

# INCREASING AWARENESS AND UTILIZATION OF UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES BY KENT STATE UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES: AN EMPLOYEE HEALTH INITIATIVE

*Final Report of the Employee Health Planning Committee*  
• March 2012 •

## Introduction



University Health Services (UHS), located in the DeWeese Health Center on the Kent Campus, primarily provides non-emergency outpatient care to eligible students. Services include treatment for acute illness and minor injuries, immunizations, women's health care, x-ray, physical therapy and an on-site pharmacy. UHS offers these same services to faculty and staff and would like to see an increase in utilization of services by employees.

In late August 2011, Vice Presidents Willis Walker and Greg Jarvie convened and charged the Employee Health Planning Committee (EHPC) -- comprised of members from the Divisions of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs (EMSA), Human Resources (HR), and University Relations (UR) -- to assess the benefits to employees of using UHS services, to develop a plan to increase employee awareness and utilization of UHS, and to make appropriate recommendations.

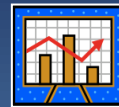
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## Strategic Alignment

Support and promote the health and well-being of the university community through the implementation of strategic and comprehensive health and wellness approaches (Human Resources Strategic Goal 6.4.2).

Formalize, market and move forward with a more comprehensive program of employee health services (Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, University Health Services 2011-2012 Goals and Objectives, VIII-A).

## Executive Summary

**ground floor n. 2. Informal.** The beginning of a venture, esp. as a position of advantage

### Background

In calendar year 2010, Kent State University spent \$34.7M in health care for its 3,361 benefits-eligible employees. For 2011, the total cost for group health insurance was unofficially \$37.8M, an increase of 6.8%. To strengthen the University's healthcare cost containment efforts and further enhance services to employees, the Vice Presidents for EMSA and HR formed the Employee Health Planning Committee in August 2011. The Committee was charged to examine avenues to promote University Health Services (UHS) as a more prominent healthcare provider for full and part-time faculty and staff from all eight campuses; though service offerings would be concentrated on Kent Campus employees given the DeWeese Health Center's location.

Beginning in September 2011, the Committee met every two weeks and analyzed related data from Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield, Medical Mutual of Ohio, and University Health Services to establish baselines and set appropriate utilization goals. The Committee also reviewed professional standards and emerging trends. During October and November 2011, the Committee designed and administered a survey to University employees regarding their awareness of UHS services and their interest or willingness to use such services (see **Appendix 1**). Both quantitative and qualitative data were received from the more than 670 survey respondents. Finally, the Committee reviewed the current state of UHS as an employee health provider, determined capacity potential (at current staffing levels), identified the specific healthcare services that would be more fully advertised and made available to University employees, outlined various communication initiatives, and determined applicable outcome measures.

### Foreground

Currently, UHS operates in the DeWeese Health Center -- a 37,896-square foot, three-floor facility -- located at 1500 Eastway Drive, and is certified with the State of Ohio as a Workers' Compensation provider. Over the past three years, UHS has averaged 170 annual Workers' Compensation visits and 22,124 patient visits. Both employee insurances (Medical Mutual of Ohio and Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield) are accepted at UHS and uninsured employees can be billed using a discounted "self-pay rate." UHS has evening hours on Mondays and Thursdays for scheduled appointments and an online appointment scheduler that will be made available to employees. Additionally, UHS has recently redesigned selected areas within the DeWeese Health Center to more effectively address the anticipated increased traffic. In brief, the Committee determined UHS has the capacity for an additional 200 appointments per month at current hours and staffing levels.

### Groundwork

Human Resources Benefits expects increases in healthcare costs to continue in the coming years (see **Appendix 2**). The University has self-funded insurance plans (i.e., the University pays the portion of any healthcare services not covered by the employee). Since UHS is already a health provider for the University, payment arrangements for services at UHS are in place. To continue to improve health and wellness-related services to employees, Human Resources -- with the support, collaboration, and existing expertise of selected University departments and areas -- is laying the groundwork for a more comprehensive, robust, and proactive Wellness program.

