



### **All in the Family**

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My dentist's waiting room displays a sign I enjoy: "Brush only the teeth you want to keep." Like everybody, I want to keep them all! So, how much of your wellness program should incorporate families? Only the parts you want to succeed!

Each component succeeds best when families participate. That goes for health risk appraisals (HRA), exercise promotion, tobacco cessation, alcohol misuse education, home safety, nutrition, depression awareness, stress management, incentive programs, health coaching, resiliency training, medical consumerism, self-care, and more. Wellness is a family affair.



Think of how family support can improve these four key metrics that define wellness program success:

**Participation** - how many people showed?

**Engagement** - how well did they complete the process?

**Effectiveness** - what proportion of participants achieved goals?

**Reach** - how well did the benefit penetrate the population you hoped to help? Note that Reach puts it all together, incorporating each of the other metrics.

Right now, we are delivering a tobacco cessation intervention, "Call It Quits Plus," to our own organization, made possible by a Mercy Health Foundation grant. Eligibility includes all employees AND spouses, which will increase PARTICIPATION. Our employee smoking rates are much lower than the state average. But, spousal smoking rates are typical. So, we expect larger participation by welcoming them.

This intensive program requires commitment by participants. It centers on medical treatment (prescription medication or over-the-counter nicotine replacement) and a series of group meetings. ENGAGEMENT in this 12-week long process will benefit from the accountability that a spouse adds.

This worksite tobacco cessation method has enjoyed remarkable EFFECTIVENESS, at least ten times higher than that of unassisted "cold turkey" attempts. Effectiveness soars higher for any would-be quitters who have a family "quit smoking buddy."

Yet, ultimately the program REACH will determine its financial outcome. That's because we provide health insurance for employees AND families. In fact, many people seek employment at Affinity to obtain health insurance benefits for their spouse. If we failed to include spouses in our tobacco intervention, we wouldn't reach this needy group, who no doubt generates much of our membership's tobacco-related health care spending.

We need family involvement to maximize the REACH in any intervention. Our financial success depends upon it. I've worked with client companies with enviable programs yet frustration in their claims results, owing to inadequate reach. Invariably, a few costly outliers sour the experience of the whole group if family members remain UN-REACHED!