

## **State of Minnesota**

### **I. Vision and goals:**

To build employer support and capacity to implement successful worksite health promotion programs that increase healthy behavior, improve the overall health status of Minnesota workers and their families and reduce health care costs across the state.

### **II. Background information:**

State Government is the largest employer in Minnesota with nearly 50,000 full-time employees. The State is self-insured and provides health care coverage to more than 120,000 state employees and dependents, with over \$450 million in annual medical claims. The top six disease states driving health care costs among state employees are hypertension and high cholesterol, severe heart conditions, mental health including depression, lower back pain, diabetes and asthma. Employees who have one or more of these conditions accounted for 73% of the cost of health care claims in 2004.

A survey of small and large employers in Minnesota, conducted by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) in 2004, found employee health risk factors of concern were: stress (57%); tobacco use (46%); and lack of exercise (40%). Employers were also concerned about the cost of health care insurance, absenteeism and decreased productivity.

### **III. *Healthy States* action agenda:**

The Healthy States Grant Program funding will be used to 1) create a Workplace Wellness Toolkit featuring a compilation of effective healthy eating and active living strategies used throughout Minnesota, 2) pilot test the Toolkit with Minnesota state agencies and both public and private sector workplaces, and 3) host a Governor's Summit to promote the Initiative statewide and market the Toolkit to Minnesota employers in need of a workplace wellness program. MDH plans to work with local public health partners to promote the Initiative and Workplace Wellness Toolkit to employers at the community level.

### **IV. Team membership:**

The Initiative is administered by MDH and guided by a Policy Team consisting of the Governor's policy advisors, members of the Governor's Health Cabinet (Commissioner of Health and Commissioner of Labor and Industry), Department of Employee Relations (DOER), contracted health insurers (Medica, Minnesota Council of Health Plans, and Blue Cross Blue Shield), employers from urban and rural Minnesota (General Mills, Bauerly Brothers, Inc. and Olsen Thielen & Co. Ltd.), academia (University of Minnesota), and nonprofit organizations dedicated to disease prevention (American Cancer Society and the American Heart Association).

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