After four months of research, collaboration, and discussion, the EHPC presents this final report which contains related recommendations to increase employee awareness and utilization of University Health Services, thereby directly benefitting individual employee health, unit work productivity, and ongoing institutional cost containment efforts.

**ground squirrel n.** Any of several burrowing or terrestrial squirrels of the genus *Citellus* or *Spermophilus*



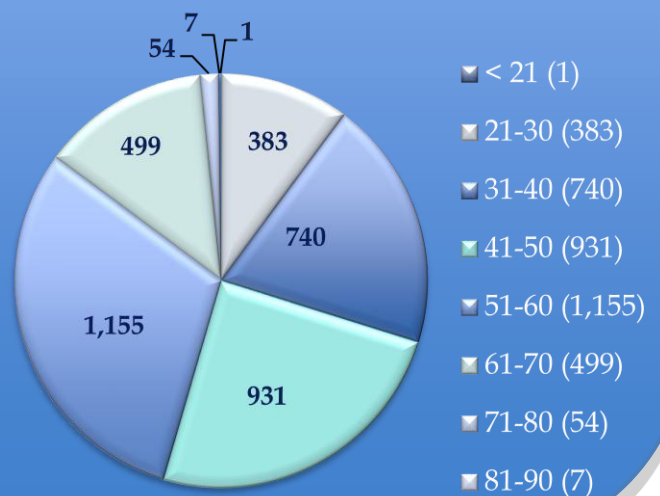
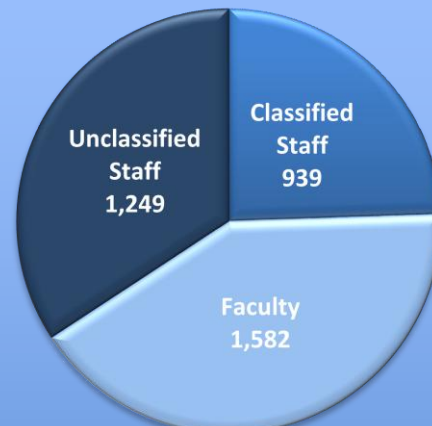
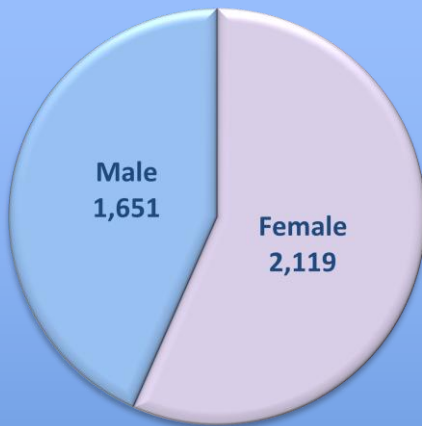
## Employee Health Initiative Goals

1. Identify the **advantages** and benefits of increasing employee use of UHS, both for individual faculty and staff members and the University as a whole.
2. Assess the **feasibility** of expanding UHS services for employees.
3. Identify the specific **services** to be offered to employees.
4. Determine **capacity** potential.
5. Establish an efficient **process** for handling increased patient volume.
6. Develop a **marketing** and communications plan, including timeline.
7. Identify **outcome measures**.
8. **Report** on the Committee's findings, including recommendations.

