



HEALTHY WORKPLACE

Healthy Workplace Related Competitions in Government of Nova Scotia

We spend so much time at work; it's a good place to introduce and promote Healthy workplace related policies, activities and competitions. According to Health Canada such policies and programs can improve employees':

- Coping abilities for stress
- Fitness & health
- Morale
- General work performance
- Job satisfaction
- Organizational effectiveness
- Productivity

These competitions not only give health benefits to the participants they are also a great way to:

- Improve relations amongst co-workers
- Introduce a fun element into the work day
- Build team work skills
- Have a sense of achievement at the end
- Incorporate physical activity in daily work routine
- Work towards culture shift

Given below are some links to the websites for more ideas for workplace physical activity:

- <http://www.centre4activeliving.ca/workplace/>
- <http://www.in-motion.ca/work/>
- <http://ww2.heartandstroke.ca/Page.asp?PageID=33&ArticleID=5612&Src=living&From=SubCategory>
- <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/fitness/work/>

Various departments across NS government have arranged such competitions during the last year or so. Following is a brief description of those competitions:

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

Deputy Minister's Challenge

The Deputy Challenge was planned to coincide with this Healthy Workplace Week 2006; however, due to the fact that more and more people were signing up as the week progressed, it was extended to encompass a two-week period. An email was sent to all employees across the province, encouraging them to try something new. This could include volunteering at their church, going for a walk every evening, eating healthier, taking some time for themselves, reading a book, or spending more time with their children. It was felt to be a positive event as it didn't focus solely on physical activity, and every staff member could become involved, regardless of where his or her office was located. Staff were asked to email Healthy Workplace committee members a confirmation that they were participating, and (if they wanted to) a brief description of their planned activity.

Throughout the weeks, there were daily draws for items like Healthy Workplace travel mugs filled with healthy treats. Every participant received an Award of Excellence at the end of the event. They went this route, as they felt it was an equal playing field - it wasn't just those who were competitive who were awarded. Everyone got recognition through the award, and there was equal chance for everyone in the draws. By the end of the event, there were approximately 80 participants who had signed up. Attached below is a copy of the Award of Excellence that was sent out to the participants.

Submitted by: Kim E. Baldwin



Agriculture / NS Fisheries & Aquaculture Wellness Committee

presents

Award of Excellence

to

Employee Name

for

Participation in the 2006 Deputy Challenge

Office of Economic Development (OED)

Let's Get Waisted!!

The *Let's Get Waisted Challenge*, hosted by the Healthy Workplace Committee (HWC) members, was a contest to see which section of OED can healthily lose the most inches off their collective waist. The challenge was similar to the reality TV show "The Biggest Loser" but, instead of measuring weight lost, inches lost were measured. The reason for using this index is the high correlation between waist circumference and coronary risks (1&2). This may also be a more appropriate measure than weight or BMI for those with certain physiques.

Divisions formed teams with any number of participants. The teams could decide among themselves how they would record measures for each team member. For example, team members could either take their own measurements at home or get together as a team on reporting day. The task of gathering measurements was the responsibility of the Team Captain and remained confidential. Each team provided the HWC with a starting average waist size and then bi-weekly updates every second Monday (as specified in the accompanying chart). The number provided was the total waist measurement for the team divided by the number of participants. Once the data for each team was collected they forwarded it to the Health Workplace Committee (hwp@gov.ns.ca).

Teams were encouraged to hold brief bi-weekly meetings (20mins or less) to motivate each other and share their secrets of success. That could be anything from sharing low fat/calorie recipes to exercise tips.

The rules of the challenge were as follows:

- Form a team within your division on or before February 9, 2007. Please note all team members should consult your physician before starting the challenge.
- Give your team a name reflecting your division. You should also choose a picture/graphic to represent your team.
- Choose a captain for your team. Tasks: collecting measurements (to the nearest quarter inch), forwarding the numbers to the Healthy Workplace Committee, and most importantly, keeping the team motivated and scheduling bi-weekly meetings.
- Follow competition progress on the intranet http://10.2.155.101/econ/org_view.asp?OrgID=172
- Challenge ends the second day of summer June 22, 2007.

Best of luck!

[1http://ww2.heartandstroke.ca/Page.asp?PageID=1613&ContentID=24311&ContentTypeID=1](http://ww2.heartandstroke.ca/Page.asp?PageID=1613&ContentID=24311&ContentTypeID=1)

[2http://ww2.heartandstroke.ca/Page.asp?PageID=1613&ContentID=24311&ContentTypeID=1](http://ww2.heartandstroke.ca/Page.asp?PageID=1613&ContentID=24311&ContentTypeID=1)

Note: How to measure your waist properly

- Take your measurement while standing upright
- Inhale and exhale, letting out all the air in your lungs. Breathe normally.
- Place the tape around your waist, between the bottom of your ribs and the top of your hipbones (at your belly button approximately).
- Hold the tape firmly but don't press in.
- Make sure the measuring tape is parallel to the floor to avoid a misreading.
- Take the reading.

