Roadmap to employee health and wellness



2026 Health and Wellness Roadmap

Be an employee health and wellness champion with the 2026 Health and Wellness Roadmap. Fostering a thriving company culture helps increase employee morale, loyalty, engagement, and innovation. Caring for your employees starts with simple actions, leading by example, and allowing employees to create meaningful connections and enjoy fun activities together.



Feeling a sense of belonging at work means a lot!

Employees are

5.7X

more engaged

and

70%

more likely to stay
at their current workplace

We've curated a monthly list which includes a wellness action plan, themes, and important health and wellness dates, so you can easily map out your employee well-being strategies.

January
Healthy lifestyle



New year, fresh start! This month is all about boosting your immune system and embracing winter wellness. Discover why quality sleep matters more in colder months and get inspired to build healthy routines that actually stick—no guilt, just good habits.

Wellness action plan:

- Encourage healthy sleeping habits by offering a personal or wellness spending account (WSA) that includes coverage for blackout curtains, ergonomic pillows, or weighted blankets.
- Motivate employees to stick to routines or create healthy habits by offering incentives*, advocating the use of programs like BestLife Rewarded or allowing coverage for wearable trackers under a WSA.
- Encourage employees to stay active with these winter activities – it's a great way to boost your immunity, combat the winter blues, relieve stress, and improve sleep.
- Alleviate financial stress by offering guidance and learning opportunities on retirement planning.

Themes:

- Get Organized Month
- Financial Wellness Month
- Alzheimer's Awareness Month

Important dates:

- January 21, 2026 – Bell Let's Talk Day



*Did you know?

Organizations that offer incentives have higher participation rates in health initiatives. Health screenings had a 61% participation rate when incentives were offered compared to 32% with no incentives.

February
Heart health



During Heart Health Month, we're spotlighting powerful ways to protect your cardiovascular health. From quitting smoking to understanding your risk factors, learn how small lifestyle changes can make a big impact.

Wellness action plan:

- Remind employees of the options available to help them quit smoking. Does your health care plan cover smoking cessation programs? Lifestyle apps or the People Connect Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can also be good resources.
- Promote heart health awareness* and preventative care.
- Offer incentives for employees to get regular health screenings so they understand their individual risk factors.
- Encourage physical activity to help manage high blood pressure, high cholesterol and cardiovascular diseases. Set up friendly competitions, such as a step challenge, or team up with a local gym to offer discounted memberships.
- Getting enough sleep can also help to decrease the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, and obesity.

Theme:

- Heart Health Month

Important dates:

- February 4, 2026 – World Cancer Day
- February 13, 2026 – Wear Red Day
- February 25, 2026 – Pink Shirt Day

*Did you know?

"Heart and vascular disease are the number one killer of women worldwide and the leading cause of premature death in women in Canada."



March

Nutrition month



Nutrition isn't one-size-fits-all. This month, we explore how your needs change with age and life stage. It's all about eating smart and living well, without the stress of what to make for dinner.

Wellness action plan:

- Give employees the information they need to successfully claim nutritionist or dietitian services through their benefits plan—either under the insured health care benefit, or through a health care spending account (HCSA).
- Have a workplace potluck with healthy guidelines. Ask employees to share their recipes so everyone can keep up the healthy eating at home.
- Share these 27 Health and Nutrition Tips That Are Actually Evidence-Based*
- Help employees discover why they eat—and how they can adjust if needed with the help of benefits like EAP services, BestLife Rewarded, or a nutritionist or dietitian.

Themes:

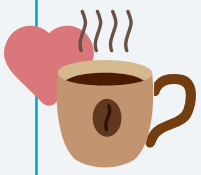
- Nutrition Month
- Brain Health Month

Important dates:

- March 3, 2026 – World Hearing Day
- March 4, 2026 – World Obesity Day
- March 6, 2026 – Employee Appreciation Day
- March 13, 2026 – World Sleep Day

*Did you know?

