



CITY OF RICHMOND

REPORT TO COMMITTEE

TO: General Purposes Committee
FROM: Mike Kirk
Director Human Resources
RE: Corporate Wellness Program Initiative

To Gen. Purp. Ctte - March 26 /00

DATE: March 6, 2000

FILE: 1850-02

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

1. That Council approve the establishment of the Corporate Wellness program and work site wellness centres, as outlined in the staff report (dated March 6th, 2000 from the Director of Human Resources).
2. That staff be authorized to sign a letter of understanding and establish an acceptable date to conduct a Health Fair in joint venture with Health Fairs Unlimited and Parke Davis.
3. That Council approve a Corporate Challenge/Picnic being held at King George Park in mid July 2000.
4. That staff be directed to report to Council on specific financial contributions toward the cost of outfitting and equipping Corporate Wellness Centres at the new City Hall and Works Yard which are available through sources other than the City.

Mike Kirk
Director Human Resources

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CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER

STAFF REPORT

ORIGIN

The Corporate Wellness program stems from an earlier initiative by the Human Resources department to introduce an attendance management program. Senior staff requested that such an initiative needed to be pursued in conjunction with a more positive, broad based approach to employee health and well-being. Senior staff felt if attention was focused on promoting the general health and well being of the employees, the attendance issues would in turn, take care of themselves. Also, Senior Staff felt that an attendance management program would be more readily accepted and workable if introduced through a more positive initiative such as introducing a formal corporate wellness program.

The Wellness initiative was launched early in the Spring of 1999 in the form of the Wellness Club. The club's vision was "to promote wellness in a supportive, educational and fun manner." The club embarked on a number of outings over the course of last summer. It became apparent from the outings, that a number of staff were interested in pursuing Wellness focused activities. Lifestyle seminars and activity sessions took place throughout the Spring and Summer as a result of the interest expressed.

Coinciding with the development of the Wellness Club, the Workforce Development Team was pursuing the development of a Corporate Wellness program. A presentation to the Workforce Development Team was made, outlining the benefits associated with providing a Corporate Wellness program and the timelines one could expect to see results.

In September of 1999, existing staff resources were re-allocated to allow a staff person to spend 2 days per week developing and implementing the Corporate Wellness program.

This staff report has been prepared for the purpose of updating council on the progress of the development of the wellness program and to seek approval to proceed with implementation.

ANALYSIS

Wellness is considered a lifestyle approach to the highest states of health and work satisfaction. Benefits corporations are realizing by having a Corporate Wellness program are as follows:

1. **Reduced Health Care costs:**
 - Companies have been able to demonstrate a decrease in health care costs as a direct result of employees' participation in the company's wellness programs.
2. **Decreased Absenteeism:**
 - Some companies have seen as much as a 29% drop in absenteeism rates as a result of people participating in a Corporate Wellness program.
3. **Increased Job Satisfaction:**
 - Employee morale as well as attitudes toward work and health have been shown to improve in those individuals who had participated in wellness programs.
4. **Improved Job performance:**
 - Companies have demonstrated increases in productivity by 7% among those employees who participated in wellness programs.
5. **Lower employee turnover.**

6. Fewer work related injuries and WCB claims.
7. Improved Corporate Image:
 - Providing a Corporate Wellness program has been shown to give the employee a sense that the employer is sincerely concerned about their health and welfare.
8. Greater Concentration and Decision making abilities:
 - Stress is a major contributing factor to a decreased ability to concentrate and make sound decisions. Wellness programs dealing with effective stress management or programs focused on physical activities, have been shown to significantly improve concentration and decision making skills and reduce levels of stress among participating employees.
9. Improved Sense of Team:
 - High performance teams are those teams who have a commitment to each other and to the organization's goals. These teams impact the bottom line of an organization in a very significant and positive manner. Wellness programs have been shown to assist in developing high performance teams.

Employee Wellness Centres have become the vehicle used by many corporations to achieve these desired outcomes. Employee Wellness facilities offer employees an educational resource centre, a space that can be utilized for therapeutic services associated with lifestyle risk reduction and modification and injury rehabilitation.

