

# SUCCESS SHOWCASE

## UNITEDHEALTHCARE USES DAILY WALKING GOALS TO HELP EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES

Thomas Williams, the director of finance for Wayne Densch, a beverage distributor in Florida, has witnessed a dramatic transformation in his employees since the company's wellness program started using fitness trackers to incentivize daily walking. One employee lost 20 pounds without changing anything in her diet. "She and a colleague take the first half-hour of their lunch break and go for a walk," said Williams. "Another employee told me he and his wife have started walking together at night. It's so great to hear things like that."



**UnitedHealthcare**<sup>®</sup>

The uptick in walking didn't happen by chance. During the last few years, employers in Illinois and across the country started participating in UnitedHealthcare Motion<sup>®</sup>, a wearable device wellness program that helps encourage employees to meet daily walking goals using the latest smartwatches and activity trackers.

The program enables people to earn up to \$4 per day in rewards by meeting "FIT" goals, which stands for frequency (500 steps or more within seven minutes at least six times per day, each an hour apart), intensity (at least 3,000 steps within 30 minutes) and tenacity (at least 10,000 steps per day). The financial incentives are deposited on a quarterly basis into a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) or Health Savings Account (HSA).

By meeting the walking goals, participants may earn more than \$1,000 per year in deductible credits to help offset health care expenses. Meanwhile, employers can achieve

premium renewal discounts based on the aggregate walking results of their employees.

A recent enhancement enables eligible program participants to receive and start using Apple Watch, initially paying only taxes and shipping, with the option to apply program earnings toward the full purchase price of the device by meeting the walking goals. This means program participants may be able to own – with a zero balance – the world's No. 1 smartwatch in as little as six months by meeting daily walking goals. UnitedHealthcare Motion participants who already own Apple Watch can also use it with the program.



*UnitedHealthcare Motion is a wearable device wellness program that helps employees meet daily walking goals, using smartwatches and activity trackers.*

Why are more employers encouraging their employees to earn rewards for meeting daily walking goals? The goal is to encourage people to move more, as studies have shown walking can help people maintain a healthier weight, strengthen bones, ward off depression and prevent and manage various chronic conditions, including heart disease, high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes. Despite the potential health benefits, too many Americans are sedentary, with the average adult walking on average between 5,900 and 6,900 steps per day. Some people may not realize they're skimping on steps, as they tend to overestimate both the amount and intensity of their daily exercise. (To get walking in Chicago, [click here](#) for an interactive map with 10,000-step walking routes across the city.)

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To be sure, fitness isn't an all-or-nothing endeavor, as some is typically better than none. Studies show that shorter bouts of intense exercise — 3,000 steps in 30 minutes, for instance — provide a health boost. Getting up and moving frequently throughout the day — even if it's only a few hundred steps at a time — is healthier than sitting for long stretches.

An estimated 35-percent of employers now integrate wearable devices into their well-being programs, helping employees more accurately understand their daily activity levels. UnitedHealthcare expects more companies across the country and in Illinois to do the same and add wearable devices to their wellness programs.

It's easy to understand why. Healthier employees are usually more productive, while having lower health care costs. For instance, Wayne Densch credits UnitedHealthcare Motion with helping lower its health care costs. Across the entire program, participants have collectively walked more than 180 billion steps, earning nearly \$30 million in program rewards. Among eligible employees, 66-percent registered their devices, with more than two-thirds of those active with the program.

Employers can contact their broker for more information or [click here](#) to have a UnitedHealthcare representative contact them. ➤



*Employees can earn \$1,000+ in credits to offset health care expenses, and employers can get premium renewal discounts through the UnitedHealthcare Motion program.*

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#### **About the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce**

The Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce is the largest, most influential business group in the Chicago region. It's comprised of 1,000 members, from all industries, that employ 400,000 people and generate more than \$24 billion in local annual revenue. Being a Chamber member means being a relevant, connected, influential leader of your industry and the Chicago business community. The Chicagoland Chamber focuses on delivering value for its members, making Chicagoland a world-class place to live and work.