



How legislators got the South Carolina State House moving.

“ Focusing on physical activity is inclusive and empowering. Improving access and opportunity to be active feels like you’re being given something and moving more provides health benefits for everyone. ”

— Rozalynn Goodwin, VP of Engagement, South Carolina Hospital Association

About South Carolina State House

Flipping the conversation in the fight against obesity.

In November 2015, state legislators in a health policy fellows program and health care professionals gathered to discuss and discover new ways to combat obesity. The conversation shifted to what legislators can do to inspire citizens to get healthy.

The team of professionals also discussed a number of effective programs including the gold standard within the state: The South Carolina Hospital Association's Working Well initiative. This statewide, multi-sector workplace wellness strategy assists organizations in creating a culture of wellbeing.

SCHA goes beyond simply focusing on a healthy weight and instead focuses on empowering people to make healthier choices—to eat smart, move more, and work toward achieving optimal health. It became clear that for the state house, there were lessons to be learned from Working Well.

The tweet that brought legislators to their feet.

After the conversation evolved into the importance of getting people physically fit, SCHA's VP of Engagement, Rozalynn Goodwin connected with Representative Neal Collins, who also happened to be a fitness enthusiast. They knew there would be interest among the staff and legislators to get healthy and participate in an activity challenge—in particular with Fitbit—but they needed more motivation to get started.

What began as a casual tweet informing the VP he was “in” turned into a full-fledged recruitment plan that resulted in Collins getting other house members and senators to join the program. Soon, SCHA had the state house on board to lead by example and create a healthier place to work, visit, and govern.

The tweet that started it all

Rep. Neal Collins | @collins_neal
@RozalynnGoodwin
@SCHospitals I'm in! Weigh-in
the first week of session?
#AHealthierStateHouse

Bringing Fitbit into the mix.

Once they had full commitment from legislators, SCHA was able to begin the Fitbit corporate wellness challenge.

To best understand the health outcomes of the Fitbit program, SCHA provided optional biometric screenings before and after. By June, Month 5, it was found that cases of overweight and obese participants decreased by 18%. And average daily steps increased by 21% from the first month to the final month.

While moving toward better health is an ongoing journey, the state house could definitively say they were healthier than a year ago. They're even installing walking trail markers on the state house grounds for everyone to enjoy for years to come.

Legislator Spotlight: Representative Neal Collins



Rep. Collins' role as a wellness champion to rally colleagues, maintain engagement, encourage friendly competition, and lead by example proved to be a key to success. Rep. Collins walked the walk by participating in

Fitbit challenges, inspiring colleagues to take the stairs and walk the state house grounds, and even tweeting out his own fitness achievement – losing nearly 20 lbs.

18%

of participants lost significant weight and were no longer considered overweight or obese.

78%

of participants with elevated total cholesterol were able to reduce it.*

9,083 steps

were taken on average per day in the final month of the program. The top team averaged 10,907.

31 inches

cumulative reduction in waist circumference, which is associated with decreased risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes.**

* With elevated or high cholesterol, one may develop fatty deposits in one's blood vessels. Eventually, this can decrease blood flow through the arteries. (Mayo Clinic, 2016.)

** With more fat around the waist rather than at the hips, one is at higher risk for heart disease and type 2 diabetes. (National Institutes of Health, 2016.)

Tips & Takeaways

Get ideas to get your company moving.



Think beyond just weight loss.

Focusing on health behaviors is empowering and inclusive. Moving more improves health at any weight. Taking the stairs or hosting walking meetings can all add up.



Ensure healthy options are available.

For office catering, start simple by ensuring there's at least one healthy item on the menu. Make sure it's delicious and prominently placed.



Consider ease and scalability.

Although SCHA considered several health improvement elements, including a cooking demo, they instead offered weekly bootcamp and yoga which only required an instructor and open space.



Encourage social media use.

Suggesting to employees that they post about their healthy behaviors can help encourage others and keep them accountable to their healthy habits.

To learn more about how Fitbit Health Solutions can help you build successful programs and improve employee health, contact us at www.fitbit.com/group-health. CS-015-A