

BE WELL Quarterly

BLUE EARTH COUNTY SHIP

NOVEMBER 2016



UPCOMING COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING

Wednesday
November 9, 2016
2:30 – 4:30 pm

Blue Earth County
Historic Courthouse
3rd Floor Conference Room
204 S. Fifth Street
Mankato



MN Department of Health Grant to Support Local BE WELL Partners



The diabetes epidemic is a challenging public health concern. It is well-known that adults with diabetes often develop other lifestyle-limiting mobility concerns. In Blue Earth County, 32.8% of adults 65 years and older have a disability and nearly 1 in 3 (31.9%) adults with diabetes report that they have serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs. The **MN Department of Health** has partnered with BE WELL to identify and invite local organizations to participate in

implementing a five-year initiative to promote healthy eating and physical activity to delay or prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes, particularly for individuals with a disability.

VINE Faith in Action, one of the local partners, will be implementing the **evidence-based CDC-led Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP)** and working to adapt the curriculum to address the unique needs of people with mobility disabilities. The program's group sessions provide participants with prediabetes support and opportunities to learn and build relationships with peers, a trained lifestyle coach and other health professionals.



The **Region Nine Development Commission** is another partner for this MN Department of Health grant. Working together with BE WELL, we will be focusing on **pedestrian planning** so that people, including those with mobility disabilities, are able to walk/roll safely and more easily in their communities.

In the coming months, BE WELL and local partners will be working with the MN Dept of Health to detail out the work to be undertaken during this five-year initiative.

New “Featured Gardener” Series

BE WELL has launched the first in a series of Featured Gardener sheets for use by our community garden partners to help gardeners get to know each other. Our first Featured Gardeners is Khadijah “Dorbell” Anthony from **Growing with Grace Community Garden**. She has been gardening with her three children at Growing with Grace for the past two years. Together, they grow lettuce, carrots, onions, cilantro, marigolds and sunflowers. When asked why she gardens, Khadijah said:

“WE GARDEN BECAUSE IT’S A BEAUTIFUL EXPERIENCE SEEING THAT WITH THE HELP OF THE LORD, SOMETHING WE PLANTED (AND DIDN’T HAVE A CLUE AS TO WHAT WE WERE DOING) GROWS INTO SOMETHING EDIBLE AND MAKES THE LANDSCAPE LOOK NICE.”



Healthy Eating



UPDATES

CLT Co-Chair

Be Well staff thank Ceceli Polzin, our volunteer co-chair for our November 9 Community Leadership Team meeting.

Ceceli is the Community and Customer Relations Manager at the Mankato Clinic and provided tremendous support for the planning of our meeting.

BE WELL Website

The Blue Earth County website is undergoing an upgrade that should roll out in November 2016. This upgrade will change the look and some of the structure of existing BE WELL pages.

BE WELL staff intend to continue to add to the online resources, which include CLT meeting packets, partner application forms, technical support guides and more.

You will still find our website at:

www.BlueEarthCountyMN.gov/BeWell

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BE WELL @ WORK in Blue Earth Co



Worksites

Comprehensive **WORKSITE WELLNESS** programs have been shown to be very effective in improving health and saving money through lower health care costs, increased productivity, and decreased absenteeism. During the last two years, BE WELL partnered with seven local employers to help establish or enhance and maintain wellness programs. A few of their successes are highlighted below:

BE WELL @ WORK partnered with the **Open Door Health Center (ODHC)** to promote wellness among their staff. Utilizing technical assistance and funding from BE WELL, the ODHC wellness committee removed vending machines from their clinic and established a healthy snack station in their staff break room to encourage healthier snacking during the work day. Other important accomplishments included: adopting a breastfeeding support policy, creating two mother's rooms for employees, adopting a tobacco-free grounds policy, and providing cessation information to employees.



BE WELL @ WORK also partnered with the **Lake Crystal Wellcome Memorial (LCWM) School District** to promote wellness among their staff. Utilizing technical assistance and funding from BE WELL, the LCWM Schools added staff wellness into their existing school wellness policy and established a worksite wellness sub-committee. They created mother's rooms at both school locations and adopted a breastfeeding support policy. They also educated staff on how to do a walking meeting and posted local walking routes in a variety of distances for staff to consider using. And just in time for the 2016 school year, they installed healthy snack stations in their employee lounges, creating healthy eating options during the school day.

BE WELL @ WORK also partnered with the **City of Mankato** to promote wellness among their staff. Utilizing technical assistance and funding from BE WELL, the City created healthy snack stations at their various worksites. They have been able to customize these stations based on staff preferences at each site. The City also created a mini-fitness room with small equipment and instructional posters. Both these changes have made healthy eating and physical activity opportunities more accessible during the workday.

