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Baptist Health Care Recognized as an American Heart Association Fit – Friendly Worksite

Worksites take steps to decrease healthcare expenses, increase productivity

PENSACOLA, Fla. (July 6, 2016) – Baptist Health Care has been recognized as a Platinum-Level Fit-Friendly Worksite by the American Heart Association for helping employees eat better and move more.

“Physical activity and employee wellness are important priorities at Baptist Health Care. We are honored and excited to be recognized by the American Heart Association as a Platinum-Level Fit-Friendly Worksite,” said Darlene Stone, Chief Human Resources Officer, Baptist Health Care. “We’re committed to providing the best workplace environment possible. This will benefit our employees’ health and produce even more positive results for our worksite overall.”

Platinum-level employers:

- Offer employees physical activity options in the workplace.
- Increase healthy eating options at the worksite.
- Promote a wellness culture in the workplace.
- Implement at least nine criteria outlined by the American Heart Association in the areas of physical activity, nutrition and culture.
- Demonstrate measurable outcomes related to workplace wellness.

The Fit-Friendly Worksites program is a catalyst for positive change in the American workforce by helping worksites make their employees’ health and well-being a priority.

American employers are losing an estimated \$225.8 billion a year because of healthcare expenses and health-related losses in productivity, and those numbers are rising. Many American adults spend most of their waking hours at sedentary jobs. Their lack of regular physical activity raises their risk for a host of medical problems, such as obesity, high blood pressure and diabetes. Employers face \$12.7 billion in annual medical expenses due to obesity alone. The American Heart Association is working to change corporate cultures by motivating employees to start walking, which has the lowest dropout rate of any physical activity.

Recognition is a critical component of the Fit-Friendly Worksites program. Employers that join this program qualify for official recognition by the American Heart Association. Qualifying worksites also have the right to use the program’s annual recognition seal for internal communications and with external, recruitment-related communications.

“The Fit-Friendly Worksites Program offers easy-to-implement ways for organizations to help employees eat better and move more, which will help improve their health – and their employer’s bottom line,” said Meghan McCarthy, Director of Community Health and Wellness, Baptist Health Care “Even people who haven’t exercised regularly until middle age can reap significant benefits by starting a walking program. A study published in 1986 in the New England Journal of Medicine found that some adults may gain two hours of life expectancy for every hour of regular, vigorous exercise they performed.”

For more information about the Fit-Friendly Worksites program and how it’s helping to improve the health of Americans by focusing on the workplace, visit heart.org/worksitewellness. For more information about the Healthy Lives™ program visit ebaptisthealthcare.org.