

July 8, 2016

Better U Challenge – What’s in it for you?

So, what is in it for you if you participate in the Better U Challenge?

The first answer to this question might be some pretty awesome prizes but the dividends for healthcare workers across Saskatchewan could be even greater, longer lasting and more impactful than a FitBit or a Bowflex, says Alana Shearer-Kleefeld, manager of employee benefits administration at 3sHealth.

“The Better U Challenge is really about challenging ourselves to get more involved in our own wellness in whatever way that is impactful for each individual,” she says. “It’s not about dieting or training for the next triathlon. It’s about wellness or an overall feeling of well-being. And it’s about really understanding our own health and the health risks we might actually be able to do something about.”

The first step to participating in the Better U Challenge is to complete the health risk assessment available on the Great West Life [website](#). The assessment is completely confidential – only your name is shared with 3sHealth in order to enter you into the weekly and grand prize draws, says Shearer-Kleefeld. The Better U Challenge will continue through the summer, wrapping up Aug. 31.

After you complete the assessment, you’ll receive a summary that defines areas where you are doing well and areas where there are habits that might not be contributing to your wellness.

The healthcare system will receive a final report at the end of the Challenge and can use that to inform decisions on employee benefit plans.

For example, effective July 1, the employee benefit plan expanded benefits for diabetics.

“The data was showing us that there were a lot of members purchasing diabetic supplies and we had a limit of \$2,000 per year established in the plan,” says Shearer-Kleefeld. “We reviewed that with our committees and trustees and that benefit was changed to unlimited diabetic supplies.”

The data we are able to gather from the Better U Challenge, will be used to inform any future changes to benefits, she says.

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“That’s why it’s really important that we get as many of our employees across the province to complete that assessment,” she says. “The more data we have, the more confident we can be when we’re exploring any changes or additions to the plans.”

It may also help the health regions and cancer agency to consider their planning for staff wellness programs, she adds.

To date, about 750 people have completed the assessment. Weekly prizes of Fitbits are being awarded. At the end of August, all participants will be eligible for the grand prizes:

- One of 4 individual prizes of a \$250 Sobey’s Gift Card, or
- One of 4 individual prizes of a \$500 SportChek gift card, or
- A Bow Flex, or
- A Tread Climber



Winners so far include:

- Michelle Haapala from Saskatoon Health Region
- Elsie Wong from Regina Qu’appelle Health Region
- Lorrie Davidowich from Regina Qu’appelle Health Region
- Faye Matthews from Regina Qu’appelle Health Region
- Teresa Roesler from LutherCare Communities in Saskatoon

You can read about the Better U Challenge [here](#). You can follow us on Twitter @BetterUchallenge or on [Facebook](#) where you are welcome to share your story, favourite healthy recipes, post about challenges in your workplace to inspire others or follow Shearer-Kleefeld’s personal story of overcoming chronic pain and improving her wellness.