(Results will follow.)

Submitted by: Kathlene Farrell

Intergovernmental Affairs and Office of Aboriginal Affairs

Walking Challenge

In Summer 2006 Intergovernmental Affairs (IGA) and Office of Aboriginal Affairs (OAA) held a walking challenge to see which department could walk across the trans Canada trail the fastest. Angela Matheson-Coutu formerly of IGA and Stephanie Cain of OAA organized this challenge.

The goal was to do the East-West route from St John's, Newfoundland to Victoria, British Columbia... which was about 12,500,000 steps. It would roughly be equivalent to 6,200 miles of trail. They were both close to the goal but OAA got there first and it took them about four months (July-October) to do so. One of the challenges along the way was that some of the pedometers were inaccurate and needed to be replaced.

There were about 10 regular participants from IGA (out of 20 employees). They had weekly prizes for the top stepper. Towards the end they started to get repeat winners so in order to avoid this and to share the prizes they gave them out to the person who was most improved over their previous week's total, or the person who had participated the most consecutive weeks, etc. The prizes were gift certificates from places like Subway, Cleve's and other "healthier" vendors.

Submitted by: Melanie fewer

Justice

Lose a ton of Weight

The Lose a Ton of Weight competition lasted 6 months (Nov. 2006-April 2007) and had 52 Dept. of Justice participants from sites across the province.

The purpose of this competition was to encourage and motivate Healthy Life Works (HLW) participants to lose weight. Participants needed to make healthy lifestyle changes that resulted in increased energy expenditure and decreased energy intake.

This competition was promoted via e-mail, the HLW monthly newsletter and word-of-mouth.

To enter the competition, participants had to e-mail AHWI their name, site, current weight, how much weight they would like to lose and one lifestyle change goal they have by November 1, 2006. At the end of each month, they had to e-mail their weight, physical activity minutes, monthly challenge and bonus challenge results.

Each participant was e-mailed a monthly calendar to record his or her physical activity minutes. The calendar outlined the competition challenges, bonus challenges, prizes and point system.

An example of a competition challenge and bonus challenge:

November 2006

Challenge: Walk or run for a minimum of 12 hours in total.

Bonus Challenges: Walk or run on a new hiking trail. Do not buy any Halloween candy on sale and throw away all that you did not distribute.

Incentives:

Individual and site prize incentives were awarded to those who earned the most points, based on the following strategy:

- 100 points for every pound lost
- 200 points for each month they are a healthy weight and/or maintaining their current weight
- 1 point for every minute of physical activity completed
- 200 points for completing each monthly challenge
- 100 points for completing each bonus challenge

Each small site (Courts) that had 5 participants enter and each big site (Correctional Centers, Head Office) that had 10 participants enter received a body fat scale. This incentive encouraged participants to get their co-workers involved. Contest entrants were e-mailed a participation contract for them to sign; once we received the specified number of signed contracts, each site was sent a scale.

The site that won the competition (points were averaged by number of participants) received \$200 to purchase a group item for their centre or lunch for all competition participants, etc. There were also six monthly individual prizes and a grand prize given to the individual with the most points.

Submitted by: Rebecca LeBlanc

Public Service Commission

Club PSC Walking Challenge

This 8-week walking challenge was launched on March 1st, with a wrap-up celebration taking place on May 1st. Teams of four were asked to submit team names, along with the name of a team captain. A total of 14 teams participated (56 PSC staff). At the launch, participants were provided with a pedometer, a tracking sheet (attached below) and a set of rules. Each week, team captains gathered their member's total kilometers walked and submitted the team totals to a representative from the PSC's Healthy Workplace Committee. Weekly totals were recorded on a large tracking sheet and displayed in the lobby of One Government Place for all to see. At the wrap-up event, all participants were provided with a certificate (attached below) and a small gift for their participation. The top three teams were announced and provided with individual gifts. This challenge sparked some friendly competition among colleagues and generated a lot of talk around physical activity. This activity was a great success.

