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Contact:
Brittany Thompson, 462-3354
Emily Wickham, 462-6638

FRANKLIN COUNTY RECEIVES NATIONAL EMPLOYEE WELLNESS AWARD

During Tuesday's General Session meeting, Franklin County Commissioners accepted the Apex Award for recognition of the best designed health care employee wellness program in the United States. The award recognizes Franklin County for showing creative and trend-setting solutions to some of the most pressing health care challenges.

Nominated programs were judged on recognition of a pressing health care benefits challenge, innovation and/or leadership in addressing the challenge and demonstration of impact and measurable results.

Judges chose Franklin County because they felt the program is "much more than the traditional wellness program and encompassed many team members in significant ways for execution."

Franklin County's Health and Wellness Program was created to reach county employees at high risk for disease and to help keep healthy employees and their families at low risk. In addition, the program is designed to address rising health care costs for Franklin County and fosters a unique workplace wellness environment that utilizes all possible avenues to reach employees with the message of physical, emotional and spiritual health.

Through creative programming, county employees are offered free or discounted health and fitness classes such as yoga, cardio and aerobic workouts, cooking demonstrations and health screenings and immunizations. The Health and Wellness Program also sponsors a health expo each year with over 70 exhibitors and demonstrations that is available not only to Franklin County employees, but also free to the general public.

In addition, the County offers weekly glucose, blood pressure, cholesterol and pulmonary function screenings and targeted week-long programs focused on men's health, women's health, diabetes management, heart health, family health and self care.

"Franklin County thanks United Healthcare for this unique national honor. As our country seeks health care reform progress, I am proud we are well under way with it here with our employees," said Commissioner Paula Brooks. "Strategic cooperation between labor and management has been key. Prevention is quality health care and this award recognizes that."

“The Health and Wellness Program and Joint Benefits Committee have worked extremely hard to promote the message of physical, emotional and spiritual health,” said Commissioner Marilyn Brown. “Living a healthy and active lifestyle is important and it is great to see so many Franklin County employees utilizing these opportunities.”

“Not only are our employees participating actively in fitness classes and health screenings, but Franklin County residents have the opportunity to have these screenings at the annual Franklin County Health Expo,” said Commissioner John O’Grady. “It is important for everyone to know the status of their health and our Health and Wellness Program does a great job at making that available to everyone.”

Now in its fifth year, the Apex Awards program is sponsored through UnitedHealth Group’s *hub* magazine, a health care publication that examines employers’ and care providers’ best practices in improving access to affordable, quality health care. UnitedHealth Group’s employer customers of all sizes are eligible to apply for an Apex Award, and an independent judging panel, composed of leaders from across the health care industry, selects the winners based on employers’ innovative approaches to specific health care challenges.