



Willis: Employers Shift Wellness Program Focus to Value on Investment

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Broker's Annual Health and Productivity Survey Tracks Employer Trends

NEW YORK, Oct. 20, 2015 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Employers offering health and wellness programs have moved beyond the standard financial measures associated health care cost savings towards a broader focus on the overall value of health management within a workplace, according to the Willis Health and Productivity Survey [published today](#) by Willis North America's Human Capital Practice, a unit of Willis Group Holdings plc (NYSE:WSH), the global risk advisory, re/insurance broking, and human capital and benefits firm.

According to the survey, nearly two-thirds of respondents (64%) with wellness programs in place described themselves as Value on Investment (VOI) based, rather than Return on Investment (ROI) based. In other words, the majority of employers have gone beyond the traditional rationale of putting wellness programs in place for the sole purpose of lowering health care costs. Instead, VOI organizations look to justify investment in health management and wellness programs based on many factors, including employee morale, worksite productivity, employee absence and workplace safety, in addition to medical cost reduction.

Employers who described themselves as more VOI-focused were:

- More likely to value "building a culture of health" (66%) than organizations with an ROI focus (51%);
- More likely to value building teamwork and morale (48%) than organizations with an ROI focus (25%);
- More likely to be concerned about improving productivity with their health management programs (51%) than respondents from organizations with an ROI focus (40%).

Commenting on the survey, Dr. Ronald S. Leopold, Willis Practice Leader in Health Outcomes said, "More organizations are realizing that the expectation of an immediate return on investment (ROI) for their wellness programs through medical cost reduction is unlikely. Worksite wellness requires a sustained effort, including annual program review and long-term program management. Companies who adopt a true culture of health better position themselves for increased profitability in the long run."

Additional survey findings indicated employers were still concerned about medical costs, with half (50%) of the respondents saying they were "more concerned about medical costs in the next three years, than in the last three years." With a projected increase in medical trend in 2016 and the looming Cadillac Tax in 2018 – the business imperative to lower medical costs will continue to be a top priority. In fact, the survey results suggests that more employers are broadening their strategies beyond the scope of traditional wellness, and utilizing more focused, data-driven solutions to achieve sustained cost reduction, Willis said.

The Willis Health and Productivity Survey tracks employers' strategies in delivering employer-sponsored health plans, including wellness programs. The survey represents the findings of over 700 participants ranging from fewer than 100 to more than 10,000 employees. A free copy of the survey can be found here:

http://www.willis.com/documents/publications/Services/Employee_Benefits/FOCUS_2015/14562_Health_Productivity.pdf

About Willis

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