

TRENDS AT A GLANCE

WELLNESS PROGRAMS

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Introduction

Data within this Trend at a Glance is based on the 2020 UBA Health Plan Survey and are based on responses from **11,788 employers** sponsoring **21,980 health plans** covering **1,366,186 employees nationwide**. Reseco Insurance Advisors is a member of United Benefit Advisors (UBA) and by using this data, we can help employers more **accurately evaluate costs**, contrast the current benefit plan's effectiveness against competitors' plans, and adjust accordingly. This gives employers a **distinct competitive edge** in negotiating rates—and recruiting and retaining a superior workforce.

Altogether, UBA's survey is nearly three times larger than the next two of the nation's largest health plan benchmarking surveys combined. The resulting volume of data provides employers of all sizes more detailed—and therefore more meaningful—benchmarks and trends than any other source. The scope of the survey allows regional, industry-specific, and employee size differentials to emerge from the data. In addition, the large number of plans represented allows for both a broader range of categories by plan type than traditionally reported and a larger number of respondents in each category. Historically, these types of benchmark data were unavailable to small and mid-size employers. For larger employers, the survey provides benchmarking data on a more detailed level than ever before.

Wellness Programs

Comprehensive wellness programs are offered by **15.2% of all employers**. Wellness programs are most prevalent among Northeast employers (24.2%), HSA plans (27%), plans sponsored by government/education employers (28.3%), and most especially among larger groups (40.9% for groups with 500 to 999 employees, and 58.3% for groups with 1,000+ employees). Historically, approximately 60% of the largest employers (1,000+ employees) offered wellness. In 2018, the number dropped significantly to about 50%. In 2019 and 2020, adoption of wellness programs among this cohort was again on the rise. UBA Partners report that wellness programs are of **high interest to employers who self-fund** or are planning to self-fund their health plans.

Among all wellness programs, **72% include health risk assessments**, **70.2% offer employee incentives** for participation, 62.4% offer biometric screenings or physical exams, 51.9% include on-site or telephone coaching for high-risk employees, and 44.3% include seminars or workshops. Health risk assessments have decreased by more than 10% since 2014 when 80.3% of plans had a health risk assessment. **The use of health risk assessments is worth watching closely** due to the government's increased scrutiny and regulation regarding their use.





The primary form of wellness incentives are in the form of **extra paid time off**. Over **52% of wellness programs** that incentivize participation reward employees with paid time off, **up 12%** from 2019 and an astronomical **952% from five years ago** (when only 5% of wellness plans offered this type of incentive). In fact, from 2014 to 2018, the most popular incentive was offering cash toward premiums. In 2018, employers largely incentivized with gift certificates. The surprising shift in 2019 to paid time off as the incentive of choice—and its continued increase in 2020—will be an interesting statistic to watch going forward. UBA Partners report that gift certificates to particular retailers are often limiting to employers and employees alike. Offering paid time off instead avoids this issue. Plus, **there are no tax implications** for this type of incentive, and it is often easier to administer than cash rewards.

WELLNESS PROGRAMS COMPONENTS

HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENTS	72.0%
INCENTIVES/REWARDS	70.2%
PHYSICAL EXAM/BLOOD DRAW	62.4%
WEB PORTAL	59.6%
COACHING	51.9%
SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS	44.3%
OTHER	4.1%

PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYERS OFFERING WELLNESS PROGRAMS

LESS THAN 25 EMPLOYEES	10.5%
25-49 EMPLOYEES	11.3%
50-99 EMPLOYEES	13.5%
100-199 EMPLOYEES	20.7%
200-499 EMPLOYEES	32.3%
500-999 EMPLOYEES	40.9%
1,000+ EMPLOYEES	58.3%

If you're interested in implementing a wellness program at your organization, contact Reseco Insurance Advisors today for help.