



## 2011 Northern California Wellness Survey Highlights Bridging the Gap in Wellness Programs

**Presidio Benefits Group's 2011 Northern California Wellness Survey** reviewed the state of wellness programming among leading mid-market and large employers. The findings in aggregate suggest that wellness program adoption and development is still in its infancy. While the interest in wellness programs is strong amongst all participating organizations, the adoption rate of formal programs is low. In most cases, organizations that have implemented formal programs have yet to realize significant clinical and financial results.

More than 150 organizations completed the online survey. Of these, 47% have not implemented a formal program although 70% of the respondents in this group are interested in doing so. For this group, the main obstacles preventing them from launching a program are time (69%) and budget (71%).

**70%** have not created a wellness program but are interested in doing so

For those groups that have implemented wellness, it is a new endeavor for the majority (68%) who have launched programs in 2008 or later. For these groups, wellness holds the promise of helping improve employee health and lowering healthcare costs.

**60%** have an overall participation rate of less than 50%

Employers who have wellness programs are providing generous benefits. All programs cover spouses/domestic partners, those with health coaching (64%) generally provide the benefit to all employees with an unlimited number of sessions, and many provide onsite biometric testing (59%). The problem, it appears, is engaging the employees to take advantage of resources that would help them improve their health and lower the organization's healthcare costs.

Low participation rates may be driven, in part, by small incentives. In general, organizations that have wellness programs are not devoting significant funding to it. Organizations committed to impacting their healthcare costs through their wellness program need to reconsider their budgets. Expecting wellness programs to deliver clinical and fiscal outcomes while spending less than 2% of the total health benefit cost per employee per year (PEPY) is unrealistic.

**56%** budgeted less than \$250 PEPY for their wellness program

**93%** see a link between good health and productivity

While many organizations are interested in wellness and some have started the journey, there remain significant gaps to bridge. The good news is that the vast majority of respondents understand the link between good health and productivity, and believe that wellness can ultimately lower healthcare costs. Human Resources, the department leading the wellness charge in most organizations, needs the active support of senior leadership. We believe that programs will mature and become more effective as organizations build more compelling business cases to invest in the health of their population.

For more information or to request a copy of the Executive Summary, please contact your Presidio representative or Matthew Coan ([matt@presidiobenefits.com](mailto:matt@presidiobenefits.com)).