

Participation in Employer-Sponsored Wellness Programs Before and After Retirement

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Objectives: To evaluate wellness program participation before and after retirement. **Methods:** This retrospective cohort design compares 3 groups of employees: 1998-1999 retirees (N=6065), 1994-1995 retirees (N=5862), and 21,176 employees who were still active as of 2002. Participation was compared over 2 time periods for high-intensity and low-intensity programs. **Results:** Significantly different participation rates were found among the 3 groups

specific to program intensity. Participation before retirement is associated with higher participation after retirement regardless of program intensity (OR=3.8 for overall participation). **Conclusions:** Wellness programs can attract retirees, especially if they participated before retirement and are offered a variety of programs.

Key words: retirees, program participation, worksite wellness
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