



**Vitality**  
CASE STUDY

## LEVERAGING SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS TO ENGAGE AND SUPPORT MEMBERS

Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) is an established leader in health sciences education, research, and patient care. Their employee wellness program, BCM BeWell, reflects their longstanding commitment to improving the health and well-being of their employees. BCM's combination of healthcare expertise, focus on wellness at the forefront of employees' lives, and collaboration with the Vitality program has delivered tremendous results in building a culture of health throughout their organization. This culminated in BCM being awarded the prestigious C. Everett Koop Award in 2019. Vitality's Wellness Champs initiative is one of the key strategies BCM BeWell uses to drive engagement and participation in the program, which has been shown to improve health risks across BCM's population significantly.

Wellness Champs serve as peer-to-peer motivators who help organize and coordinate wellness initiatives and educate and influence their peers to live healthy lifestyles. BCM's Wellness Champs originated as an informal network and have since evolved into a customized, Vitality-recommended three-tier model of engagement to ensure that anyone who wants to get involved as a Wellness Champ can do so at a level that works for them. Champs self-select their desired participation tier: the top tier, promoting BCM BeWell activities and facilitating in-person events; the middle tier, spreading the word about existing BCM BeWell activities and

encouraging participation; or the bottom tier, learning about the Champs program and how they can get more involved in the future. By offering a three-tier approach to engagement, any employee who wants to get involved can do so without job responsibilities and time constraints acting as barriers to participation.



To maximize engagement for employees who work in clinics outside the main Houston location, the BCM BeWell team sought to identify employees who are highly engaged with BCM BeWell activities and invite them to become Wellness Champs. These individuals help spread the word about BCM BeWell across the large organization. Further, BCM BeWell encourages employees of all ages and job levels, from new employees to C-suite executives, to consider becoming Wellness Champs. To date, BCM has recruited and supported approximately 100 Wellness Champs across all levels of the organization and multiple BCM locations to reach a broader demographic and expand their reach.

According to Jesse Gavin, Wellness Director at BCM, Champs are now a fundamental driver of engagement across the company.



**We have onsite activities, challenges, and presentations. Champs help to promote everything we do – literally, everything. We ask people how they heard about certain events, and Champs are always one of the primary avenues.”**

Of particular importance is getting inclusive engagement in the program, and BCM BeWell achieves this through its diverse representation among Wellness Champs. While one might expect that Wellness Champs are athletes in peak physical condition, many of the most effective and passionate Wellness Champs are those who have overcome personal health challenges or are currently managing a health condition. These Champs demonstrate that engaging in wellness activities is important regardless of your health journey. They often inspire others facing similar challenges to participate and work toward becoming healthier.



While the central role of the Wellness Champs is to drive engagement in wellness activities, they also serve an essential role in supporting members by acting as gatekeepers of information. They help members access the right resources, such as mental health support, within the BeWell program and the greater Baylor community.

While the pandemic shifted to more virtual activities and events, the BCM BeWell team hopes that the Wellness Champs will help foster social connections by developing mutual interest groups to unite people. With hybrid work environments here to stay, the Wellness Champs play an even more important role going forward in reaching employees across the organization.

