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## HEALTH CARE

# Outsourcing firm offers assortment of wellness options to its employees

By LINDA M. CORISDEO  
Special to the Business Journal

I am writing in response to the article on how Volvo-Mack motivates their workforce to adopt healthy habits in the Nov. 26 issue of the Business Journal. At the end of the article you had asked for other companies to provide you with innovative ways to motivate employees to live healthier lifestyles.

Berkheimer Outsourcing has several programs in place to assist and encourage our employees to live healthier lives.

As an alternative to the Blue Cross PPO health plan offered to employees, Berkheimer offers an H.S.A. health plan. (H.S.A. stands for health savings account.) The H.S.A. plan was designed to get employees thinking about their health care and the choices they make. It has built-in rewards — employees are able to make contributions to their H.S.A. account, in addition to the nominal amount that the company contributes, and the healthier the employee is the more interest is earned on the account and the more the balance builds.

The funds are completely owned by the employee for use on medical expenses. Additionally, the unused funds roll over from year to year and earn interest tax-free.

At age 65, any remaining funds can be used to supplement income for the employee as well.

In addition to the alternative health plan options, Berkheimer offers several different health-focused programs to our employees.

- Berkheimer offered a WalkingWorks program through Blue Cross for employees as a friendly competition to encourage a healthier lifestyle through regular exercise. WalkingWorks is a program sponsored by Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association in partnership with the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, as a campaign to

help Americans live healthier lives by helping them set and achieve personal walking goals.

Our company encourages employees to participate in the WalkingWorks program, which gives each employee access to the Blue Cross Web site to create their own personal health account to keep track of their personal goals, weight loss goals, etc. This year Berkheimer had 140 of our employees participating in the program, which is about 28 percent of our entire workforce!

- This year the company paid for on-site health screenings offered to employees to test cholesterol/glucose levels, body fat and blood pressure. Berkheimer had 86 employees participate in the screenings, which were done by Coordinated Health on two separate dates.

- Berkheimer hosts on-site Weight Watchers meetings in our Bangor office once a week with the company paying for half the cost for each employee who participates.

- A smoking cessation program was offered in 2007 for employees to encourage a healthier lifestyle.

In 2008 our company plans to offer many of the same programs to encourage healthier lifestyles and is looking into additional wellness options as well. We hope to make some decisions in the beginning of the year to have the full wellness program scheduled for the remainder of the year.

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*The information in this article was collected with the assistance of the Human Resources team at Temp Poole Inc., which handles the Human Resources function for the Berkheimer family of companies.*