### Kent State University Employee Profile

Kent Campus, December 16, 2011

N=3,770



*"I have been to the health center many times and have had excellent care each time."  
(October 2011 Employee Survey)*

## Advantages and Benefits of Using UHS

The use of University Health Services by Kent State employees has a number of advantages, including:

- Convenience – online appointment scheduling, centrally located, adjacent parking
- Quality medical care from experienced, board-certified physicians and licensed nurse practitioners
- Direct insurance billing to Medical Mutual of Ohio, Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield and other major medical insurance providers
- Discounted/reasonable self-pay rates for uninsured employees
- Same-day appointments (in most cases)
- Wide range of services beyond routine medical appointments – flu shot clinics, women's health, physical therapy, immunizations, preventive health screenings, blood tests, x-rays, and an on-site pharmacy
- Hours of operation currently include lunch hours and evenings on Mondays and Thursdays
- Lower cost healthcare alternative
- Reduction in time away from work
- Opportunity for online appointment scheduling
- Confidentiality of (electronic) medical records
- Continuity of care (employee may choose a UHS clinician to serve as her/his primary care provider)

*"It's really not promoted well to [employees]...*

*Do they even take our health plans?"*

*"It will be good if we can see a doctor at the health center, especially for the women's clinic."  
(October 2011 Employee Survey)*

In addition to the above-noted advantages for employees in making greater use of UHS, a broadened Employee Health Initiative carries certain potential institutional benefits [and is in accord with Human Resources' Strategic Goal 6.4.2] including cost containment, improved productivity, reduced lost work time, and a more positive work environment. In brief, expanded quality and convenient health services for employees can enhance the University's well-established and highly-regarded program of employee benefits and services.



## Certification and Accreditation



University Health Services' clinical staff members are licensed, board-certified physicians and nurse practitioners who are trained to diagnose, treat and write prescriptions for a variety of acute illnesses. Clinicians are supported by qualified nursing personnel and other experienced ancillary staff members.



University Health Services has earned accreditation status from the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC) for four consecutive three-year periods beginning in 2001. AAAHC accreditation is recognition of University Health Services' demonstrated and documented commitment to quality health care in the following areas: patient care, quality improvement, clinical records, pharmaceutical services, laboratory services, x-ray, psychological counseling and health education.

## Services Offered to Employees

A wide range of medical services is currently provided to Kent State students and employees by the UHS professional staff. These services include:

- Primary Care
  - Treatment of acute, short-term medical illnesses and injuries
  - Treatment of chronic medical conditions
  - Routine medical check-ups/wellness examinations/physicals
- Pre-employment physicals
- Women's Health
- Preventive Health Screenings\*
- Immunizations, including flu, travel, and other vaccinations
- Care for Workers' Comp injuries – state certified
- Occupational Health
- Allergy and Medication Injections
- Pharmacy
  - New prescriptions
  - Prescription refills
  - Consultation
- Laboratory Services
- Radiology Services (X-ray)
- Physical Therapy
- Nutrition Counseling
- Smoking Cessation Programs
- Bone Density Screenings
- 24-Hour Nurse Line
- Coordination of Care and Case Management



\* For a complete listing of health screenings recommended by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, August 2010, see **Appendix 3**.

## Employee Awareness and Utilization Survey: Key Results

A 13-item survey designed to assess Kent State University employees' awareness and potential utilization of UHS as a healthcare provider was administered in October and November 2011. The on-line survey yielded both quantitative and qualitative data from 676 respondents, 70% of whom were female and 98% of whom worked on the Kent Campus.

*"Thanks for sending out this survey. I have been a KSU employee for 12 years and I did not know the health services are available for Kent State University employees and accept KSU insurance policies!"*

Approximately two-thirds of the respondents indicated awareness of UHS services for employees, though only 47% had ever used UHS for healthcare services. Given that 87% indicated a willingness to use UHS in the future, there exists a clear utilization growth potential among KSU employees for on-site employee health services.