Coffee has been linked to reduced risk of Type 2 Diabetes, Parkinson's Disease, and Alzheimer's. It's full of antioxidants and may even help extend life expectancy. 2-3 cups a day is recommended.





April

Gratitude



Feeling stuck? Gratitude could be the reset you need. April's spotlight explores simple tools for practising gratitude. Simple shifts in perspective can make a big difference. Start with one thankful thought each day.

Wellness action plan:

- Use a HRIS tool to track important employee milestones, anniversaries and birthdays so you can recognize them appropriately.
- Incorporate gratitude into your workplace culture and remember that small gestures can go a long way*. Try using these 8 employee recognition ideas for a positive employee experience.
- Remind employees about their total compensation, including any bonuses, spending accounts (and what's eligible), retirement savings options, value-added benefits like People Advantage, and more.
- Support employee gratitude by supporting employee volunteer efforts. Environmental conservation efforts in support of Earth Day are perfect for April.
- Encourage spending time outdoors to reap more than just physical benefits. Getting outside improves empathy, reduces loneliness, and increases one's sense of purpose.

Themes:

- Gratitude
- National Oral Health Month

Important dates:

- April 2, 2026 – National Employee Benefits Day
- April 7, 2026 – United Nations' World Health Day 2026
- April 22, 2026 – Earth Day
- April 19 –25, 2026 – Canadian Fertility Awareness Week

*Did you know?

58% of employees say they feel undervalued at work, and 44% say lack of recognition was the reason they switched jobs.



May

Mental health – mental load



Ever feel like your brain has too many tabs open? May is all about understanding the mental load and how to lighten it. How can we find solutions to an invisible problem? It starts with honest and respectful reflection and communication.

Wellness action plan:

- Make mental health discussions part of your culture. Incorporate mental health information into HR presentations, encourage open dialogue, and check in with employees.
- Help prevent employee burnout.* Ensure there is adequate staff to cover sick days and holidays, and support employee recognition from managers and peers.
- Encourage the use of mental health resources, such as the EAP, virtual health, or paramedical services like psychologists and counsellors.
- Review your policies on absences, leave, and sick days, and communicate them clearly to all employees, so there is no misunderstanding about when they can take time for their mental health.

Themes:

- Mental Health Month – mental load
- National Sun Awareness Month
- National Speech and Hearing Month