How Long Before The Organization Realizes A Return On Their Investment:

Changed Knowledge	Immediately
Decreased Turnover, Absenteeism	6 months – 1 year
Changed Behaviour	1 year
Reduced Costs	gradually 1-4 years
Prevention of Disease	4 years

Implementing a Wellness program is a three-step process:

1. Planning:
 - Establish a working committee that represents a cross section of the organization's employees.
 - Obtain information on the needs of the employees (health survey)
 - Define program mission and program goals and objectives
 - Develop a calendar of activities that reflect the information gathered
2. Implementation:
 - Kick off event
 - Activity calendar
3. Evaluation:
 - Process evaluation
 - Outcome Evaluation (was the program successful in achieving its goals)

To date, a number of initiatives have been undertaken and completed. The program is presently at the Implementation phase. For a listing of completed projects please see attachment 1. There are also a number of projects that are currently underway as part of the implementation phase (see attachment 2). The remainder of the report will focus on three of these projects, the City Hall and Works Yard Employee Wellness Facilities, the Staff Health Fair, and Corporate Challenge/Picnic.

Project 1 – Fitness Facilities at City Hall and Works yard

Project Overview:

Senior staff have been petitioned on numerous occasions to provide fitness facilities at the Works yard location and at City Hall, and as well to provide employee access to the City's many recreation facilities such as the community centres. As council is aware, space has been allocated in the new City Hall to address this request, for city hall staff. To address the requests for a Works yard location, the Civic buildings group is currently researching possible locations. This report addresses the costs associated with equipping and outfitting both facilities.

Project Status:

For budget purposes, estimates were received from 3 different equipment suppliers. Estimates were received from Torvik Industries, Fitness Depot and Fitness Corporation of Canada. Fitness Corporation of Canada has been identified as the preferred provider, as the equipment this company carries is of superior quality and is considered very user-friendly and very reliable. These factors are of particular importance in fitness equipment in reducing maintenance costs, increasing the longevity of the equipment and reducing the amount of time equipment is out of service. It should also be noted that of the three estimates received, Fitness Corporation was prepared to add an additional 3 pieces of equipment valued at \$10,392.60 at no additional charge and was prepared to be actively involved in assisting with the start-up (training etc.) for both sites. This company is prepared to provide staff resources to assist in orienting staff to the equipment at both sites. Although the cost of purchasing the superior product is higher than other prices received from the suppliers, when the additional machines, staff resources, and support is factored in, the price is extremely competitive. In addition, the quality and durability of their equipment lines is far superior.

Staff users will be charged a nominal fee for use. This money will then be allocated for ongoing equipment repair and replacement. Staff will be soliciting funding for the capital costs from a variety of sources including the respective Unions.

A registration/waiver form has been drafted to cover any potential WCB concerns and has been submitted to the city solicitor for review.

Project 2 – Health Fair/Official Program Kick-off – “New Beginnings”

Project Overview:

This project has been named “New Beginnings” and is an extremely exciting opportunity for the city workforce. This project involves a three-step process and is a joint venture between the City of Richmond, Health Fairs Unlimited and Parke-Davis. Health Fairs Unlimited is a company that provides engaging, interactive Wellness Fairs to corporations and conferences, and their Fairs have won provincial and national awards.

The three steps are as follows:

- Step 1: Initial Health Fair allows staff to assess their personal risk for developing heart disease and will provide them with practical points toward better health. After the Fair each participant will receive a confidential health report card. The City will receive a summary report that we can use to develop an appropriate selection of programs targeted towards the needs of the employee. See attachment 3 for a layout of the Fair.
- Step 2: A 12 week program of health seminars and activities, and rewards and recognition will be offered to all staff wishing to modify their lifestyle behaviours.
- Step 3: A second, scaled down version of the initial Health Fair will take place for the people who took part in the first Fair and in step 2 of the program. This step allows the employee to see the positive changes they have made to their health. The City will again receive a summary report which will give us the opportunity to see any health improvements staff have been able to realize as a result of this program.

As the City of Richmond is seen as a leader in the municipal arena relating to wellness initiatives, Parke Davis is sponsoring steps 1 and 3 of this project in return for access to the data we will be able to provide. Normally this health fair would cost approximately \$17,000 (total for the 1st and 2nd fair) and the City's expenses related to Step 2 above is \$2500 which has been budgeted through the Corporate Training budget.

