



**Client:**

Beaumont Health System, Metro-Detroit, MI

**Challenge:**

Reduce health risks, healthcare costs, and increase wellness program participation among spouses and domestic partners who are primary drivers of healthcare claims.

**Solution:**

Use integrated communications to drive engagement, and updated incentives to drive participation.

**Results:**

- > Health risk assessment (HRA) completion increased by 57% from 2009 to 2010.
- > HRA participation by spouses/domestic partners rose from 284 in 2009 (less than 5% of eligible spouses) to 4,175 a year later – an increase of 1,623%.
- > Increase in participation introduced 4,864 new participants into the myOPTIMAL HEALTH program.
- > For participants over a 3-year study period, average per-person per-year medical cost savings (medical claims, absenteeism, and presenteeism) was \$386.

## Beaumont Health System Engages Spouses in Health Management

### A Case Study

Beaumont Health System employs more than 18,000 people in the Metro-Detroit area, in more than 50 sites of care spanning 28 communities. The organization is dedicated to providing the highest level of patient care possible, but recognizes that healthcare workers are often better at taking care of others than themselves.

Beaumont has a strong program foundation in its culture of health and wellness. After years of wellness efforts focused within individual facilities, Beaumont launched myOPTIMAL HEALTH in 2005 as part of an organized effort to oversee wellness across all of its hospitals. Over time, Beaumont has engaged more than 11,000 people in its wellness program, and recently targeted family members covered under its benefits plans. “Engaging spouses and family members was critical for two reasons,” says Tom Spring, program manager of myOPTIMAL HEALTH. “First, by including employees’ families, we’re setting a tone for behavior change that says we’re serious about health. Also, including families helps us curb cost trends, as spouses and dependents are typically our highest drivers of healthcare costs.” Beaumont used extensive communications, generous incentives, and easy-to-understand metrics to drive program success.

#### NEW INCENTIVES REQUIREMENTS ENCOURAGE SPOUSES

In 2009, Beaumont made a concentrated effort to increase wellness program participation by spouses and domestic partners. In the past, Beaumont offered a \$120 annual premium credit for completing the WebMD HealthQuotient<sup>SM</sup> (HQ) health risk assessment – an incentive that encouraged participation by 45 percent of employees. In 2009, Beaumont made a concentrated effort to increase wellness program participation by spouses and domestic partners. Beaumont raised the incentive to a \$240 annual premium credit for completing HQ, and an additional \$240 credit for completing a biometric screening. This change brought employee participation up to 60 percent, but less than five percent of eligible spouses and domestic partners voluntarily participated.

To raise spouse and employee participation, Beaumont offered a combined \$480 annual premium credit to employees who completed both the HQ and biometric screening, and whose covered spouse or domestic partner also completed the HQ. In addition, myOPTIMAL HEALTH participants can earn points for health-related activities, and can convert those points for up to \$100 in rewards.

*“Including families helps us curb cost trends, as spouses and dependents are typically our highest drivers of healthcare costs.”*

— Tom Spring, program manager, myOPTIMAL HEALTH

*“The key is to be progressively more aggressive in what we’re asking people to do to earn those incentives year after year.”*

– Tom Spring, program manager,  
myOPTIMAL HEALTH

“Incentives are a big part of our programming,” says Spring. “The key is to be progressively more aggressive in what we’re asking people to do to earn those incentives year after year. If you continue to offer the same incentive without an increase in requirements, you’ll lose the interest of those who want to make a difference in their health, and only keep those who are just responding to the reward.” In 2012, Beaumont is looking at requiring spouses to also complete a biometric screening to earn the incentive.

### COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN BUILDS ON SUCCESSFUL CULTURE OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Beaumont’s goal was to communicate a positive, healthy message to each employee two to three times a day using consistent, recognizable themes. The focus was on Beaumont’s MET program (measure, energize, take time), which encouraged participants to understand their metabolic equivalent score and improve it. The MET program was heavily branded so that each employee saw the message two to three times per day – via e-mail, on the myOPTIMAL HEALTH site, and throughout the facilities. A congratulatory email was sent to employees on completing HQ that reminded them to complete the biometric screening step and to encourage spouse participation. WebMD also sent a letter to employees’ homes with instructions and a unique registration ID for the spouse/domestic partner.

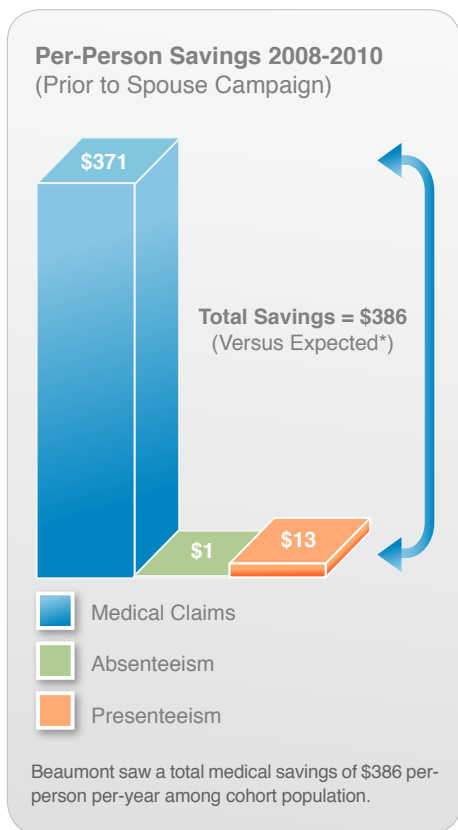
Spring explains, “With budget constraints, we’re using e-mail and online communications as much as possible. That makes it even more important to get spouses registered with the myOPTIMAL HEALTH portal so we can message them directly, just as we do employees. It also allows us to use targeted messaging, which is so effective in prompting behavior change.”

### COHORT STUDY OUTCOMES PROVIDE FOUNDATION FOR SPOUSE CAMPAIGN

Before the spouse campaign was completed, Beaumont measured health risk changes in a cohort study over a three-year period, from 2008 to 2010. During that time, Beaumont has seen significant reductions in overall risk counts and in specific risk groups for participants who completed HQ all three years. In that time, Beaumont saw an impressive \$386 per-person per-year medical cost avoidance among the cohort population (including medical claims, absenteeism, and presenteeism).

In addition, from 2009 to 2010, participation in the HQ increased significantly – by 57 percent. This was largely driven by the increase in spouse participation, which has historically been a few hundred participants (284 in 2009) and is now over 4,000 – a 1,623 percent increase in one year. The jump in HQ participation introduced 4,864 new participants into the myOPTIMAL HEALTH program. These individuals will now be more aware of their risks and will receive information, tools, and resources to make improvements so they can prevent more serious illness and future large claims. And the aggregate data provided to Beaumont gives the organization valuable information on where to invest in relevant condition management programs.

Going forward, Beaumont has launched programs focused on coronary artery disease (CAD), diabetes, chronic low back pain, asthma, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and is adopting WebMD coaching for tobacco cessation for employees and spouses.



\*Assumes: 0% expected growth in absenteeism & presenteeism, and 4.1% expected annual growth in medical claims (due to the aging of the cohort) Source: Cohort of 2008, 2009 & 2010 HRA completers