Wellness programming exists at all campuses. Some programs are fairly highly developed with strong local management support and wellness teams providing a variety of programs including comprehensive Health Risk Appraisals and an array of support programs. Other universities in earlier stages of development are working towards building their programs. At this time in our nation’s history, the health and wellness of America’s workforce is of vital importance. By focusing our system-wide efforts parallel with national efforts on programs that promote prevention, we can begin to address not only the health and wellness of our workforce but the cost of healthcare.

Two organizations have recently recognized several of our universities for their accomplishments in promoting work-site wellness.

The Wellness Councils of America and the Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce presented its coveted Bronze Well Workplace Awards jointly to The University of Maine System and The University College of Bangor, and presented the Silver Well Workplace Award to The University of Maine at an awards ceremony hosted at the University of Maine System Office on March 8, 2006.

The Bronze Well Workplace Award (SWS/UCB) recognizes employers that have obtained strong senior-level support, created integrated wellness teams, collected strategic organizational health data, and are delivering tailored programs to meet their organization’s specific needs.

The Silver Well Workplace Award (UM) recognizes employers that, in addition to meeting the Bronze level standards, are creating supportive organizational environments and policies that support employees’ efforts to modify health risks and improve overall health and well-being. Behavior change initiatives and strong evaluation programs are also present at Silver Well Workplace Award winning organizations.

At the awards ceremony, Dr. David Hunnicutt, president of the Wellness Councils of America, announced that the Bangor Region Wellness Council (BRWC) has received the first “Well Region” designation in the country. Dr. Hunnicutt remarked on the significance of the well region accomplishment, noting the breadth of Well Workplace Award winning companies, from the very small to the large. He complimented the business community on its vision in achieving the “Well Region” designation in less than 5 years. SWS, UCB and UM are all active partners in the BRWC.

University of Southern Maine’s Lewiston-Auburn College was also honored with the 2006 Gold Work Healthy Award from Healthy Androscoggin County, a community coalition that promotes good health among Androscoggin County residents. The award recognizes businesses and other organizations in Androscoggin County that have placed high priority on promoting good health for their employees in the areas of tobacco, physical activity and nutrition.

Receiving these awards reflects the building of a strong worksite wellness foundation which includes benchmarking best practices and providing a template under which all of our universities will move forward toward common goals. One prestigious goal would be for the University of Maine System to become a “Well University System” within the next year!

Senior Care Questions?
We Can Help.

It isn’t easy to think about aging, even though we know it’s inevitable. When it comes to our parents, grandparents or any senior loved ones, dealing with the vulnerabilities age brings can be both uncomfortable and intimidating.

Many of us remember these seniors as the one constant in our lives, as “rocks,” and as a valuable support network. But with age even the strongest among us experience challenges and eventually need help.

As life expectancy increases and our senior loved ones live longer, more people will find themselves responsible for the care of an older person.

If you’re among those handling senior care issues for your loved ones, you don’t have to do it on your own. Call your EAP. We can help.

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Senior Care continued...

From determining the level of care your seniors require, to locating and reviewing living arrangements, your EAP has the expertise and resources to save you time and help avoid mistakes.

Some people are reluctant to address issues that impact their independence or question their physical or mental ability to live on their own. When you address these issues before they become critical, you'll be doing what is in everyone's best interest in the long run. And keeping your senior loved ones involved as much as possible throughout the decision-making process will make the results easier for everyone to accept.

While it's best to plan ahead, many people postpone addressing senior care issues. These important issues demand an early start so everyone can have enough time to thoughtfully consider all options.

Here are tips to help you approach senior care issues with a loved one:

- Discuss health, finances or other issues when interruptions are unlikely and everyone is calm.
- Listen respectfully and with an open mind to their preferences, perceptions and concerns.
- Phrase your concerns about their health and welfare as questions, and allow them to come to the conclusions.
- Keep them involved as much as possible throughout the decision-making process.

If concerns about senior care are on your mind, call EAP at 1-877-622-4327 today (UMA/UMF/UMFK/UMM/UMPI/USM and SWS employees and retirees).

We're available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to provide clinical counseling, information and referral services on a confidential basis.

You can also visit us online at www.cignabehavioral.com.

