I would like to provide some comments on a County Wellness offering that REALLY worked for me. I have never been grossly overweight but a number of years ago, at 5’ 8”, I weighed 194 pounds with a 36 inch waist. I didn’t think a whole lot about it until I happened to go to an annual physical where my doctor described me as “well nourished.” I am a claims adjuster, so I look at other people’s medical records all the time. “Well nourished” is doctor-speak for overweight!

Well, that was totally unacceptable, so I tried to lose weight and couldn’t.

Then I saw a County email about an allegedly wonderful healthy lifestyle program called Real Appeal. By nature, I am skeptical of hype and salespeople who smile too much, but I was mildly intrigued, nothing was working and it was free so I gave it a shot.

I joined, then found it was a year-long program (WHAT!!??), had a mandatory weekly online meeting after work (seriously?) and they wanted me to learn and do stuff (ehhh!).

However, the meeting moderator was obviously in shape, well trained and engaging. So I stuck around and followed the program (mostly). By the end of the year, I had not only dropped down to 162 pounds, but I acquired a 32 inch waist and am as strong as I have ever been at any age.

Emotional Intelligence
During the Holidays

By Ashley Skubal, Wellness Technician

It’s no secret that this time of year is stressful, especially the stretch from Thanksgiving to New Year’s. This season is meant to bring happiness and joy, but the mundane tasks in life don’t take a vacation. Appointments, financial stressors, and day to day things still demand attention on top of gatherings, gifts, and mile long checklists.

The best way to make it through this time of year without losing your mind is to practice emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence, or EI, is the awareness of your own emotions as well those of others. They drive behavior and impact interactions in either a positive or negative way. Practice these skills to improve your emotional intelligence and enjoy the holiday season to its fullest!

Be Aware of Yourself

Pay attention to your feelings. Take a moment and allow them to happen. Decide how you want to respond. Practicing this allows you to recognize stressors and prepare a technique to cope with them.

Be Aware of Others

Allow others to have their feelings. Recognize how you initially react to them. Practicing this will make you less likely to take their signs of stress personally and potentially make light of a situation.

Continued on page 4.
Healthcare Updates for 2020

Your UHC Nurse

Amy

By Amy Hertog, RN, BSN, Clinical Nurse Liaison

There are several exciting changes for the County’s benefits.

Virtual Visits

Virtual Visits are a way to see and talk to a doctor via mobile device or computer. These visits are a great way to see a doctor for minor health conditions after-hours or when your regular doctor isn’t available. The doctor will give you a diagnosis and a prescription, if needed. Virtual Visit providers Amwell and Doctor on Demand continue to be in-network. Teledoc® joined UnitedHealthcare’s virtual provider network in September 2019. Effective January 2020, you will also be able to have a Virtual Visit with Teledoc® by phone. For those who do not have access to a smartphone or computer, this will provide broader access to these valuable physician services.

To use a virtual doctor, visit myuhc.com.

UnitedHealthcare Hearing

EPIC Hearing Healthcare and hi HealthInnovations will join forces to become one fully integrated hearing health company—UnitedHealthcare Hearing. You will have access to a wide selection of hearing aid styles and technology from name brand and private label manufacturers at significant savings. Plus, you’ll receive personalized care from experienced hearing providers along with professional support every step of the way.

Real Appeal

Real Appeal classes have migrated to an improved virtual platform. There are now 26 weekly classes for the first 6 months and monthly classes for the last 6 months of the program. If you haven’t explored Real Appeal or have tried Real Appeal and want to come back, sign up here. Remember, small changes lead to big results.

Please note that Real Appeal is free of charge to employees and spouses who qualify with a BMI of 23 or higher.

UnitedHealthcare App

The new app – available on Android® and Apple® devices – has replaced the existing Health4Me app for UnitedHealthcare. Users will be able to continue to use Health4Me for at least a few months in 2020.

InFluenza

In our flu prevention efforts this fall, we have let employees know that this year’s outbreak is expected to be severe. According to the data trend on the Florida Department of Health models, cases are already higher as compared to this time last year.

