

## Whidbey General Hospital gets its employees walking

Jan 17 2009

Whidbey General Hospital is taking a proactive approach to the management of chronic disease with its "Get Moving Challenge."

The hospital recently began an online employee wellness program offered by [walkingspree.com](http://walkingspree.com).

The walk-oriented program is sponsored by the hospital's human resources department and its Life Center for Essential Wellness.

The program includes the use of pocket pedometers obtained through walking

[spree.com](http://walkingspree.com) to track and automatically upload employee walking data to the Web site.

Each employee can add other activities, such as swimming or cycling, to get a full picture of the calories burned.

Employees can also track calories consumed with an online food and nutrition tracker to balance their daily "energy in, energy out" equation, thereby assisting with weight loss and weight-loss maintenance.

Employees also receive support from WalkingSpree's online fitness and nutritional coaches.

"This easily accessible program encourages exercise and offers nutrition guidance for our employees," said Carolyn Pape, hospital human resources director. "These folks can just track their steps and achieve wellness benefits in the process."

For employees who want a more comprehensive focus to fitness and diet, there are other resources available on the program's personal Web pages, Pape said.

"We look forward to supporting our employees in meeting their personal wellness goals and providing a model for the community we serve," said Tom Tomasino, interim hospital chief operating officer.

The program offers customized wellness packages with private Web sites to corporations to promote wellness in the workplace, Pape said.

It also offers online social networking to the public with walking clubs, Walking Buddies, blogs and forums.

"The program promotes a healthy lifestyle, and it offloads the number of visits to the doctor, thereby reducing the burden on the health system," Pape said.

Chronic disease is a major challenge for employers and health care systems, because it is the major cause of death and disability worldwide, Pape said.

In the United States, chronic disease is the cause of about two thirds of all deaths, she said.

"Overweight and obesity are important causes of chronic disease," Pape said. "Studies have shown that exercise such as walking can significantly reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and cancer."

"It's no wonder that walking is the number-one health initiative prescribed by health professionals in North America," Pape said.

For more information on the management of chronic disease, visit [www.walkingspree.com](http://www.walkingspree.com), or call Pape at Whidbey

### RELATED STORIES

#### South Whidbey Record

- [Whidbey General Hospital CEO talks about bond](#)
- [Whidbey General Hospital commissioner to resign](#)
- [CEO of Whidbey General Hospital to step down](#)

#### Whidbey Island

- [Scholarships help hospital employees](#)
- [Whidbey General Hospital board approves CEO contract](#)
- [Whidbey General Hospital healthy, auditor says](#)
- [Ultra-successful 'Tour' benefits Whidbey General Hospital](#)

### NEWS BLOGS

#### Crime Time

The latest from South Whidbey's police blotter and the Record's siren chasers

#### Langley Inside and Out

All about the City of Langley from The Record and other sources

#### The Newsroom

Get the inside scoop on what the newsroom is working on at The South Whidbey Record

General Hospital in Coupeville at

360-678-5151.

**Find this article at:**

<http://www.pnwlocalnews.com/whidbey/swr/news/37742579.html>

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.

Copyright ©2008 Black Press. All rights reserved.