

Stretching for injury prevention ... and a Chairman's Award!

Author: test

In the lead-up to this year's Chairman's Awards ceremony in London on 23 June, we are interviewing our finalists to learn more about their projects and what it means to reach the final.

The awards recognize and celebrate the efforts of employees who have gone above and beyond their day jobs.

The Health and Wellbeing category recognizes employees for best practices or behaviors that improve the mental and physical wellbeing of their colleagues. Our US Health and Wellbeing finalist is the fit for work early intervention pilot in Massachusetts.

Jeffrey Merritt, Director, Operations Overhead, Baystate South, MA

What can you tell us about your project?

Soft tissue injuries make up over half the reported injuries at National Grid in the US. The fit for work early intervention pilot identifies and treats symptoms of workplace injuries before they get serious. Athletic trainers come into our area to help with our day to day stretching and where somebody has a soft tissue injury during their work day, provide them with first aid treatment. They also give employees tools to prevent injury and immediate help if they get hurt working in the field, including a follow up plan for them to prevent recurrence of injury in the future.

What does it mean to reach the final of the Chairman's Awards?

It was quite a bit of work to get the 'fit for work' program in place and running. It took a lot of dedicated people. During the pilot, it was very evident there would be a benefit to our co-workers with this program. I'm happy enough that 'fit for work' is an answer to reducing our OSHA recordables, but it's icing on the cake to be nominated for a Chairman's Award.

What are you most looking forward to about the ceremony in London on 23 June?

I'm looking forward to seeing the other finalists' projects and I'm looking forward to the event itself. I've never been across the pond, so it will be a great experience for

myself and the others.

Anything else you'd like add?

This was truly a team project. No one person should be credited with the success. 'Fit for work' is for everyone and involves everyone; unions, management, gas and electric etc.

It took a lot of support and faith from our leadership to start the program, and a lot of support from the unions and supervisors to make it all possible.

In my opinion, this is one of the few programs that positively impacts ALL of our employees.

The theme we are working towards is getting to a healthy retirement. Along the way, we also recognized that there were a lot of benefits day to day for our folks and that's what allowed this program to take on a life of its own.

Everyone on the team recognized the benefits very quickly. They worked with other areas outside of their own, so they too could take advantage of the program.

I am very proud of all of the work the entire group did and continue to do. I believe in my heart that this is absolutely a great program for our employees and for our company. Everyone wins.

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