Submitted by: Lisa Palermo

CLUB PSC

Walking Record

Name _____

Team _____

Weekly Totals – Summary Chart

	Kilometers
Week 1	
Week 2	
Week 3	
Week 4	
Week 5	
Week 6	
Week 7	
Week 8	

Daily Totals

(Record your *daily totals* below and transfer the *weekly total* to the summary chart provided above)

	Total Kms Week 1
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	
Week 1 Total	

	Total Kms Week 2
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	
Week 2 Total	

	Total Kms Week 3
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	

	Total Kms Week 4
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	

Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	
Week 3 Total	

Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	
Week 4 Total	

	Total Kms Week 5
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	
Week 5 Total	

	Total Kms Week 6
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	
Week 6 Total	

	Total Kms Week 7
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	
Week 7 Total	

	Total Kms Week 8
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
Sunday	
Week 8 Total	

PSC Healthy Workplace Committee



CLUB PSC

Team Captain Summary Sheet "Walk to Honolulu"

Team Captain _____

Team _____

Weekly Team Totals – Summary Chart

(Report your *weekly totals* to Lisa Palermo every **Wednesday** by end of day)

	Total Team Kilometers
Week 1	
Week 2	
Week 3	
Week 4	
Week 5	
Week 6	
Week 7	
Week 8	

Weekly Totals by Team Member

(Record your *weekly totals by team member* below and transfer the *weekly total* to the summary chart provided above)

Name	Total Kms Week 1
Week 1 Total	

Name	Total Kms Week 2
Week 2 Total	

Name	Total Kms Week 3
Week 3 Total	

Name	Total Kms Week 4
Week 4 Total	

Name	Total Kms Week 5

Name	Total Kms Week 6

Week 5 Total	

Week 6 Total	

Name	Total Kms Week 7
Week 7 Total	

Name	Total Kms Week 8
Week 8 Total	

PSC Healthy Workplace Committee

HEALTHYWORKPLACE

The following certificate was given to all the participants.



The pictures below are from the wrap up ceremony.



SNSMR

Stairway to Health

All the information about the Stairway to Health program can be found at <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/sth-evs/english/index.htm>. They had a successful climb and still have staff climbing the stairs on their own. The initial climb was launched with a nice address from their Assistant Deputy Minister and one of the Executive Directors. Approximately 30 people joined in the climb at the launch. The challenge was advertised with loads of posters all over the place. Those posters too can be found on the above website. Packages were sent to all departmental offices across the province. Those employees who did not have stairs in their office buildings were encouraged to count the stairs they took at home or to find a building that did have stairs. All in all it was and still is a success!

Submitted by: Margo Wilkinson

Treasury And Policy Board

Step Challenge

The staff of Treasury & Policy Board (TPB) recently joined other Nova Scotia Government Departments in supporting the Healthy Workplace Initiative with the launch of their "Step Counter Challenge" on April 3, 2007. This challenge has the staff of TPB walking across Canada, with the goal of beating the current unofficial record of 126 days held by OAA. They have a 100% participation in the Step Counter Challenge. The office culture has definitely changed. Most staff are now taking the stairs. This competition has people talking about physical activity. Following is a step by step description of the challenge:

1) 1-week trial period where the steps were not recorded. This was an opportunity to "get used" to the pedometers. The second week was the "base week". The teams were chosen on the basis of the base week with the objective of ensuring that they were evenly matched. After the base week, the competition began. By now they have completed 4 2-week periods and chose a winning team at the end of each. The winners are presented with the "Big Steppers" trophy. The overall winner will receive a \$75 award.

2) There are 6 teams (as of recently with names and captains)

3) Object #1: Improve as Individuals, teams and TPB

4) Object #2: Win as a Team (The team that wins the most '2-week periods' at the end of the challenge is the winner. To 'win' a period, a team must have the highest average daily steps per individual)

5) Objective #3 - the Cross-Canada Challenge: Yes, they are walking across the country and have already crossed Sturgeon Falls, Ontario. The record, at this time, is held by OAA having completed the same trek in 126 days. They are using an 11-person average for comparability. It took them 53 days to complete "stage 4". OAA took 50 days to get to the same point - so they are trailing by 3 days. However, they have established seven new directions (some quite substantial) in a bid to close this gap. They are as follows:

The Seven New Directions in the Step Counter Challenge:

Brought to you by the TPB Health committee:

Bruce, Meddy, Susan, Sheri, Gary and Frank

June 20, 2007

1) Teams: Each team is asked to get together to choose a team name and a captain (appointment to follow).

2) Up to 500 Bonus Steps!!

In addition to accumulating steps for your team in the process of completing weekly challenges, you can now earn "**bonus steps**" as well! Each team can now earn up to 500 bonus steps for participation in weekly challenges (the 500 steps would be added directly to the team's *average-daily-steps-per-individual*).

Individuals on 5-member teams can each earn up to 100 steps for their team, while those on 4-member teams can earn up to 125 steps. For individuals to obtain the full credit for their team, they must complete two (or more) weekly challenges for the two-week period (timing is irrelevant).

A single “**elevator infraction**” (i.e. use of the elevator when use of the stairs was possible) disqualifies participants from claiming bonus steps for the stair challenge for that week. However, it is still possible to obtain full credit by participating in two weekly challenges for the two-week period.