University of Maine employees have an internal, on-site EAP. Contact them at 1-877-EAP-3315 or 581-4014, or www.umaine.edu/eap for assistance with senior care or other issues. UMaine’s EAP services include:

- Free confidential counseling;
- Emergency loans (employees can borrow up to $750 interest-free for emergencies and repay through payroll deduction);
- Free credit counseling services;
- A lending library, including videos;
- Online assessment screenings;
- Consultation services for administrators and supervisors; and
- Workshops tailored to a department’s specific needs.

BENEFITS CORNER

ADVANTAGE ACCOUNTS (Flexible Spending)

OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS

Advantage Accounts, or “Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA’s),” allow you to pay for eligible unreimbursed healthcare and for dependent day care expenses with before-tax dollars. This article will focus on reimbursement for over-the-counter medications under your Health Care FSA.

In addition to familiar items such as medical expenses not covered by Anthem BCBS, dental expenses not covered by Delta Dental, copayments, deductibles or coinsurance payments under either health or dental, you may now also submit expenses for many over-the-counter medications.

While Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations have always permitted a Health Care FSA to reimburse the cost of prescription drugs not covered by your health insurance plan or any copays for prescription drugs, IRS regulations now permit reimbursement for over-the-counter drugs (OTC), BUT ONLY TO ALLEVIATE OR MITIGATE A SPECIFIC DISEASE, SICKNESS OR INJURY. The IRS continues to require that when you submit for reimbursement, you must provide a receipt with the name of the drug and the date purchased. The IRS regulations DO NOT permit reimbursement of OTC medications purchased for non-medical reasons.

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Non-Discrimination Notice: In complying with the letter and spirit of applicable laws and in pursuing its own goals of diversity, the University of Maine System shall not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status or gender expression, national origin or citizenship status, age, disability, or veterans status in employment, education, and all other areas of the University. The University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities upon request. Questions and complaints about discrimination in any area of the University should be directed to the campus Equal Opportunity Director.
Dissolution of marriage or domestic partnership is not usually a pleasant situation. However, if it does occur, there will be an impact on several of your University benefits that you should understand. In the event of dissolution, two-person or family health coverage may no longer apply. Check with your Benefits Office to make certain that the appropriate health plan change is made. For example, if you both work for the University of Maine System, coverage needs to be split into separate individual plans, and if there are children, the decision regarding who will provide health coverage must be made. Also, remember to review your beneficiary designations for retirement and life insurances. Your Benefits Office has forms to make these changes as well.

If you use the Health Care FSA for these expenses, you cannot also take a tax deduction on your income tax return.

**DATES to REMEMBER**

**Helpful Hints for UMS Retirees**

**Power of Attorney**

If you've named a Power of Attorney to act on your behalf should you become incapacitated, please remember that the University of Maine System must have a copy of the power of attorney document on file in order to discuss matters regarding your pension, health insurance premium payments, or issues regarding health insurance claims. Our address is: University of Maine System, Office of Human Resources, 16 Central Street, Bangor, Maine 04401.

**Change in Procedure for Obtaining a Prescription Override**

If you or any of your family members are planning a trip and will need more than a 30-day supply of your medication, Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield has simplified the process for obtaining a prescription override.

You can go to your local participating pharmacy, request the vacation override, and the pharmacy will be able to process your request at that time. If the pharmacy has difficulty processing your request, they should contact Anthem Prescription Management at the pharmacy help desk line.
SPRING IS IN THE AIR! Staying healthy is the key to a successful life. Take a walk, go fishing, play golf and most important of all enjoy time with family members and friends. As always when starting an exercise program, remember to see your doctor first. Find the hidden somewhere in this newsletter and you could win a $25 gift certificate from Wal-Mart. Once you find it, send your name and the location to the University of Maine System, 16 Central Street, ATTENTION: Benefits Office, Bangor, ME 04401, or e-mail to benefits@maine.edu. You will be entered into a drawing for the $25 gift certificate. All entries MUST BE IN OUR OFFICE BY May 25, 2006. Drawing to be held on May 26, 2006. Good Luck!

CONGRATULATIONS to Jeanette Edinger, University of Maine System retiree, winner of January’s Wal-Mart gift certificate.