

## Health & Wellness (H&W) Programs for CMV Drivers

### **Background**

A study conducted by Wiegand et al. (2009) indicated that obesity in commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers was associated with a higher risk of crashes. Truck drivers routinely spend the majority of their day in the truck cab, between driving and sleeping in the sleeper berth. These long hours can reduce a driver's motivation as well as time for exercise.

CMV drivers are also exposed to a number of physical and psychological stresses during the work day. The irregular work/rest schedules and high-mileage driving can take a toll on the drivers' bodies. Extended time away from home along with commonly driving alone can lead to daily frustrations. Research has shown that these factors can compromise the drivers' decision-making processes and roadway safety, as well as their long-term health.

According to a 2012 Bureau of Labor Statistics report, CMV drivers account for 19 percent of all workplace fatalities and consistently rank among the top three occupations for total nonfatal injuries and illnesses.

### **On the Road Lifestyle**

Current Federal regulations allow truck drivers to spend up to 11 hours per day driving and up to 70 hours driving in an 8-day period. These long driving hours coupled with frequently changing schedules—such as late night or early morning shifts—can lead to an unhealthy lifestyle. Limited access to healthy food options, lack of exercise, and irregular sleeping patterns are common among truck drivers.



### **Health & Wellness (H&W) Program**

Due to the elevated prevalence of overweight and obesity in the transportation industry and the risks that accompany obesity, an H&W program at a leading trucking organization was initiated to reduce obesity and the associated risks. In 2008, Schneider National Inc. (SNI), along with Atlas Ergonomics and United Healthcare (UHC), launched a companywide, voluntary H&W Program with their employees.

# NSTSCE

National Surface Transportation  
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## *NSTSCE Study: Case Study on Worksite Health and Wellness Program for Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers*

### Did You Know?

**Overweight and obesity rates in commercial motor vehicle (CMV) drivers have been reported to range between 56 to 85 percent. This is alarming as these rates far outpace the obesity rate of the general U.S. adult population.**

Since the H&W Program launched in 2008, Atlas and UHC have worked with SNI to offer health and wellness programs, ergonomic and injury prevention services, on-site physical therapy and health screenings, and overall wellness coaching to approximately 17,000 company-insured employees, including commercial drivers, at 15 SNI operating centers across the U.S. and Canada. Employees' spouses are also eligible to enroll in the H&W Program. The purpose of this Case Study was to detail SNI's H&W Program with Atlas Ergonomics and UHC and to evaluate the opinions, perceptions, and program satisfaction of participating drivers and program staff. The findings from this Case Study will aid in the development of recommendations for a carrier-implemented H&W program.

The study concluded that CMV drivers face many barriers and challenges in attaining a healthy lifestyle. Even small, positive health changes, such as limiting soda consumption or incorporating 15 minutes of daily physical activity, can significantly impact health status. Often, small changes snowball into larger changes, which results in goal attainment. Identifying sources of motivation and supporting individualized and manageable goals were identified as predictors of success. A corporate H&W program is only one piece in the larger promotion of healthy living on the road for CMV drivers; however, educating drivers on health and wellness and empowering them to take positive steps toward healthy living using the knowledge and tools they acquire in the H&W Program is a significant move in the right direction.

VTTI, along with participating sponsors Travelers Insurance and Northland Insurance, have created a helpful web-based resource with health tips for CMV drivers. This resource can be found at [www.drivinghealthy.org](http://www.drivinghealthy.org).

#### **Final report:**

Mabry, J. E., Hickman, J., & Hanowski, R. (2013,). Case Study on Worksite Health and Wellness Program for Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers. Retrieved from <http://vtechworks.lib.vt.edu/handle/10919/24207>

#### **Resources:**

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2012). Fatal Occupational Injuries by Occupation and Event or Exposure. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/cfoi.t03.htm>

Wiegand, D.M., Hanowski, R.J., & McDonald,, S.E. (2009). Commercial Motor Vehicle Health and Fatigue Study. Retrieved from [http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/VTTI/reports/Health\\_and\\_Fatigue\\_021109.pdf](http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/VTTI/reports/Health_and_Fatigue_021109.pdf)