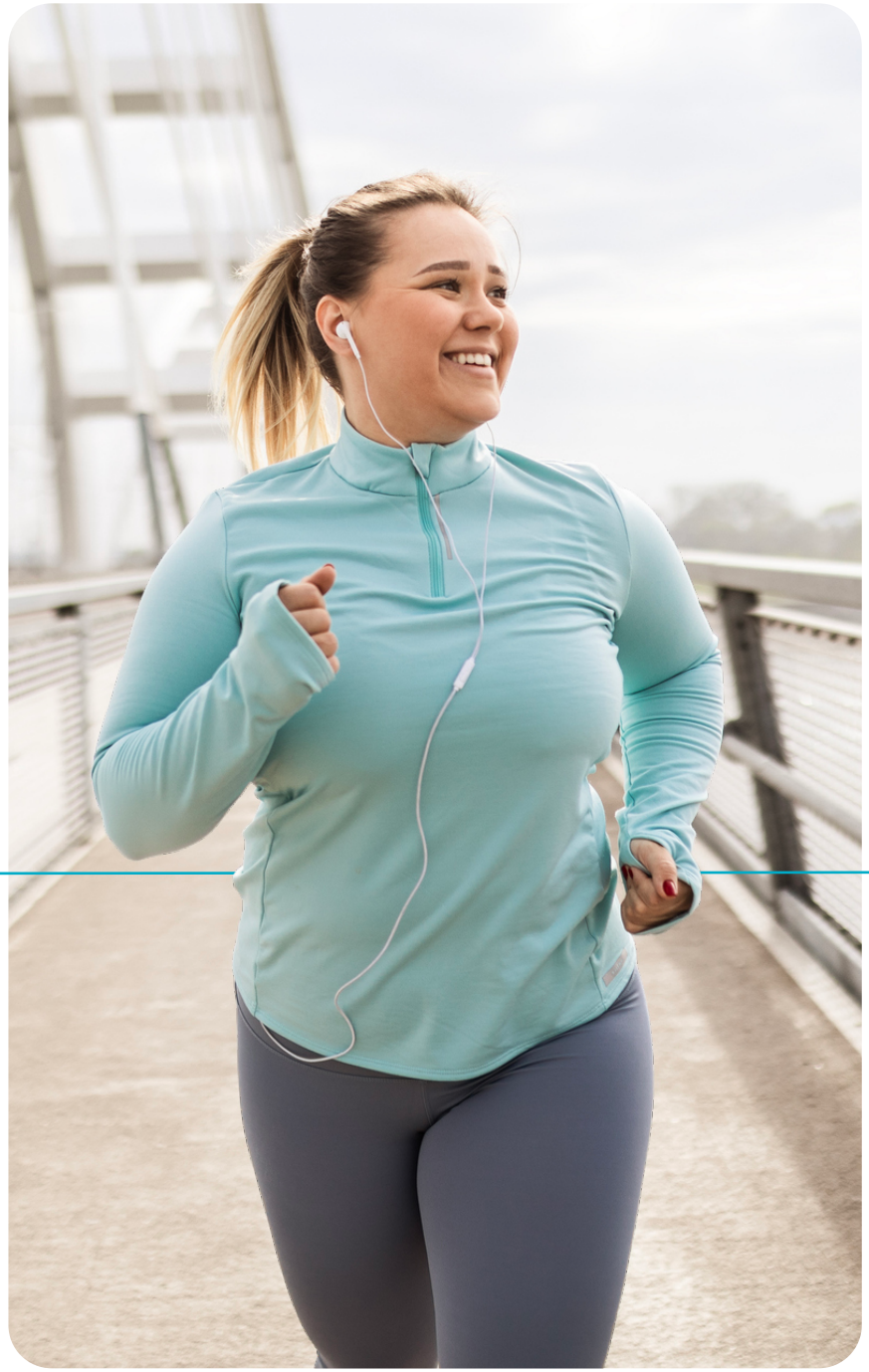
Important dates:

- May 4-10, 2026 – Mental Health Week
- May 4, 2026 – Check your skin day
- May 10-16, 2026 – Women's Health Week
- May 15, 2026 – National Bike to Work Day
- May 21, 2026 – World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development

*Did you know?

Almost 40% of employees feel burnt out, and burnout costs an average of $6,800 per employee per year—a figure which can be cut in half with preventative measures.





June

Weight management



June focuses on healthy weight management. We're also spotlighting how to stay well in the summer heat—because wellness isn't just about numbers, it's about feeling good in your body.

Wellness action plan:

- Encourage everyone to drink lots of water! It combats the heat, keeps your brain firing on all cylinders, and helps with weight management. Try making a game out of it (Water BINGO, anyone?) or add fun water cooler topics in the kitchen to get people going back for more.
- Encourage physical activity to help employees maintain a healthy weight. Provide standing desks or bring in a yoga instructor for group sessions. Or suggest these summer activities to help keep your employees happy and healthy.
- Give employees WSA dollars towards gym/club memberships—think outside the box, it could be for rock climbing, squash club, the local swimming pool, or a snowboarding pass—just remember to let them decide.
- Some employees may need extra help to move the needle.* Look into offering weight management coverage under your benefits plan—consider adding coverage under a HCSA to keep costs manageable.

Themes:

- Weight management
- 2SLGBTQIA+ Pride Month
- Men's Health Month
- Parks and Recreation Month

Important dates:

- June 6, 2026 – National Health and Fitness Day
- June 14, 2026 – World Blood Donor Day
- June 26, 2026 – National Take Your Dog to Work Day

*Did you know?