Project Status:

As this project is a joint venture between Health Fairs Unlimited, City of Richmond and Parke-Davis, a letter of understanding will be signed and then a firm date in late May or early June will be established and promotions will get underway. Appropriate locations, convenient for Works yard staff, Fire, community centre staff and City Hall staff will be booked.

Project 3 – Corporate Challenge/Corporate Picnic

Project Overview:

The objective of this program falls in line with the "Great People, Great Product" Corporate initiative and will continue to promote the image that the Wellness program has something for everyone. It is also a continuation of the Wellness program's theme "New Beginnings" that started with the Health Fair. The picnic is slated for mid-July at King George Park. There will be games and events for everyone. Within the games will be a fun "mini Olympics" challenge between departments. Points will be awarded for the number of people who attended from the individual departments to points being awarded to the winners of various fun races. The event will also keep the momentum going for the Wellness program during the summer months.

Project Status:

At the last advisory meeting (February 15), the group divided up the responsibilities. Planning of the event is underway and will be formalized at the March and April committee meetings.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The total combined value of the three Wellness Program projects is \$149,892. However, if the incentive and sponsorship discounts of \$27,392 presently being offered to the City (\$17,000 and \$10,392 for the Health Fair and Equipment Purchase respectively) are accepted, the City's total cost to implement the Wellness Program will be \$122,500. The funding source currently identified is the City Hall project's furnishings and equipment budget, however, other funding sources are also being explored, including the respective Unions and staff contributions.

Total Project Value	Total Discount	Total Cost to the City
\$149,892	\$27,392	\$122,500

Staff users will be charged a nominal monthly fee for use. Monies collected will be allocated towards ongoing maintenance and replacement of equipment.

Civic Buildings Department have been asked to identify space at the worksyard that can be identified as their Wellness Facility.

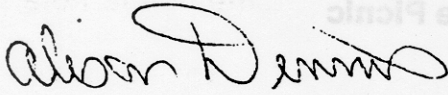
CONCLUSION

Today's workplace environment is a landscape of rapid change. "The shifting of the ground underneath people is so extensive today that there is a surging growth in stress related and mental disorders." The economic impact to organizations as a result of excessive employee stress is many. Among the leading ones are:

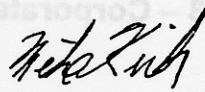
- High absenteeism
- Lowered creativity
- Decreased productivity
- High medical and drug claim costs

"In this era of rapid change and increased stress, management of a company of any kind includes the management of the health behaviours and health risks of its employees, to reduce costs." A Corporate Wellness program with a clearly defined vision and set of program goals and objectives (see attachment 4) and effective program offerings will enhance the success of the organization in bringing under control, the above listed areas.

Staff are seeking direction from Council on the degree that the Employer is willing to support the Wellness initiatives.



Alison Dennis
Corporate Wellness Coordinator



Mike Kirk
Director of Human Resources

3. Improve employee morale.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Total Project Value	Total Discount	Total Cost to the City
\$149,892	\$27,392	\$122,500

CONCLUSION

- High absenteeism
- Lowered creativity
- Decreased productivity
- High medical and drug claim costs

