

**BENEFITS PLAN ENGAGEMENT***Sponsored by Great-West Life Group Benefits*

# Management and staff walk the talk

**LIBRO CREDIT UNION***Shanna Doyle,  
benefits coordinator*

**W**hen Libro Financial Group (now Libro Credit Union) decided to add a wellness program to its benefits plan, HR staff knew they wanted to go “all out” to engage employees. After one year, participation rates remain high, and there has already been a positive impact on absenteeism and utilization of traditional benefits.

Working with Employee Wellness Solutions Network, Libro employed 350 people at 17 sites in London, Ont., when it launched the program in January 2013. HR staff took a two-pronged approach to engage employees, working closely with

management as well as employees on the new wellness committee. Says Stephen Bolton, Libro’s president and CEO: “Our leadership team supports the program 100%, and many participate in the wellness consultations and challenges. We consistently share announcements and results at staff meetings, and branch supervisors coordinate staff schedules to accommodate one-on-one visits with health coaches.”

Employees on the existing health and safety committee were approached about adding wellness to their mandate. “They welcomed the change and have been very enthusiastic since the beginning,” says Shanna Doyle, Libro’s benefits coordinator.

After two weeks of promotion using memos, meetings, webinars and word of mouth, the day of the program’s launch saw 82% of employees sign up for an appointment with a health coach. One year later, 85% of those original employees continue to see their coach regularly, and overall participation has increased to 88%.

Libro further raised the bar on engagement by asking employees to participate in research at Western University studying the impact of sedentary work environments. It promoted general awareness with a four-week “sitting disease” campaign that included tips to incorporate more movement into the working day. ■

THE  
**Great-West Life**  
ASSURANCE  COMPANY

Great-West Life is an established leader in the Canadian group benefits and group retirement services marketplaces. We serve the needs of more than 30,000 group benefit plan sponsors and their plan members, and handle approximately 50 million group health and dental claims transactions for members and their dependents each year. As well, we administer more than 17,500 group capital accumulation plans and more than 1.3 million plan member accounts.

Helping clients achieve physical, mental and financial health is an important part of what Great-West Life does. We’re committed to helping equip clients and the public with tools and information that can help them to lead healthier and more financially secure lives.

We applaud all employers seeking new and effective ways to communicate, educate and engage employees in personal wellness and financial goals. Great-West Life is pleased to recognize the achievements of exceptional Canadian plan sponsors in the areas of employee group benefits and group retirement and savings plans through our sponsorship of the Workplace Benefits Award for Benefits Plan Engagement, and the Workplace Benefits Award for Pension Plan Engagement.

**HEALTH & WELLNESS PROGRAM (<1,000 EMPLOYEES)***Sponsored by Morneau Shepell*

# Powered by healthier, happier employees

**LONDON HYDRO***Jeff Harrison,  
manager of health and safety*

**L**ondon Hydro delivers electricity to more than 152,000 customers—and its health and wellness programs energize the lives of more than 300 employees.

The results speak volumes: in five years, sick days per person have declined by 35%, and drug costs declined almost 5% from 2009 to 2013. Musculoskeletal strain injuries have decreased by 90% since 2009, and overall injuries to workers decreased by 15% in 2013. The company is also preventing costs: health risk assessments show statistically significant declines in risk for cancer and cardiovascular disease.

These numbers, however, “are just the beginning,” says Jeff Harrison,

manager of health and safety. “I can tell you that participants feel valued and healthier and, in turn, are happier at work. They are more engaged and more productive. These benefits can be difficult to quantify but are the ultimate rewards.”

A personal approach is key. Employees can book fully subsidized appointments with health coaches during work hours (with a booking rate of 98% in 2013) and can track their progress using web-based tools. Exercise classes, weight-management workshops and sessions with guest speakers are among the group offerings to help them reach personal goals.

Working with London Hydro’s wellness provider, Employee Wellness Solutions Network, the wellness

committee (made up of a cross-section of employees) helps brainstorm ideas tailored to employee groups. This proved especially important for field teams, who don’t spend much time at the main office. Now, the field teams’ health and safety meetings often address a wellness topic, and health coaches regularly visit the field—often at the break of dawn—to offer homemade vitamin water and oatmeal with healthy toppings.

Mental health is increasingly at the forefront. In 2013, managers received training, and this year, London Hydro commissioned an assessment of the psychological health and safety of its work environment to guide its planning for further training and other mental health initiatives. ■



Business. Needs. People. This phrase embodies Morneau Shepell’s approach to helping organizations achieve their goals. We work with our clients to maximize operational and cost effectiveness, and grow their productivity—while increasing engagement and managing risk.

We’re proud to partner with Benefits Canada as sponsor of the 2014 Workplace Benefits Award for a Health/Wellness Program (less than 1,000 employees) in order to recognize those plan sponsors that have achieved success in employee benefits and well-being. We applaud their accomplishments, are proud to have partnered with a number of the finalists, and look forward to continued innovation and great results.