The bonus steps are sufficient to significantly change placement so “the stakes are high!”

The forms in the Kitchens will now include a box to indicate the number of weekly challenges completed.

- 0 = 0 bonus steps
- 1 = 50 or 62.5 bonus steps
- 2+ = 100 or 125

In order to maintain comparability with OAA, we will not use the bonus steps for our cross-Canada challenge.

3) The September 14 TPB 5K Boardwalk challenge:

We will have a TPB 5k challenge (speed walk, jog, or run). It will be on Friday September 14 at 3:45 (weather permitting) - so there will be plenty of time to “**train**”.

Since Friday is a casual day, we can all come to work in our fastest running/walking shoes and clothes.

The route: The start/finish line will be on the boardwalk by the blue wave. The route will be confined to the boardwalk. We will establish the turn-around point(s) shortly and communicate them to you.

The whole idea here (besides fun and the accumulation of steps in a bid to catch OAA) is to improve our overall fitness level and health (and by so doing feeling noticeably better in our day-to-day lives).

As such, this is not intended to be a one-time event. The build-up to the 14th and the decision to maintain the higher fitness level achieved by the 14th are more important than the actual event of the 14th.

We are urging that you follow 5 steps:

1) Make a commitment:

- Actually put a check mark beside your name on the sign-up sheet in the 5th floor Kitchen –**this will count as completing a weekly challenge!**

2) Determine your starting point:

- do the 5k route and note your time – it is encouraged but not required for you to record this time on the sign-up sheet (5th floor kitchen).

3) Train:

- do the 5k route a number of times between now and Sept 14 with the intention of improving your time.

4) Participate on Sept 14 and note your improvement (record on the sheet in the Kitchen).

5) Maintain or improve upon your heightened fitness level.

This can all be done over the course of lunch breaks. If you are unable to make it for the 14th, you can still participate – just record your time and we will believe you!!

FYI, here is a selection of 4 different 8-week training schedules for 4 levels (Walkers, Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced):
<http://www.halhigdon.com/5K%20Training/index.htm>.

4) September 21 TPB walk across the bridge/lunch day:

We will have a fun speed walk across the Bridge to the Irish Pub directly across from the Dartmouth ferry terminal for lunch. We will then take the ferry back. This will mark the conclusion of our step counter challenge - an opportunity to “reminisce” perhaps even discuss “what’s next”.

5) Sunday August 12 – 5k or 1.5k Lung Run/Walk:

We have a team together – **“The TPB Elites”**! So far the team consists of one person – me! This is a call for volunteers to join our team. We need at least 5 people to complete the team.

If you join, you have the option of doing the 5k or the 1.5k.

There are two ways our team can win: 1) raising the most pledges; or 2) greatest number of participants.

Note: There is no expectation for you to actually fund raise. Your participation + your \$30 registration fee (\$35 after August 10) is more than sufficient!

It’s considered to be a non-competitive fun run/walk. Kids are encouraged to participate. Strollers are welcome. Yet the streets will be closed and the event will be “chip timed”.

It’s a run/walk for a good cause. Money raised will go to:
raising awareness of Asthma and COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease); and to support Camp Treasure Chest – The Lung Associations summer camp for children with moderate to severe asthma.

You will receive an “Atlantic Lung Run 5K souvenir Technical T-shirt.”

For general info about this event:

<http://ns.lung.ca/lungrun/index.php>

To join the TPB Elites:

<http://secure.jmgsolutions.ca/lans/lungrun.asp>

...Click on “Sign up as a Runner Today”...find “TPB Elites” in the drop down box. Then let me know!

Once our team has been established, I will let everyone know and how you can make a donation.

6) Daily Walks (except on Thursdays, which is the DM-led walk):

Sheri will be organizing daily walks. These walks will support training for the September 14 TPB 5K Boardwalk challenge. Participation in one of these daily walks will count as completing a weekly challenge for the bonus steps for that week.

7) This Week’s Two Weekly Challenge:

First, a reminder that we have two on-going standing weekly challenges:

Take the stairs or bare the stare (Susan will give you the ‘stare’)

The Thursday DM led walk.

The two weekly challenges for this week don’t involve taking a single step (at least not initially)! They only require making commitments:

Make a commitment to the **Sept. 14 TPB 5K Boardwalk challenge**... as described above (item #). All you have to do is put a check mark beside your name on the sign-up sheet in the 5th floor Kitchen.

Join the “TPB Elites” – August 12 – 5k or 1.5k walk/run (see item#5 above). To do so, go to: <http://secure.jmgsolutions.ca/lans/lungrun.asp>...click on “Sign up as a Runner Today”...find “TPB Elites” in the drop down box. Then let me know that you joined! (Results to follow.)

Submitted by: Frank Reinhardt