*"I am grateful for the information that this survey provided me – I had no idea the health center services were available to faculty."*

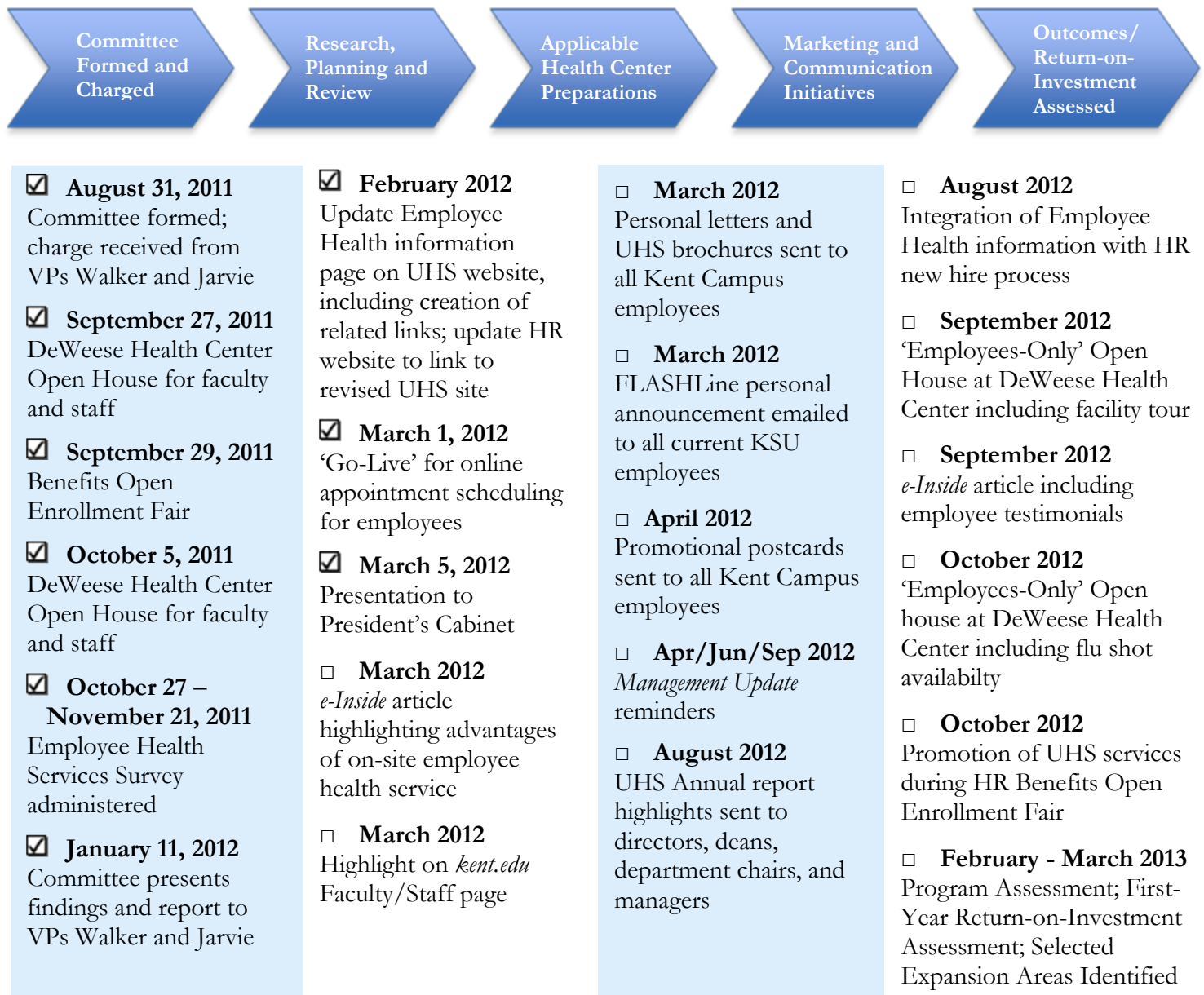
Among those who had used UHS in the past, convenience was indicated by 82% of survey respondents as the major reason for their decision. Nearly half (48%) of respondents indicated their preference to maintain their current healthcare provider (physician) as a reason they had not utilized UHS in the past.

*"Who knew? While I plan to stay with my doctor, some of the services on your checklist would be useful to me and many others."*

Complete survey results, including all 309 open-ended comments, can be found in **Appendix 1**.



