HEALTHSPAN:

Bridging the Gap in Longevity

What is Healthspan? Why is it Important?

Life expectancies in the USA over the last century have improved dramatically:

![Graph showing life expectancy improvements from 1890 to 2020.]

But people are living more years with non-communicable diseases, like:

- Cardiovascular Diseases
- Diabetes
- Chronic Respiratory Diseases
- Cancer

This has led to an increasing gap between how long people live, their lifespan, and how long they live in good health, their healthspan.

![Chart showing health expectancy and life expectancy at age 65 in the USA.]

This means there is a great need to help ensure that people are not only living longer, but that those additional years are spent in good health.

How to Improve Healthspan

The five central risk factors that have the largest impact on a long and healthy life are:

- Tobacco Use
- High Body-Mass Index
- Poor Diet
- Diabetes
- High Blood Pressure

These risk factors are modifiable through behavioral interventions:

- Quit Smoking
- Physical Activity
- Healthy Diet
- Medication Adherence

Other interventions can also increase healthspan:

- Sleep Hygiene
- Preventative Screenings
- Vaccinations
- Improve Social Engagement
- Cognitive & Mental Health Management
- Increase Sense of Purpose

Benefits of Bridging the Healthspan Gap

These factors tie back to measurable cost savings with 35% of USA healthcare spend in 2016 attributable to modifiable risks among those over age 65.

So, changing behavior can lead to longer lifespan, longer healthspan and lower healthcare costs.

A Framework to Improve Lifestyles and Manage Conditions

To tackle these problems requires multiple parties invested in creating healthy ecosystems.

- Acknowledge
  - Enranged health inequities have led to a large gap between lifespan and healthspan.

- Support
  - Fund research to inform national guidelines, provide federal programming, perform public health surveillance and create evidence-based policy.

- Act
  - Develop interventions and strategies that maximize individual healthspan and account for inequities by improving access to healthcare and healthy lifestyle choices.

Health Promotion

- Workplaces are a key setting for health promotion. Beyond the financial and productivity gains, a commitment to health improvements can be part of a larger goal of corporate social responsibility.

Incentives

- Incentives that utilize well-established behavioral and clinical science principles can have a material impact on health behaviors and outcomes.

Programs

- Appropriate health and wellness programs can create a healthier multi-generational workforce.

Read the Literature Review:

https://www.soa.org/resources/research-reports/2021/healthy-lifestyle-and-retirement/

1 United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

About Vitality

Our core purpose is to make people healthier. With over 20 years of experience and a presence in 30 markets globally, our proven wellbeing platform is designed with an evidence-based approach to drive engagement and improve health outcomes through behavior change. VitalityGroup.com