



Knox County Health Department

140 Dameron Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37917

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KCHD's Service Spotlight: Worksite Wellness

This week's spotlight highlights KCHD's work with Project Diabetes and East Tennessee Wellness Roundtable.

Knoxville, Tenn. – The Knox County Health Department (KCHD) recognizes that a healthy workforce is a productive workforce. The average U.S. citizen spends 90,000 hours in the workplace during their lifetime. With most of the population employed and spending a significant amount of time at work, worksite wellness programs are an important component in improving population health.

KCHD's community worksite wellness initiatives are funded by the Project Diabetes grant, a highly-competitive grant from the Tennessee Department of Health focused on reducing the number of people who are considered overweight or obese. KCHD is the only health department in the state to receive the category A Project Diabetes grant, which supports several KCHD programs, not just worksite wellness.

As a part of KCHD's worksite wellness community initiatives, KCHD helps facilitate the East Tennessee Wellness Roundtable (ETWR) and has staff who serve in leadership roles with the organization. ETWR is a member-based collaboration of wellness professionals and has more than 300 members whose common goal is to cultivate healthier worksites.

"Local businesses are already doing the groundwork to promote employee wellness, and the ETWR has the honor of partnering with them to provide additional resources and build on existing programs. Since 2017, ETWR has recognized 40 worksites for their wellness efforts," stated KCHD Nutritionist and ETWR Chair, Kaela McIver.

Local worksites interested in workplace well-being are encouraged to attend meetings featuring topics such as chronic disease prevention and management, mental health, financial wellness, and other current well-being trends. Those interested in joining should visit the [ETWR website](#).

ETWR also has an annual three-tier recognition program that awards bronze, gold or platinum status to employers who demonstrate a supportive wellness infrastructure and meet criteria related to disease monitoring and prevention, including the promotion of physical activity, nutrition, breastfeeding, and mental health, as well as the prevention of substance misuse and tobacco use. Through the three-tier awards program, worksites can apply for grant-funded resources that support worksite wellness initiatives, such as blood pressure





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monitoring cuffs, exercise equipment and lactation room supplies. These resources are provided by KCHD's Project Diabetes grant. To view a list of ETWR-recognized worksites, click [here](#).

ETWR is gearing up for its biggest event of the year, the ETWR Annual Seminar, which will focus on overcoming barriers to employee wellness. It will be a virtual event featuring speakers from all over the United States, networking opportunities, and a recognition ceremony to highlight companies who exemplify excellence in employee wellness with awards presented by Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs and KCHD Senior Director Dr. Martha Buchanan. The event is scheduled for May 19, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. For more information, including registration, click [here](#).

The most recent project within KCHD's worksite wellness initiative is to pilot this program for school educators. With guidance and support from KCHD staff, Knox Education Foundation staff and school administrators have created worksite wellness committees that are looking at the health of school staff and working to create a work environment that promotes wellness to all staff. KCHD has worked with the wellness committees to gather staff feedback on wellness needs and interests and used their ideas to develop complementary programming and built environment upgrades.

About Knox County Health Department

The first health department in Tennessee to achieve national voluntary accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, the Knox County Health Department (KCHD) is dedicated to ensuring the conditions in which every resident can be healthy. As a chief health strategist for the community and with more than 240 team members, KCHD's broad scope of work includes convening partners to improve community health, identifying community health threats, investigating disease outbreaks, conducting extensive outreach and education, preparing for public health emergencies, providing and connecting the public with medical care, enforcing food safety and air quality laws, and more. For more information, visit www.knoxcounty.org/health.

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