## Timeline



*“I would love to be able to see a campus doctor or nurse when I have a sinus infection or ‘bug’ and get the prescription I need, instead of having to travel to Akron to my PCP!”*

*(October 2011 Employee Survey)*

*“I think it would be excellent and was not aware of this resource for employees. Better advertisement would be helpful as well as a variety of hours available to staff.”*

*(October 2011 Employee Survey)*

## 2012 Planned Marketing and Communication Initiatives to Increase Awareness and Utilization of University Health Services

Ref.	Marketing Piece/Task	Timing	Qty	Audience	Cost	Status
<b>Spring Semester 2012</b>						
<b>1</b>	Creation of 'Employee' link on UHS website to include services provided, employee FAQ's, 'UHS Employee Health Initiative' PowerPoint, links to UHS on-line scheduling system and HR Benefits Worker's Compensation page	February	NA	Current Employees	\$0	Need to create links and develop insurance-related FAQ's
<b>2</b>	<i>e-Inside</i> article introducing Employee Health	March	NA	Current Employees	\$0	Need to schedule and draft
<b>3</b>	Highlight on <i>kent.edu</i> Faculty/Staff page	March	NA	Current Employees	\$0	Need to schedule and draft
<b>4</b>	UHS brochure* + individually-addressed letters from Vice President and Director of UHS	March	3,800	Kent Campus Employees	\$5,400	Update if necessary and distribute
<b>5</b>	<i>FlashLine</i> Personal Announcement	March	NA	Current Employees	\$0	Need to schedule and draft
<b>6</b>	Reminder postcards reflecting UHS services, hours of operation, and advantages of employee health	April	5,000	Current Employees	\$330	Need to draft, print and distribute
<b>7</b>	Giveaway Item(s) (notepad and/or magnet)	TBD	6,000	New and Current Employees	\$1,560	Need to select item(s), order and distribute
<b>8</b>	<i>Management Update</i> reminders	April June September	NA	Managers	\$0	Need to schedule and draft
<b>Fall Semester 2012</b>						
<b>9</b>	UHS Annual Report Executive Summary/Highlights	August	200+	Administrators (e.g., directors, deans, chairs, managers)	\$200	Complete report and distribute highlights document
<b>10</b>	UHS brochure and giveaway in New Hire information packets	August-ongoing	Use existing supply	New Employees	\$0	Need to arrange for inclusion in new hire packets
<b>11</b>	<i>e-Inside</i> Employee Health article to coincide with start of Fall Semester	September	NA	Current Employees	\$0	Need to schedule and draft
<b>12</b>	'Employees-Only' Open Houses at DeWeese Health Center, including facility tours, flu shots	September and October	NA	Current Employees	\$500	Need to select dates, organize, and advertise
<b>Total Estimated Cost:</b>					<b>\$7,990</b>	

\* See **Appendix 4** for UHS brochure and other sample promotional materials.

## Health Center Capacity

### CLINICIAN/APPOINTMENT CAPACITY

Maximum Appointments  
[Academic Year] by month =  
1,929

[5.9 FTE clinicians x 327  
appointments]

Maximum Appointments  
[Break Periods] by month =  
915

[2.8 FTE clinicians x 327  
appointments]

### CAPACITY

At current levels  
of staffing, UHS  
will be able to  
accommodate an  
**additional 200**  
appointments per  
month during the  
academic year.



*"I think it's great that Health Services allows  
employees to use their facility. I guess I just  
forget to use it."*

*(October 2011 Employee Survey)*

### Staffing

UHS Clinician Staffing:  
(During Academic Year)

