

## **A Prestigious Awards Program**

Investing in the health of employees is a win-win situation. Having a workplace wellness program is beneficial for employees and employers. Employees benefit from improved overall health, decreased stress, and reduced illness. Employers benefit from increased productivity, improved morale and decreased absenteeism, prescription costs, and turnover rates. Also, workplace wellness programs improve corporate image as creating a healthy workplace can increase respect and admiration for your company both externally and internally.

The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit and Go For Health Windsor-Essex are pleased to continue to offer the *Working Toward Wellness (WTW)* Healthy Workplace Awards Program. The purpose of this program is to recognize local workplaces that provide comprehensive workplace wellness programming to their employees and their families. These workplaces are leading the way in addressing wellness topics such as tobacco use, nutrition, physical activity, mental health, alcohol and substance abuse, and more, through integrated programming and policy strategies.

Comprehensive workplace wellness programs involve four main strategies.

- ***Awareness building*** – Provide information about the benefits of making healthy choices.
- ***Educational skill building*** - Help individuals to acquire the knowledge, skills and confidence necessary to make healthy lifestyle choices.
- ***Environmental support*** - Create physical and social workplace environments that promote, support, strengthen and enhance healthy behaviours.
- ***Policy support development*** – Have policies in place that help solidify the commitment to and sustainability of the organizations' wellness program and its components.

All workplaces in Windsor-Essex County are eligible to apply for a prestigious *WTW* Healthy Workplace Award. There are a total of eleven award categories ranging from Bronze-Level 1 to Diamond. These categories are designed to encourage new workplaces to create workplace wellness programs and policies while allowing well established workplaces to expand and maintain their current programs and policy initiatives.

The application process is thorough, yet quite simple. Any workplace offering a workplace wellness program between August 1, 2011 and July 31, 2012 can apply for a 2012 Healthy Workplace Award. Obtain a copy of the 2012 *WTW* Healthy Workplace Award Kit at [www.wechealthunit.org](http://www.wechealthunit.org) by clicking on the Workplace Award Kit button on the right hand side. The kit outlines the awards criteria and application process in detail.

For more information on how to develop and implement a wellness program in your workplace or to find out more about the *WTW* Healthy Workplace Awards process, contact the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit at 519-258-2146 ext. 3100. Together we can make our workplaces, families, and community healthier, happier, and more successful.