It’s not too late to get vaccinated! You can do so at your network physician’s office, a convenience care clinic, or Walmart and Publix pharmacies near your work or home.

To avoid the flu …

◆ Wash your hands often.
◆ Avoid touching your nose and mouth.
◆ Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze.
◆ Disinfect areas you come into contact with, especially common areas.
◆ If you are starting to feel ill, keep your distance from others.

Visit Amy’s web page or contact her at 464-5579 or by email at amy_hertog@uhc.com.
One drawback, I did have to buy all new jeans, shorts, dress slacks and downsized my shirts from large to medium so when I raised my arms I didn’t look like a flying squirrel. Darn.

Two years later, I am still in my 32’s and my family doctor is very pleased with my health.

For people who join Real Appeal, they will find that although the formula for losing weight is not complicated—i.e., eat better, exercise more—there’s definitely a learning curve to get used to that type of lifestyle. For me, once I started seeing progress, I was motivated to continue.

Real Appeal is not just about the mechanics of weight loss and health, but about finding the underlying motivation to decide what you want, why you want it, learn how to get what you want, then get it.

In reality, progress can feel slow and sometimes there are setbacks. It requires patience and persistence to get through those periods. Despite the realities of all lifestyle changes, the program really worked for me.

Real Appeal is available at no cost to employees and their dependents who qualify. Enroll now.

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**New Lunch ‘n Learn on Stress Management**

*By Risoldi Chiropractic*

**Monday, December 9th, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.**

**Public Works, 22211 US 19N, ERB (Building 1), Room A20, Clearwater**

*No need to register. Please bring your own lunch.*

Learn the causes and ways to relieve stress on the mind and body for maximum wellness. The class will also cover tips and tricks for eating during the holidays to ensure a healthy start to the new year.

Attendees will:

- Learn the real definition of health and how you can overcome current health issues using practical steps.
- Learn how to reduce daily stress.
- Learn some simple steps to maximize your health potential.
- Learn how to implement the 5 Essentials into your daily life!

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**Crustless Spinach Quiche**

*Top this with fresh tomatoes for a memorable breakfast!*

**Ingredients**

- Cooking oil spray
- 1 sweet onion, sliced thinly
- 4 cups chopped spinach
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 8 eggs, scrambled
- 2 tablespoons plain nonfat or low-fat yogurt (regular or Greek)
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan
- Freshly ground black pepper

1. Preheat oven to 375°. Heat a 9-inch ovenproof skillet over medium heat. Once pan is hot, spray with cooking spray. Add onion and cook until soft, about 3 minutes. Remove onion from pan, wipe pan clean and spray liberally with cooking spray.

2. Place onion in a large bowl with spinach, add salt and mix thoroughly.

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together eggs, yogurt, Parmesan and pepper to taste.

4. Place spinach mixture in skillet and top with egg mixture. Bake until eggs are set in the center, about 20 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature.

5. Wrap any extra servings and freeze.

Serves 4.
Emotional Intelligence, continued from page 1.

Respond, Don’t Just React

When you feel threatened or verbally attacked, it’s natural to have an initial defensive or rash reaction. Instead, try pressing pause on the gut reaction, feel your emotions and then consider a solution.

Listen

Everyone has a need to be understood. Some of the biggest disagreements and disappointments during the holidays result from others feeling like they aren’t being heard. Listen to what they have to say, even when it seems impossible. You may discover a deeper meaning in what they are trying to tell you.

Boost Your Emotional Vocabulary

The ability to voice your feelings is one of the most powerful tools you have at your fingertips. Simply saying you are frustrated helps you settle those feelings, process them, and move forward. The more you practice verbalizing what you feel, the better you will get at it.

Consider Multiple Perspectives

Emotional intelligence allows you to see situations from more than one point of view. The holidays bring families and friends together more often. The extra socializing and interaction can be exhausting and bring on disappointment, anxiety, jealousy, envy, and even conflict. When you feel the stress coming on, pause and put yourself in the other person’s shoes for a moment. You may be surprised.