1 in 3 Canadians were considered obese in 2024, up from 1 in 4 just two years prior. A whopping 68% fall under the obese or overweight category.



July
Social health



Loneliness is more common than you think—and connection is the cure. July's spotlight highlights the importance of relationships and how to recognize when emotional struggles need support. Discover simple ways to build genuine, meaningful connections.

Wellness action plan:

- Set up walking meetings to take advantage of the sunny weather. Benefits include inspiration, conversation, memories, and closer bonds.
- Plan an employee appreciation event. Check out these 35 Ideas to Inspire Your Next Company Picnic for some fun options. Have a remote team? Consider bringing them together for the day, or plan a virtual team building event.
- Encourage spending time outdoors to reap more than just physical benefits. Getting outside improves empathy, reduces loneliness, and increases one's sense of purpose.
- Give back to the community by giving employees volunteer* hours to use at their discretion, or organize group volunteer activities.

Themes:

- Social health
- Picnic Month

Important dates:

- July 6, 2026 – Canadian Injury Prevention Day
- July 7, 2026 – Global Forgiveness Day
- July 24, 2026 – International Self-Care Day



*Did you know?

Volunteering helps strengthen connections, improves social skills, and exposes people to new experiences, ideas, and people, reducing loneliness, and improving social health.

August
Diabetes



This month is all about understanding diabetes and managing blood sugar dips throughout the day. Learn simple strategies to support stable energy levels and overall wellness.

Wellness action plan:

- Provide employees with information on the risk factors and symptoms of diabetes. Try multiple media choices to get the message across.
- Healthy lifestyle choices can manage and even prevent Type 2 diabetes. Help employees explore different options for diabetes treatment and prevention.
- Emphasize the benefits of People Connect Carepath: employees can get individualized diabetes care plans and follow-up from a dedicated Nurse Case Manager.
- Remind employees about the coverage and any discounts they have for diabetes medication, and supplies under the health care benefit or HCSA, if applicable.

Themes:

- Diabetes
- National Immunization Awareness Month

Important dates:

- August 15, 2026 – National Relaxation Day
- August 19, 2026 – World Humanitarian Day
- August 31, 2026 – International Overdose Awareness Day

*Did you know?

There are approximately 4 million Canadians living with diabetes (type 1 and 2), and another 2.4 million adults living with prediabetes.



September

Brain health



Your brain powers everything—so let's take care of it. This month, we're focusing on brain health, from understanding concussions to recognizing signs of brain-related conditions.

Wellness action plan:

- Check in with your Health and Safety Committee and make sure your workplace/jobsite doesn't have any obstacles, unmarked drops, or other hazards that could result in a fall.
- Remind employees to wear a helmet whenever they operate recreational vehicles, bikes, scooters, etc. WSAs can accommodate the cost of a helmet—just ask to have it included as an eligible expense.
- Recognize the impact of early-onset Alzheimer's* as an emerging concern for employees and benefit plans. Share information on risk factors that can be controllable and non-controllable risk factors.
- Help employees keep their brains sharp and healthy. Buy puzzles and board games for the staff room or common area, get people moving, challenge employees to sleep well, and remind them that being social is also great for your brain.

Themes:

- Brain Health
- International Pain Awareness Month
- Healthy Aging

Important dates:

- September 10, 2026 – World Suicide Prevention Day
- September 21, 2026 – World Gratitude Day
- September 29, 2026 – World Heart Day
- September 30, 2026 – National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

*Did you know?

People who are extremely deficient in Vitamin D have 125% higher risk of developing Alzheimer's—the risk was 53% higher in those who were moderately deficient.





October

Workplace wellness



October is Healthy Workplace Month. Learn how to stay healthy while juggling changing schedules and discover ways to calm your mind when life feels chaotic. This month's spotlight is all about finding balance—on and off the clock.

