



## **Wise Consumer Health Month Activity Tips**

February is Wise Consumer Health Month. Teaching employees the basics of being good health care consumers can result in a healthier and happier work force. It can also help to reduce unnecessary utilization of costly medical services. Activities such as those listed below can support and encourage employees to be better health care consumers. Use your imagination and remember, enthusiasm is contagious!

1. Start a self-care program at your workplace. Distribute self-care books to each employee and encourage their use at home and in the workplace. Schedule viewings of a self-care video at convenient times and locations to help teach employees about correct use of their self-care guide.
2. Ask employees to submit success stories about their own use of self-care. Publish the first three stories submitted in the monthly newsletter. Award the authors of the published stories with a free lunch from a local restaurant. Some time during February, have a grand prize drawing where all selected winners from the previous twelve months win a chance at a cash prize.
3. Put together a “doctor-bag” display of medical self-care items for the home. Create fliers for employees which list the important items which should be included in their home pharmacy. Encourage them to complete the project by taking a “creative” picture of them in their homes next to their newly created home pharmacy. Post pictures on a bulletin board. Participants win a free coupon for an important item they may need to refill in the pharmacy such as bandages, or aspirin.
4. Have a doctor-patient communication workshop. Offer this to employees at lunch time or in the evening when spouses can attend. In groups of four or five, ask participants to compile a list of questions to ask their doctor about an “assigned” health problem. Include information on being assertive. Ask a doctor to attend, if possible, to answer questions and discuss how doctor-patient interaction helps with proper diagnosis and treatment. Give away a wallet size card that has questions you should ask your doctor at an appointment. Also give out pocket size medical info cards or booklets that provide space for the employees to record medical history, test results, dates of doctor’s visits, immunizations, etc.
5. Make up a test for employees to evaluate their physician’s performance. Encourage employees to grade their physicians and not to continue to see a doctor who doesn’t get a high score. This is especially important for employers who offer standard indemnity health insurance plans.
6. Distribute a booklet on recommended immunizations, medical exams, tests, etc. Include a “quiz” as a paycheck stuffer and ask employees to complete the quiz using the booklet they were given. Those who complete the questions correctly will be announced in the employee newsletter or given a free prize.
7. Approach a local pharmacy about cosponsoring a special event day. Encourage local television and newspaper coverage. Have balloons imprinted with Wise Health Consumer Month to give away at the event. Give away free band aids or other items to be used in a home pharmacy.
8. Publicize a logo or theme contest for Wise Consumer Health Month with the local elementary schools. Have contestants draw a picture depicting some aspect of taking care of their health. Display them in the local library, city hall, or hospital lobby. The first place winner could have their work incorporated in a promotional campaign for Wise Consumer Health Month throughout the community.