Ask for Help

It’s important to reach out for support when you need it. You may be concerned about not burdening others with your own stress, but in reality, that phone call or lunch date may be exactly what that person needs, too. Find your people and love them hard.

The holiday season may be all about selflessness, but a little self-awareness still goes a long way. Allowing yourself to feel emotions and recognizing others’ will help you to become more aware and take the first step to becoming emotionally intelligent.

Happy Holidays!

Source: www.vunela.com/7-ways-emotional-intelligence-can-help-you-handle-year-end-stress/

Stepping Into Your Health 2020

How many of us will make a New Year’s resolution, only to give up before January is over?

If good health is your goal, the Wellness Department has a plan to help get you on track and stay there!

Stepping Into Your Health 2020 is an 8-week walking/whole health challenge that is a launching pad to looking and feeling your best in 2020. It combines team support, a healthy dose of competition, and health-enhancing habits to keep you motivated. Details coming in January.

New Benefit Administrator for EAP and Behavioral Health

The administration of Pinellas County’s Behavioral Health Program is moving to UnitedHealthcare (UHC) and the Employee Assistance Program will transition to Optum (a subsidiary of UHC) from ComPsych as of January 1, 2020. The move to UnitedHealthcare leads to a whole-person approach to your healthcare by integrating medical and behavioral health services with one administrator and allows for an expanded national network of behavioral health providers, addition of virtual visits and availability of out-of-network benefits. Those utilizing behavioral health benefits may continue to see their current provider during the transition period from January 1 to March 31, 2020. More information will be forthcoming regarding the network change. To learn more about this transition and benefits offered to you through the Behavioral Health and Employee Assistance Programs, view our FAQs.
**WELLNESS CENTER UPDATES**

Do you work in downtown Clearwater, visit the offices frequently, or live nearby? The Wellness Center is a free resource available to you AND it’s open 24/7 (yes, even on holidays)! It’s in the basement of the old Courthouse at 324 S. Ft. Harrison Avenue.

If you’d like to join, contact wellness to setup an orientation at wellness@pinellascounty.org.

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**Try Something New: Life Fitness Rower GX Trainer** By Ashley Skubal, Wellness Technician

One of the new pieces of equipment in the Wellness Center is the Life Fitness GX Rower. This aqua rower provides strong, quiet resistance using water and is smoother than the traditional fan-powered rower. It provides a heart pumping, whole-body workout that can improve posture and even reduce back pain. With one swift motion, you’ll hit all the main areas including arms, back, core, and legs. The best part is, you control how hard of a workout you get. The harder you row, the more resistance you feel and the more force you must apply. Come down and give it a try!

Not sure how to get set up for a heart pumping workout? Check out this quick how-to video.

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**New Flooring**

Phase 1 of the flooring project is complete! The Main Group Exercise room got level 4 Taraflex Sports flooring. We chose this because it provides cushion and shock absorption for all forms of exercise, but especially for aerobic and high impact movements. The back of the main group exercise room got commercial gym rubber flooring that is shock and sound absorbing yet also gentle on the joints. Several other spaces in the Wellness Center got the same durable rubber flooring. Come down and check them out.

Phase 2 is scheduled to take place between December 6 and 9. The entire gym, including the locker rooms, will be closed during this time.

Updates will be sent out via the Wellness Center Updates distribution email. If you are not on the distribution list but would like to be, contact us at wellness@pinellascounty.org.

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*Kudos to the Wellness Program for getting rid of outdated equipment in the Wellness Center. The new equipment will make employees more enthused about working out. Whether you want cardiovascular exercise or are a gym junkie, you can reach every muscle group in your body with this advanced technological equipment. This gym has it! The new flooring helps prevent injuries and prevent equipment from being damaged. The new schedule makes the gym accessible 24/7 as well. Again, job well done ladies!*

*Sincerely,*

*Kelly Green, Purchasing & Risk Management*
Learn Something New in 2 Minutes

Did you know the copay for a visit to the emergency room is $250? Learn about alternatives for less severe medical needs such as a broken finger, sprained ankle or a small cut. Take 2 minutes to watch the video Alternatives to the Emergency Room or read the script.