Attachment 1

Projects Completed September 1999- February 2000

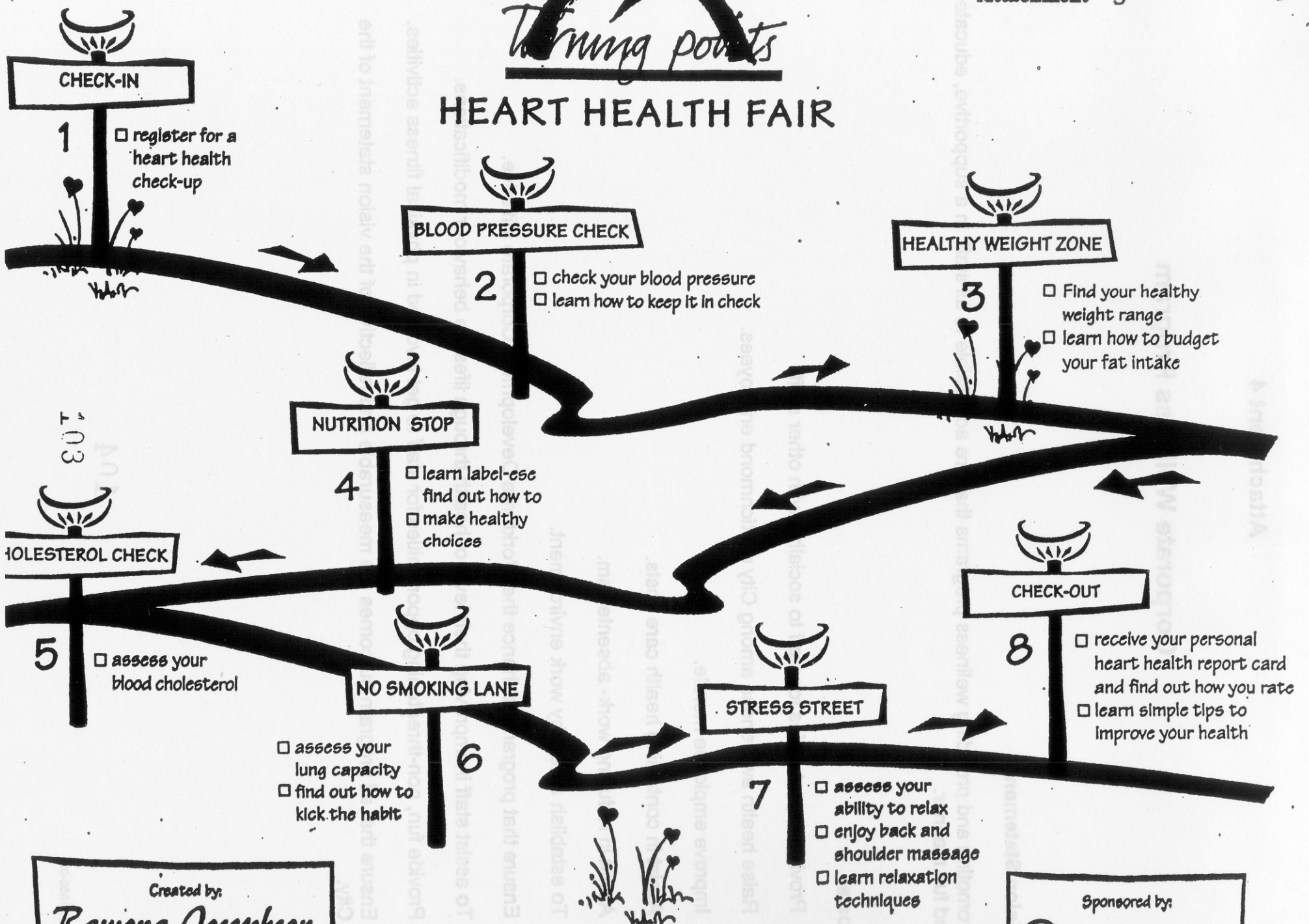
- Wellness Club organized 3 hikes, lunch and a bike ride, and a boat cruise
- Wellness information board is in place at both the Works yard and City Hall.
- Suggestions boxes have been built, staff feedback forms have been created and have been posted.
- A Wellness section has been added to the Applause newsletter (when space permits)
- A Wellness advisory committee has been pulled together and has met 4 times to date.
- A calendar of events for December and January was created and posted.
- A Christmas social and tour of Christmas lights around Richmond took place in December. 30 people attended, many of the participants had never taken part in other Wellness initiatives.
- Presentations were made to interested staff, on information gathered at the Health, Work and Wellness conference, by the staff who had attended the conference. This was followed by an informal social.
- A survey was conducted, to determine the interest level of Works yard staff, for an on-site Wellness facility.
- Estimates from 3 companies have been received for fitness equipment for the new City Hall and the Works yard Employee Wellness facilities.
- A proposal has been discussed with interested community centres, for a group discount on passes for city employees. To date, Thompson, West Richmond and Richmond Aquatic services are interested in participating. This project will come into effect in March.
- A night and one weekend of employee fitness testing took place for those interested in finding out what fitness level they were at.
- Presentation to TAG on the City Hall and Works yard Employee Wellness Facility was made in February
- Development of a vision statement and set of program goals and objectives has been drafted and is currently undergoing revisions by the Wellness Advisory Committee.

