



## Participating in CDC’s Work@Health® Program

Before participating in the [Work@Health®](#) program, the University of Georgia College of Pharmacy’s (UGA COP’s) efforts consisted of programs that were operating independently instead of collaboratively across the UGA campus. One program was Healthy Dawgs®, which the COP started in 2010 to help UGA employees reduce their risk of heart disease. For this program, teams of pharmacy students from the COP and health psychology students from the College of Education collect biometric data from participants before and after the program. They also provide individualized counseling and goal setting.

With training and effort, employers of all sizes and types can plan and implement a workplace health program. Employers can learn from the experiences of employers like the University of Georgia College of Pharmacy about how to plan strategies and anticipate implementation challenges.

Since the Healthy Dawgs program started, 194 UGA employees have participated. The COP also began working with the university’s health center in 2013 to deliver flu shots to students, faculty, and staff through mobile clinics.

Before COP joined the Work@Health® program, Healthy Dawgs was not being promoted as a campus-wide

program. COP faculty had to approach each department supervisor, individually, and getting departments and colleges to participate was a challenge. The program also lacked support from top campus administrators.

Several colleges were conducting their own worksite health promotion activities, but none were working together in a comprehensive way. Part of the problem was high turnover in leadership positions. Many people were serving on an interim basis, making it difficult for anyone to lead a more comprehensive, campus-wide approach to worksite health promotion.

Two UGA COP employees, Assistant Dean Lori Duke and Public Service Assistant Ashley Hannings, participated in the Work@Health® program’s hands-on training in Atlanta, Georgia, in 2014. They signed up because they wanted to expand the employee health services offered at UGA to create a more comprehensive wellness program.

## Organization Background

University of Georgia College of Pharmacy

- « Established in 1903
- « Public flagship university
- « Industry sector: educational services
- « Location: Athens, Georgia
- « 9,000 Employees
- « 50% women, 50% men

The University of Georgia’s (UGA’s) College of Pharmacy (COP) offers a doctor of pharmacy degree through a 4-year program that integrates classroom, laboratory, and experiential training in a curriculum organized around both human physiology and diseases. The college also offers graduate studies in disciplines associated with pharmacotherapeutic research, clinical work, and administration. UGA emphasizes the critical role that pharmacists play on the patient care team, not only dispensing medicines and educating patients, but also helping prevent disease and promote wellness. The COP has supported employee health promotion efforts across the UGA campus for several years.

They needed ideas on how to move forward with a comprehensive program and advice on how to navigate political environments like universities.

The [Work@Health®](#) Program is designed to teach employers how to improve the health of their workers (and workers' families) by using prevention and wellness strategies that focus on chronic health conditions. Well-designed, science-based, and comprehensive workplace wellness programs can improve the health of individuals and companies, lower health care costs, and increase worker productivity.

After the training, participants in Work@Health® received 6-10 months of technical assistance in the form of coaching, webinars, and interactions with peers. Duke and Hannings said they found the training on how to frame the benefits of worksite health promotion activities using concepts like “presenteeism,” which is when people come to work even when they are sick, to be particularly helpful. They also learned more about how to educate leaders at their university about the importance of worksite health promotion. In addition, they said that the training’s focus on assessment helped them learn how to frame messages to get support from their leadership, assess current activities, and inspire new ideas for future activities.

Employers selected to participate in Work@Health® were assigned to one of three models, all of which delivered the same comprehensive workplace health curriculum.

1. The hands-on model was an on-site, instructor-led, 1-day training workshop held in one of six regional locations.
2. The online model allowed employers to move through the curriculum independently over several weeks using a web-based learning platform.
3. The blended model included a combination of hands-on and online learning strategies.

## Program Overview

### Strengthening University Partnerships



*A pharmacy student providing smoking cessation counseling to a UGA employee. Photo provided by UGA College of Pharmacy.*

Since joining Work@Health®, one of the COP's biggest accomplishments has been strengthening its partnerships within UGA. The program inspired Hannings and her team to increase

their collaborations across departments despite the leadership challenges. While these collaborative efforts were going on, UGA decided to make its campus tobacco-free. COP faculty seized this opportunity to expand the college's “Beat the Pack” program, a free 6-week tobacco cessation education and counseling program for students, employees, and the community that was adapted from a pharmaceutical company program.

COP faculty approached the college's interim human resources (HR) administrator about marketing the “Beat the Pack” program campus wide. The program started in 2011 when UGA's employee insurance plan began applying higher premiums on employees who use tobacco. Hannings' team had been having trouble

getting the word out about the program. The HR administrator agreed to help and was instrumental in promoting “Beat the Pack” across campus through various communication tools and materials.

### Providing Employee Training and Education Across the University

After participating in the Work@Health® program, Hannings worked to raise employee awareness about healthy lifestyles and to educate them on how to make lifestyle changes. Her team provided worksite wellness training through UGA's Center for Training and Development. The training was conducted through a brown bag series that offered three sessions each semester. The center advertised the series campus wide and scheduled the sessions at lunchtime in a centralized location to make it easier for employees across the university to participate.

Hannings and her team were able to draw on expertise from across the university to help make the wellness trainings successful. For instance, faculty members from the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences led sessions on nutrition. By working with multiple departments, the team increased collaboration and investment in employee worksite wellness across UGA.

## Program Success



Healthy Dawgtoberfest for UGA employees.  
Photo provided by UGA College of Pharmacy.