Blood Drives

Did you know?

- Blood cannot be manufactured.
- One blood donation can save up to three lives.
- One in three of us will need a blood transfusion.
- A single car accident victim can require 100 pints of blood.

Pinellas County Wellness staff works with OneBlood to bring the Big Red Bus to employee blood drives every eight weeks. Please mark the next event on your calendar:

**January 15, 2020 - Utilities**
14 S. Ft. Harrison Avenue, Clearwater
8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

**January 21, 2020 – Courthouse**
315 Court St, Clearwater, West parking lot
11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**January 22, 2020 – Gulf to Bay Tax Collector**
1663 Gulf to Bay Boulevard, Clearwater
10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Learn more at www.pinellascounty.org/hr/blood.

Don’t Delay: Just Over 3 Weeks Left

The December 31 deadline to obtain your 2020 preferred premium and save $500 is just around the corner. Get your biometric screening and health survey completed now!

**What’s a preferred premium?**
The preferred premium means you’ll save $500 in 2020 on your healthcare premium.

**Step 1: Complete the biometric screening**
There are two components — an annual physical exam and lab work.

**Step 2: Complete the health survey**
The online Rally questionnaire asks about your health and habits, which can help you identify possible risks or medical conditions.

**What if I’m not sure if I completed the two steps this year?**
To verify that you completed both activities in 2019, see the Rally Quick Guide.

**How can I learn more?**
View the Biometric Screening and Health Survey FAQs.

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Learn more at www.pinellascounty.org/hr/blood.
Hungry Girl: 300 Under 300

This book features 300 satisfying and delicious dishes that contain less than 300 calories each! Breakfast, lunch and dinner dishes, plus snazzy starters and sides. In addition to crockpot recipes, foil packs, and other Hungry Girl favorites, this book serves up more than 75 soon-to-be-famous Hungry Girl trios: three-ingredient combos that take easy to a whole new level. Included are:

- Bean 'n Cheesy Soft Taco in an Egg Mug
- PB&J Oatmeal Heaven
- Creamy Crab Cakes Benedict
- Classic Cheesesteak Salad
- Dreamy Butternut Chicken Foil Pack
- Burger-ific Mushroom Melt
- Buffalo Chicken Wing
- Macaroni & Cheese
- BLT Pizza
- Big Apple Butternut Squash Soup
- Loaded Bacon-Wrapped Hot Dogs
- . . And more!

30-Day Tune-Up Wellness Series Summary

This fall, approximately 300 employees participated in the “30-Day Tune-Up: Change a Habit, Change Your Health” 4-week learning series which taught employees how to create mini-habits to make healthier lifestyle changes. In addition to employees designing their own habits, they learned about the connection between blood pressure, cholesterol, food and exercise.

- 80% of participants rated the class Excellent
- 19% rated the class as Good
- More than 85% were likely to recommend this class to a colleague

Here are a few comments:

- “A tremendous amount of information.”
- “Helped me understand that even mini goals make a difference.”
- “Eye opener.”
- “Helps you understand the importance of...keeping [your blood pressure] at a normal level and the foods that can help you achieve this.”
- “New habits can be intimidating, this class provided excellent tools to make it easier.”

Wellness Incentives

Incentive activities completed between July 1 and September 30th will be paid in the December 27th paycheck. Activities (including the 30-Day Tune-Up class) completed by December 31, 2019 will be paid in March 2020.

Tobacco Cessation

If you complete an approved tobacco cessation program between August 1, 2019 and March 31, 2020, you will qualify for the 2020 Tobacco Premium waiver.

Upcoming class:

Justice Center, 14250 49th Street, 2nd Floor Conference Room, Clearwater,

Wednesdays, 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.,


No weapons, pepper spray (Mace), pointed objects, or open containers. All visitors are required to go through a metal detector.

