Human Resources, and a nationally renowned wellness-oriented cardiologist.

The LifeWORKS team collects data through employee interest surveys and comprehensive clinical evaluations. This data is analyzed and details are shared with the senior leaders and the LifeWORKS Team to determine future needs and strategic direction. Strategic directions are reviewed and adjusted throughout the year to enhance programming effectiveness. The LifeWORKS' Team recognizes the Operating Plan as the essential guide for our program, however we make modifications to the plan when appropriate.

Swedish Covenant Hospital continues to work toward becoming an employer of choice in the Chicago marketplace, which includes creating a supportive environment for employees with management practices encouraging employees to maintain a healthy work / life balance. The hospital policies and benefits support our interest in our employees as partners toward our continued growth and success. Swedish Covenant Hospital has an open door management policy and communication style which welcomes continued feedback and suggestions from all employees. Hospital employees are empowered and invited to participate on projects initiating positive changes to the work environment, continuing to make Swedish Covenant Hospital a great place to work.

EHS evaluates and interprets clinical data and participant feedback. The LifeWORKS Team continuously seeks program feedback and evaluates results, finding ways to improve satisfaction, participation, and outcomes.

## **Wellness Champion**

The LifeWORKS champion is Michelle Aronson, Human Resources manager, who used the LifeWORKS philosophy to unify the hospital benefit program. Benefits were reviewed, enhanced, and categorized according to their ability to support employees' health, time, knowledge, spirit, or money (see benefit summary attachment in Critical Benchmark #6). "The LifeWORKS program is a great strategy to increase employee health, employee satisfaction, manage benefit costs, and engage employees in new ways", Aronson said. "Employees appreciate LifeWORKS and regularly share their success stories with me and through the hospital newsletter to inspire others." Michelle developed a LifeWORKS section on the hospital's intranet which contains program materials and an online calendar of LifeWORKS events.

## **Three Strengths**

A strength of the LifeWORKS program is the strong clinical background and outstanding tenure of the Wellness Team. The team includes two EHS nurse practitioners, two experts in cardiac rehabilitation (including a wellness-oriented cardiologist), clinical dietitians, nurses, wellness center employees, Human Resources, Marketing, and Community Health professionals. By having such a strong team with an expert clinical focus, LifeWORKS can offer clinically appropriate, innovative, and highly effective interventions. The 11 member team is comprised of employees with an **average** length of service of 12 years. The tenure of the team permits unique perspectives on organizational culture and creative strategies for overcoming barriers. The team tenure helps with program implementation since patient diversity mirrors employee diversity, we clearly understand our diverse employee population risks.

Another strength is the program design which offers incentives to encourage employees to stay motivated and account for their health behaviors. EHS's nurse practitioners offer

employees support and clinical advice to reach their personal health goals. After one year of participation in LifeWORKS, employees are eligible to receive up to \$200 in LifeWORKS financial incentives. Employees can earn the funds (and other incentives) through maintaining a food and exercise journal, attending education programs and discussion groups, and participating in annual health risk appraisals. The food and exercise journal design is conveniently small enough to be conveniently kept in a pocket, making it easy to track program participation and progress. (See LifeWORKS journal attachment in Critical Benchmark #5).

A final strength of the LifeWORKS program is the targeted development of over 140 LifeWORKS programs in 2003 to address the wide array of wellness needs in our organization. LifeWORKS programs offer topics to attract participation from a diverse employee population with varying backgrounds, interests and fitness abilities. Fitness education program topics have addressed various fitness levels, and included: Starting to Exercise, Starting a Walking Program, Strength Training, Back Health, Yoga, and Training for your first 5K. Our clinical dieticians have presented a variety of nutrition programs, including Fiber, Fruit and Vegetables, What is a Portion Size, and Healthy Snack Attack, aimed at prevention of illness and obesity through proper diet. Our Employee Assistance Program developed a series of monthly programs addressing work / life balance to be implemented through the remainder of 2004. LifeWORKS team members are fortunate to have immediate access to qualified healthcare and fitness experts for new program development to meet the evolving employee and LifeWORKS program needs.

### **LifeWORKS Popular Program**

The most popular program is our Walk-at-Work program. Departments are encouraged to join together and walk a ¼ mile path through the hospital. Each participant who walks the path moves their department one step closer to departmental victory. Raffles and prizes encourage fun

and continued participation, most popular day is “Poker Walk”. Participants receive pedometers so they can continue their healthy walking habits. Last summer, employees walked more than 715 miles during the Walk-at-Work event. Our Walk-at-Work celebration, hosted by our wellness leader, honored the winners and informed employees they had walked further than distance between Chicago and Washington, DC!

### **Other Information about Swedish Covenant Hospital LifeWORKS**

Swedish Covenant Hospital’s vision is to excel as the independent hospital of choice. We realize that our employees and patients have a choice of where to work and where to receive care. Becoming the hospital of choice for employees is critical to our success in becoming the hospital of choice for our patients.

The hospital values its employees and our commitment to LifeWORKS demonstrates our long term commitment to our employees’ personal and professional wellbeing. We are a healthcare provider so we understand the essence of creating a healthy community, needs to begin with our own employees. We branded (created a promise to our employees) our wellness initiative and began promoting all employee benefits and wellness activities under the name LifeWORKS. The comprehensive LifeWORKS wellness benefit supports employees health, time, knowledge, spirit, and money. We understand that helping employees take care of these five areas of their lives, will allow them to be healthier and more balanced personally and professionally. Healthy and balanced employees are the foundation of a successful organization.