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ZOLL Achieves Platinum Status as American Heart Association ‘Fit-Friendly Company’



ZOLL Medical Corporation, a manufacturer of resuscitation devices and related software solutions, has been recognised for the third consecutive year as a Platinum-Level company by the American Heart Association’s (AHA) Fit-Friendly initiative for helping employees to eat better and move more.

“Physical activity and employee wellness are important priorities at ZOLL. We are especially honored that the AHA, a national health organisation closely aligned with ZOLL’s core mission of improving outcomes from cardiac arrest, recognises our commitment to providing the best workplace environment possible,” said Richard A. Packer, Chief Executive Officer of ZOLL. “This designation benefits our employees’ health and produces positive results for our company overall.”

The wellness culture at ZOLL has taken many forms to encourage employees to lead more active and healthy lives. Enrollment in the exercise, yoga, and fitness programs, offered at a discount in the onsite gym, increased by 13% from 2012.

And the number of requests for gym badges is up over last year. The company added on-site chair massages for employees to assist with reducing stress. Stress reduction offerings are also available through ZOLL’s employee assistance program, as are monthly webinars and telephonic coaching that help employees resolve personal issues and meet life’s challenges.

ZOLL subsidises the heart-healthy menu options offered daily in the cafeteria as well as the healthy choice vending machine, which offers such fare as yogurt, fruit, veggies, and water. It is also not unusual to see groups of employees making use of the marked 1-mile walking path on the ZOLL campus. In addition, ZOLL has instituted a smoke-free campus and offers smoking-cessation programs.

The Fit-Friendly Companies Program is a catalyst for positive change in the American workforce to help companies make their employees’ health and wellness a priority.

Platinum-level employers:

- Offer employees physical activity options in the workplace
- Increase healthy eating options at the worksite
- Promote a wellness culture in the workplace
- Implement at least nine criteria outlined by the American Heart Association in the areas of physical activity, nutrition and culture
- Demonstrate measurable outcomes related to workplace wellness

American employers face increasing healthcare expenses and health-related losses in productivity that cost an estimated \$225.8 billion a year. Many American adults spend most of their waking hours at sedentary jobs. Their lack of regular physical activity raises their risk for a host of medical problems, such as obesity, high blood pressure, and diabetes.

Employers face \$12.7 billion in annual medical expenses due to obesity alone. AHA's program helps change corporate cultures by motivating employees to start walking, which has the lowest dropout rate of any physical activity.

"The Fit-Friendly Companies Program offers a unique, easy-to-implement opportunity for corporations to increase employees' physical activity, which will help improve their health and their employers' bottom line," said Elizabeth Van Dahm, Senior Director, Heart Walk. "Even people who haven't exercised regularly until middle age can reap significant benefits by starting a walking program."

Source: Zoll

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