To schedule a class at your location, you need a minimum of 3 participants. Contact your Wellness Champion or email the Wellness Department to make a request.

In addition to classes, you may satisfy the tobacco cessation program requirement with phone coaching or online lessons. Visit www.pinellascounty.org/hr/tobacco to learn more.
On November 9th, over 40 family, friends and employees gathered to walk in the Tampa Bay Heart Walk at Raymond James Stadium. The Pinellas team, along with over 32,000 walkers showed their support for the American Heart Association and the important community outreach and research they do to prevent heart disease.
Separate orientation required for Spin class.

All group fitness classes are held in the Wellness Center located in the basement of the old courthouse at 324 S. Fort Harrison Ave. in downtown Clearwater, and are free for all members. If you’re not a member yet, email our staff to schedule an orientation. The Wellness Center is now open 24/7.

Classes are subject to change.

See exercise class descriptions and satellite fitness center locations.
Pinellas County Wellness Program
(727) 464-4049
www.pinellascounty.org/hr/wellness

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**December 2019 Group Fitness Classes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:15 to 12:45 pm Spin*</td>
<td>7 to 7:30 am Spin*</td>
<td>7:15 to 7:45am Low Impact Circuit</td>
<td>7 to 7:30 am Spin*</td>
<td>12:15 to 1:00 pm Killer Abs &amp; Back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor: Ashley (12/2, 12/9, 12/23, 12/30)</td>
<td>Instructor: Ashley (12/3, 12/10, 12/17, 12/24, 12/31)</td>
<td>Instructor: Ashley (12/4, 12/11, 12/18 NO CLASS 12/25</td>
<td>Instructor: Ashley (12/5, 12/12, 12/19, 12/26)</td>
<td>Instructor: Isiah (12/6, 12/13, 12/20, 12/27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO CLASS 12/16</td>
<td>12:15 to 12:45 pm Full Body Blast</td>
<td>12:15 to 12:45 pm Trigger Point In Spin Room</td>
<td>12:15 to 12:45 pm Full Body Blast</td>
<td>12:15 to 1:00 pm Killer Abs &amp; Back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor: Ashley (12/3, 12/10, 12/24, 12/31)</td>
<td>NO CLASS 12/17</td>
<td>Instructor: Rickey (12/4, 12/11, 12/18 NO CLASS 12/25 Pre attendance info: Trigger Point</td>
<td>Instructor: Ashley (12/5, 12/12, 12/19, 12/26)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:30 to 6:30 pm Urban Line Dancing</td>
<td>12:30 to 1:30 pm <em>NEW</em> Urban Line Dancing</td>
<td>5:15 to 6:15 pm Yoga</td>
<td>5:30 to 6:15 pm Killer Abs &amp; Back</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor: Jolanda (12/2, 12/9, 12/16 12/23, 12/30)</td>
<td>Instructor: Leslie (12/4, 12/11, 12/18 NO CLASS 12/25</td>
<td>Instructor: Kelli (12/11, 12/18 NO CLASS 12/4 &amp; 12/25)</td>
<td>Instructor: Isiah (12/5, 12/12, 12/19, 12/26)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 to 6:45 pm Step &amp; Sculpt</td>
<td>5:15 to 6:15 pm Yoga</td>
<td>6:00 to 6:45 pm Step &amp; Sculpt</td>
<td>No Class</td>
<td>NO CLASS 12/16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor: Lisa (12/10, 12/17)</td>
<td>NO CLASS 12/3, 12/24, 12/31</td>
<td>NO CLASS 12/3, 12/24, 12/31</td>
<td></td>
<td>12:15 to 1:00 pm Killer Abs &amp; Back</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Separate orientation required for Spin class.

**High Five!**

Have something wellness-related you’ve done that you want to brag about? Completed a walk or race? Quit smoking? Started or joined a fitness group? Email photos and info to wellness@pinellascounty.org and we’ll give you a well-deserved “High Five!”