Attachment 2 Projects Currently Underway

Task	Completion Date
Lunch time Skate or Swim at Minoru Park	March
Staff report on the Corporate Wellness program and proposed kick-off event	Mid- March
Day of fun on Cypress mountain	March 11
Walleyball league	March - June
Stress management workshop for staff	March
Meet with department managers to talk about their involvement in the program	Mid-March
Have a Wellness topic included in each publication of the Ob-zine magazine	March
Develop a program/club for the inactive	March
Easter special event	April
Grand opening of the City Hall & Works yard Wellness facilities	May
Kick-off event	May or June
Lactating room established in the New City Hall	May
Summer Calendar of events	June
Corporate Challenge and picnic	July
Orienteering and barbecue at Cypress Mountain	September
Contest for staff to name the Employee Wellness Program	September

Turning points

HEART HEALTH FAIR



Created by:
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Make the Turning Points to health today!

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Attachment 4

Corporate Wellness Program

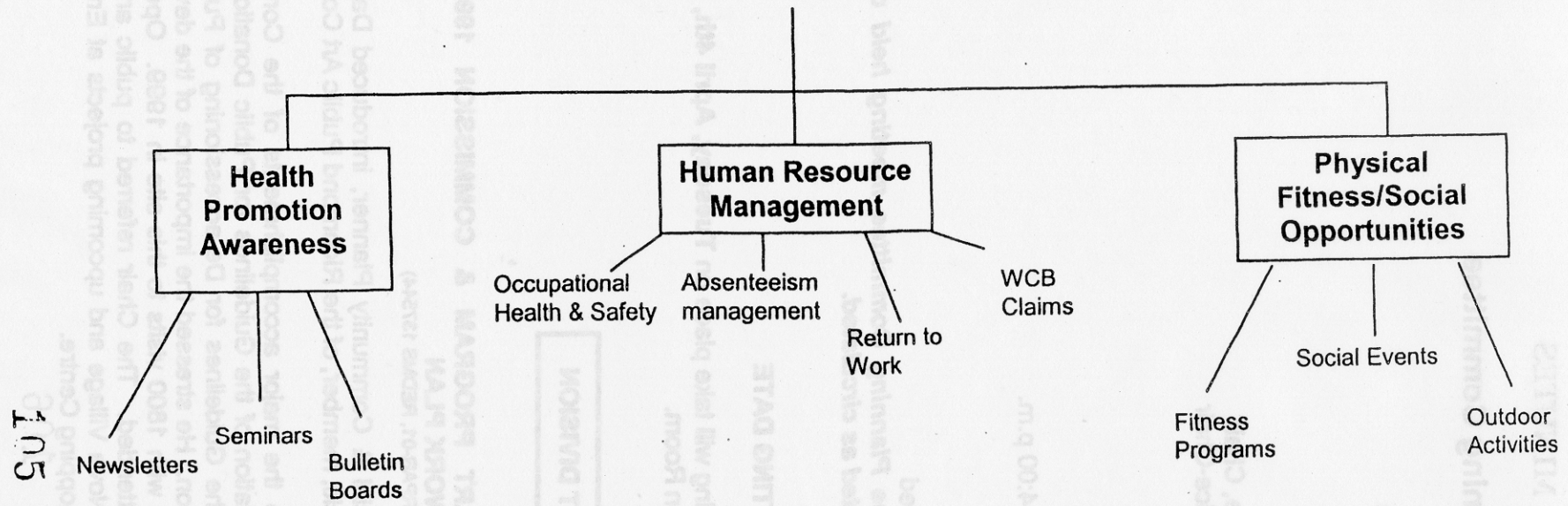
Vision Statement:

Promoting and providing wellness programs that are accessible to all staff, in a supportive, educated and fun manner.

Goals:

1. Provide opportunities for staff to socialize with other staff.
2. Raise health awareness among City of Richmond employees.
3. Improve employee morale.
4. Assist in containing health care costs.
5. Assist in reducing work- absenteeism.
6. To establish a healthy work environment.
7. Ensure that programs enhance the Workforce Development Corporate initiative.
8. To assist staff in improving their level of health through lifestyle behaviour modifications.
9. Provide fun, non-threatening opportunities for staff to get involved in physical fitness activities.
10. Ensure that all program outcomes are measurable and reflective of the vision statement of the City.

Wellness Program Overview



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