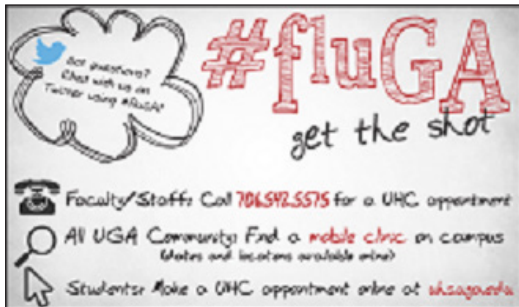
Like all of the employers participating in the Work@Health® program, UGA COP used the [CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard](#) to assess the extent to which it had evidence-based health promotion strategies

in place before and after training. The ScoreCard is a free tool that employers can use to assess their health promotion and disease prevention programs, identify gaps, and set priorities across health topics.

Strategies assessed by the ScoreCard include health promoting counseling services, environmental supports, policies, health plan benefits, and other worksite programs shown to be effective in helping to prevent or mitigate heart disease, stroke, and related health conditions.

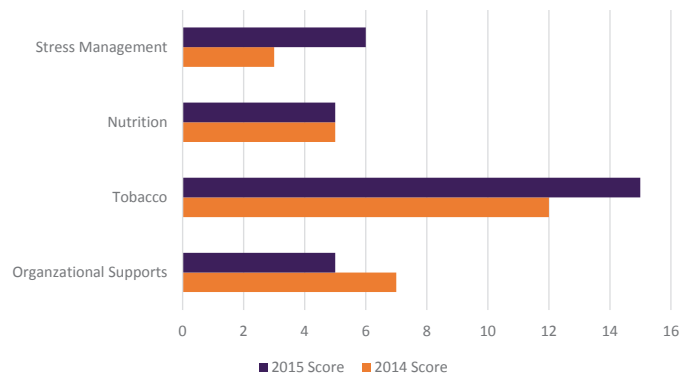
From 2014 to 2015, UGA COP increased its total score from 90 to 94 out of a possible 264 points. Areas that showed improvements included tobacco control and stress management, which are closely related to the college's efforts to improve heart health. Although its score increased only slightly, the college has implemented evidence-based interventions that were not in place before the Work@Health® program. These interventions include a written policy banning tobacco use on campus and stress management programs for employees.

UGA COP had a low score (5 out of a possible 33 points) on the Organizational Supports module, which assesses the extent to which organizations have a foundation in place to support and maintain a worksite health promotion program (e.g., a dedicated budget, annual objectives). Scoring in this area was negatively affected by the high turnover in leadership and the sporadic support for UGA's employee wellness program.



Poster promoting onsite flu clinics for faculty, staff, and students.  
Source: UGA Health and Wellness website.

CDC Worksite Health ScoreCard Overall Score  
In Wellness Programming, 2014-2015



## Learning from Work@Health®

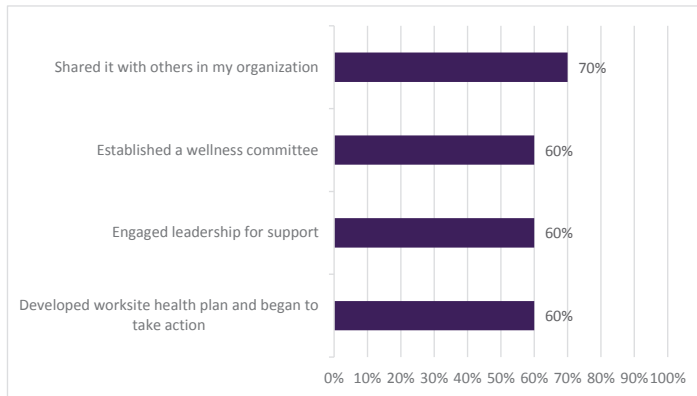
In a survey after the hands-on training in Atlanta, all participants in the session with Hannings said they understood how to apply what they had learned in the training to their jobs and that they would be able to use what they had learned at their jobs. After completing the technical assistance portion of the program, all participants were asked to list the top three lessons they had learned. Hannings said she had learned the following:

1. How to assess program effectiveness.
2. The advantages of collaboration.

3. Who should be brought to the table when building a wellness team.

About 6 months later, participants were asked to complete surveys about what they had done since the training. Most (70%) said they had shared what they had learned in the training with others in their organizations, 60% had used it to appeal to their leaders for support, 60% had established wellness committees, and 60% had already developed worksite health plans and were starting to take action.

## How Work@Health® Trainees in the Atlanta, GA Hands-On Model are using the Information They Learned in the Program



Pharmacy student conducting health screening for Healthy Dawgs program. Photo provided by UGA College of Pharmacy.

## Challenges

UGA employees have reported an interest in worksite health and have responded positively to the programs offered by the COP. However, the lack of permanent leadership to promote worksite wellness and a more comprehensive campus-wide approach remains a challenge. With leadership turnover in key positions (e.g., HR administrator), maintaining momentum has been difficult.

Despite this challenge, the COP has made progress. For example, the college has worked with the university's health center to streamline the purchase

and promotion of vaccinations for employees. Hannings and her team also established a relationship with UGA's Center for Training and Development, and plan to use employee feedback to expand health and wellness class offerings.

Another challenge is the lack of data about people from other departments and colleges who participate in COP's health promotion activities, like the "Beat the Pack" program. Assessing the level of change resulting from the college's efforts campuswide is difficult without comprehensive data.

## What's Next?

Over the next 12 months, UGA COP has planned the following activities for worksite health promotion:

- Continue to expand partnerships across campus to support health promotion activities through the Center for Training and Development.
- Use evaluation data and feedback from employees to expand efforts with the Center for Training and Development.
- Continue to promote the "Beat the Pack" program campus wide.
- Find ways to better integrate worksite health promotion with COP's current curriculum revision efforts.



*The Work@Health® employer-training program is an initiative of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to promote workplace wellness through employer education, training, and technical assistance. Work@Health® training provides employers with knowledge and tools through a comprehensive curricula to promote good health in their work places to prevent or reduce chronic illness and disability, and improve productivity.*