



Fitness Center at a Health System

This fitness center partnered with HealthFitness in 1997 to provide health and fitness services at the hospital-based fitness center and to promote community health. The fitness center is an extension of the health promotion and wellness activities provided by a leading health care system in Wisconsin.

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We serve as a front door to the health system. Community members have learned to trust us and will turn to us to meet their health care needs. We also provide positive public relations for the health system, whether through health fairs or attracting people who want to work for the hospital. We add value to the health system.

- Mark Tessar, HealthFitness
General Manager

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Promoting community health through a hospital-based fitness center

Challenge

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that six out of ten Americans live with at least one chronic disease,¹ and 90 percent of all health care costs stem from chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes and obesity.²

Many employers know the importance of employee fitness as a way to control costs associated with illness and are investing in the health of their employees in exchange for significantly lower health care costs, reduced employee absenteeism, and positive returns on their investment.³

A growing number of hospitals and health systems across the country are operating hospital-based fitness centers that are open to the public and their employees in order to boost engagement and improve health in their communities,⁴ but many find it challenging to reach the community and engage community members in their health.

Solution

This hospital-based fitness center partnered with HealthFitness to provide health and fitness services to the community. The fitness center also represents the health system's commitment to providing high quality care for the sick and helping the community improve its quality of life through disease prevention and health promotion.

Results

Boosting community engagement. The fitness center's partnership with HealthFitness keeps the hospital-based fitness center active and its members and employees engaged, creating an encouraging culture of health and wellness for their entire community. More than 165 staff members service community members at the 89,000 square foot facility, featuring 150 weekly group classes and 600 monthly personal training sessions.

Integrating with the health system. "Partnering with HealthFitness provides a place for the community and employees to focus on both fitness and wellness," says Mark Tessar, HealthFitness general manager. For example, the health system's physical medicine and rehabilitation services are available at the fitness center and medically directed classes are available to its members and the community.

"Being a hospital-based fitness center allows us to invest more in the staff and training than most local gyms, so staff can play a greater role in the health community," Tessar says. "As a result, we are part of a complete well care system. The community knows about us, we are getting more doctor referrals and more hospital employees are coming to the fitness center."

Reaching community members when they are well. "Hospitals want their fitness centers to reach the community, but a lot of them are not," he says. "Providing practical, hands-on fitness solutions helps us stand out in our community and reach more people when they are well," he says.

About HealthFitness

HealthFitness, a Trustmark company, delivers a complete and personalized wellbeing solution that is designed to make people healthier and includes the best of fitness and recreation, wellness, injury prevention and an engaging platform. HealthFitness is URAC and NCQA accredited and a proven leader and partner for enhancing wellbeing programs and transforming lives for the better. Parent company Trustmark provides a full spectrum of employee benefits to improve wellbeing through better health and greater financial security. For more information on HealthFitness, visit www.healthfitness.com.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/index.htm>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/about/costs/index.htm>

³ Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.
<https://health.gov/news/blog/2017/05/five-reasons-employee-wellness-is-worth-the-investment/>

⁴ <https://www.amnhealthcare.com/latest-healthcare-news/hospital-affiliated-wellness-centers-rise/>



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