

**Well Workplace Award
Executive Summary**

**The West Virginia
Rehabilitation
Center Complex
Gold Award
Re-certification**

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. ©2002 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

© 2003

General Information

WELL WORKPLACE *Gold Re-certification Application*

Basic Information

Name of Organization The West Virginia Rehabilitation Center Complex

Address of Organization _____

Institute, WV

Work Telephone _____

Fax Number _____

Contact Person Jeanann Leone

Title Team Leader, WRC Wellness Program

Alternate Contact Beverly Binford

Parent Organization West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services

Number of Sites Covered by this Application 1

Number of Employees Covered by this Application 350

Nature of Business or Industry State Government

Name of CEO William Tanzey - WRC

Date of Application 5/30/2003

Preface Organizational and Program Background

The West Virginia Rehabilitation Center Complex is a part of the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services which is a state government agency. Our Agency interim director is Ms. Janice Holland. We are one of only nine comprehensive rehabilitation centers in the United States. The West Virginia Rehabilitation Center Complex Wellness Team provides wellness programming to approximately 330 full-time employees.

As Rehabilitation professionals, our staff is keenly aware of how tenuous our health can be and how quickly it can be taken from us. In 1996, West Virginia Rehabilitation Center Administrator, Mr. William Tanzey, chartered the WVRC Wellness Team.. The charter was to “Explore, develop and implement a wellness program at The West Virginia Rehabilitation Center compatible with staff interests and needs.” Beverly Binford, Special Projects, was appointed as team leader and Jeanann Leone was selected as team co-leader.

The first meeting was held on February 27, 1996 with seventeen members chosen as a representative group by the Team leaders. In 1997, Beverly Binford was asked by management to give-up her position as team leader so as to focus on other special projects. She was, however, given permission to continue as a regular team

member and Jeanann Leone took over the leadership of the team. We became a Bronze Level Well Workplace winner that year, Silver in 1998 and Gold in 2000.

MISSION/VISION

The DRS mission/vision statement, in relation to wellness, is “DRS is committed to wellness as an integral part of its culture in which all employees are provided with opportunities to pursue a high quality of life and health.”

The Wellness Team’s mission/vision is to encourage each individual to self-evaluate where they are today- in relation to their physical, emotional and spiritual health- and to help and encourage him/her through awareness, education, and behavior change programming to move forward one step at a time towards wellness.

The Wellness Program is guided by the Seven Critical Benchmarks. Our administration supports our efforts to provide a quality program by designating us a budget which is almost unheard of in state government. This budget is used to maintain a wellness section in our staff library, purchase incentives, and sponsor wellness- related activities.

Our program is administered by a strong “Wellness Team” which consists of staff from various units within our facility in order to assure that the needs and concerns of our staff are being met.

The Wellness Team also initiated a '**Co-Worker of the Month**' program to recognize individuals on our staff who are making a contribution in their communities and in the lives of others.

To evaluate the effectiveness of our programming, we have the participants to complete surveys at end of a program or on a periodic basis for those programs which are ongoing. We also gather information from our Health Fair screenings to see if there are improvements in the general health of our staff.

The Well Workplace process has given us the framework to develop a quality program. We are seeing more and more how an organized wellness program can impact the health of employees. We have had several staff members who have discovered serious medical problems which were identified in our Health Screenings. In some cases, this detection has resulted in the successful treatment of life-threatening conditions.

As Team Leader, Jeanann Leone, has led the Team since the original leader, Ms. Beverly Binford, resigned her leadership in 1996 after obtaining the Bronze Level Well Workplace Award. Ms. Leone had this to say, "The most significant lesson I have learned as the leader of our wellness program, is that I am dealing with

individuals- each with their own wants, needs, and idiosyncrasies- and the personal touch is invaluable. Just stopping to ask a co-worker how they are doing after an illness, sending an uplifting e-mail to staff, etc. can mean so much. Everyone wants to feel cared for- it's a basic human need. A wellness program must 'go the extra mile' and make these personal contacts. They go a long way towards developing a sense of community in the workplace".

Our Wellness Program is strong and grows year by year. We have many strengths and here are three that we would like to mention:

1. **Strength:** In 1996 we not only established our own wellness program, our Complex became a charter member of **The Pathways to Wellness Program** which was established by the WV Public Employees Insurance Agency. Employees of the work sites that are enrolled in the Pathways program are eligible to take advantage of awareness, education, and behavior change programs ranging from Health Screenings, Health Risk Appraisals, and "Lunch and Learns" to physical activity programs- just to name a few. Each work site has a Health Promotion Consultant (HPC) that works with the leader of the work site wellness program to provide these services most of which are free of charge including incentives.

2. **Strength:** Our wellness program prides itself in providing unique opportunities to our staff. A few examples of the kinds of programming we have offered are:

Friday Noon-Time Bowling, Summer Bowling Tournament, Weight Training, Walking, Weight Loss Programs, Stress Management, Arthritis Swim, Aerobics, Team Sports, Lunch With Oprah (Lunch and Learns based on topics presented on the Oprah Winfrey Show) and other "Lunch and Learns" on a variety of topics, Tai Chi, Country Line Dancing, Yoga, YMCA Corporate Cup (Our team was the Division II winners in 2001 and 2002), Employee Health and Fitness Day One Mile Walk and Luncheon, Health Care Screenings, and the distribution of Self-Care manuals with accompanying training. We try to utilize the talents of our own staff to provide instruction for our classes whenever possible.

We have also offered one-day bus trips that have provided not only an opportunity for fun and relaxation, but the chance for staff, and their families to interact on a personal level outside the work place.

We recently offered the program "Cooking Around the World." We used our staff who are natives of other countries and family members of our clients to provide a variety of cuisines. Those represented were Thai, Vegetarian Indian, Middle Eastern, and Latin. These were very well received and we hope to offer more of these classes in the future.

We also have an annual budget which allows us money to provide incentives and supplies. Money set aside for wellness in State Government is a rarity and we are empowered by such strong administrative support.

3. **Strength:** Because we are a school, we are fortunate to have a fully equipped gymnasium, therapeutic swimming pool, games room and bowling alley. Our staff have the opportunity to use these facilities during their lunch hour and after work.

We are starting to get a lot of feedback from our staff as to how our Wellness Program has impacted their lives and the changes they are making towards improved health. Here is one example of an e-mail we received after a walk/luncheon our Wellness Team sponsored to celebrate **National Employee Health and Fitness Day**: "Jeanann, just wanted to tell you I enjoyed the walk and REALLY enjoyed the lunch! I am not good at standing up and tell people about myself, but I have benefited from the wellness, and the gym, and the walking programs quit a bit. Working in the gym gave me the energy to work out at home and then to walk here at work, I have lost between 70-75 lbs., so working here has encouraged me to get more physical! Keep up the great work....because even starting out doing these things for fun, ends up shedding a pound at a time and before you realize it your watching what you eat and making sure you get your exercise (in some way or another) each day. Thanks again, Kitty " These kinds of comments make all the hard work worthwhile!