Wellness action plan:

- Take action towards furthering your workplace culture. Help your staff and people managers improve their communication and avoid misunderstandings.
- Workplace wellness extends beyond culture to encompass employee wellness. Discover Employee Wellness Program Benefits and Options to consider and communicate any you already have in place.
- Promote psychological health and safety in your workplace. Try holding a workshop or webinar to educate employees at all levels on how to achieve one.
- Evaluate workloads and schedules*—are your employees supported, do they have the flexibility they need? Running an employee survey could offer invaluable insights and boost employee engagement and retention.

Themes:

- Workplace Wellness
- Small Business Month

Important dates:

- October 4, 2026 – Improve Your Office Day
- October 10, 2026 – World Mental Health Day
- October 18-24, 2026 – Invisible Disabilities Week
- October 18-24, 2026 – BDC Small Business Week



*Did you know?

According to employees, the top three ways employers can support their health and well-being are flexible work arrangements (49%), reasonable workloads (49%), and paid vacation/sick days (44%).

November

Financial literacy



Let's talk money—without the stress. November is all about the art of saving. Discover simple, effective ways to build your savings and create financial peace of mind, one step at a time.

Wellness action plan:

- Sponsor time for employees to learn about financial basics. You can watch the videos together or allow employees time to learn on their own.
- Help employees save for the future by investing in a group retirement plan. Already have one? Get an actuarial evaluation to make sure it's running tip top.
- Promote budget-friendly options and opportunities, such as cancelling automatic subscription renewals, to get employees saving. Challenge employees to see who can eat out the least all month—winner gets a grocery store gift card.
- Understand the impacts of financial stress on your employees and remind them of the free, unlimited financial advisory services available through an EAP.
- Prepare employees for the realities of retirement.* Strategic planning and management now will set them up for success in the future.

Themes:

- Financial Literacy Month
- Diabetes Awareness Month
- Movember

Important dates:

- November 1-7, 2026 – National Pain Awareness Week
- November 13, 2026 – World Kindness Day
- November 17, 2026 – National Grief and Bereavement Day



*Did you know?

43% of retirees worry about outliving their savings, and 56% of retirees are still paying their mortgage.



December

Nutrition



December is about balancing your plate during the holidays. Enjoy the season's flavours while making mindful choices that keep you feeling your best.

Wellness action plan:

- Continue providing healthy snack options during the holidays. When cookies and chocolates are often widely circulated, having healthy alternatives helps employees make mindful choices.
- Remind employees that they are not alone—the health care benefit includes coverage for dieticians and nutritionists, and consultations can be arranged via your EAP after the free sessions have been used.
- Host a mindful eating challenge. Have employees eat their lunch away from their desk at least twice a week for the entire month. Poll them afterwards to see if they noticed any difference.
- Stress eating* can be magnified during the holiday season. Promote balance by ensuring employees maintain healthy workloads and stay active. Added benefits like BestLife Rewarded also offer personalized guided coaching, including nutrition.

Themes:

- Nutrition
- Stress-Free Family Holidays Month

Important dates:

- December 1, 2026 – Giving Tuesday
- December 5, 2026 – International Volunteer Day (IVD)



*Did you know?

We stress eat in response to the increased cortisol and insulin levels stress causes, which release blood glucose and signal the brain that more energy is required.

Build a workplace where wellness thrives

Employee health and wellness is an ongoing effort and commitment. This essential guide gives you actionable ideas to implement, helping you draft strategies to continue building a resilient workforce and company culture.

Employees who feel seen, cared for, and psychologically safe will spread that positivity, creating a cycle of increased employee morale and loyalty. All of which translates to greater business success through improved productivity, creativity, and motivation, and decreased employee turnover and absenteeism.

Start shaping a workplace where well-being and connection fuel productivity—the 2026 Health and Wellness Roadmap is your blueprint for success.



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