**3.2 FTE** Board-Certified Physicians  
(M.D.'s or D.O.'s)

**2.7 FTE** Licensed Nurse Practitioners

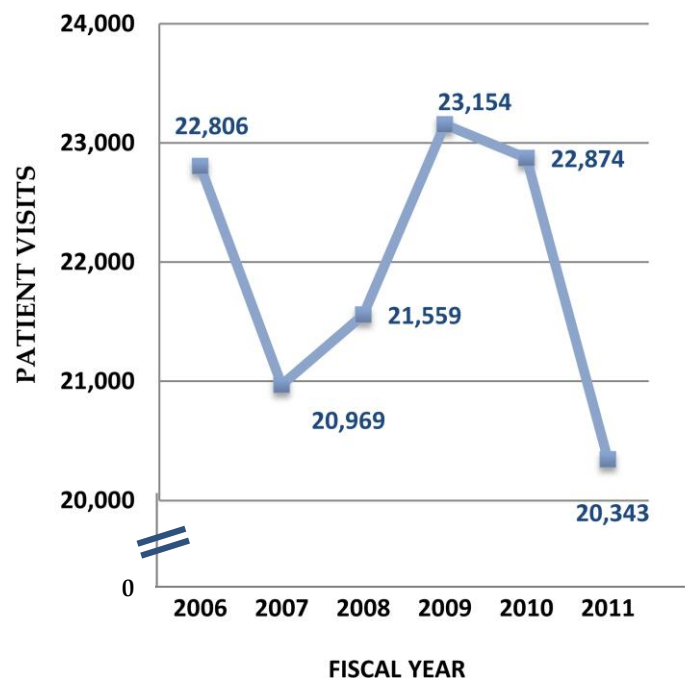
**5.9 FTE** TOTAL Available Clinicians

### University Health Services Hours of Operation

Mon	8 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Tues	8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Wed	9:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Thurs	8 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Fri	8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
<b>47.5</b>	<b>Total Health Center Clinic hours per week</b>

*Walk-ins are accepted.  
Appointments by phone or on-line.*

### University Health Services Total Patient Visits Fiscal Years 2006-11





## The Facility

Built in 1969, the Arville O. DeWeese Health Center is centrally-located on the Kent Campus. The three-floor facility encompasses 37,896 square feet. The medical services area has 15 medical exam rooms, four women's health exam rooms, one procedure room and a pharmacy. With convenient adjacent parking, the DeWeese Health Center not only houses UHS, but is also home to Student Accessibility Services, Physical Therapy, a College of Public Health research laboratory (all located on the ground floor), and University Psychological Services and the Office of Health Promotion (both located on the second floor). For a more detailed overview of the DeWeese Health Center, see **Appendix 5**.

Recent facility improvements include:

- Remodeled check-in, billing, waiting, triage, and X-ray areas (2010, 2011)
- Total remodeling of laboratory services area (2011)
- 100% wireless (2011)
- Creation of College of Public Health research laboratory (2010)

Planned facility renovations include:

- Front entrance/canopy/signage/landscaping re-design (2012)
- Creation of an east side, ground-level and ADA-compliant entrance/reception area for Student Accessibility Services (2012)



DeWeese Health Center  
Kent Campus

## A Brief Review of the Related Literature

To better understand the context of Kent State's Employee Health Initiative in relation to the existence of similar programs at other colleges and universities, the Committee performed a number of Google® searches and reviewed the results of the Southern College Health Association's Fall 2011 Sunbelt Survey. A major finding from the Sunbelt Survey involved the emerging trend among college health centers to provide employee health services.

While there is an increasing amount of both academic and industry literature on employee health programs in the past five years, the Committee found a paucity of articles on evidence-based programs and return-on-investment/cost savings research. The October 7, 2011 Custom Research Brief of The Advisory Board Company, "Providing On-Site, Non-Specialty Health Services to Employees" (**Appendix 6**), cites the difficulty in tracking overall cost savings as a result of offering health services directly to college or university employees. The Advisory Board Company's report concluded that "...most contacts state that on-site health services are considered an investment in employee benefits instead of direct cost-savings mechanisms" (p. 6).

The Committee also reviewed general employee health programs and examined best practice recommendations from related professional organizations, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's *Workplace Health Promotion*, U.S. Preventive Service Task Force, the American College Health Association's *Healthy Campus*, and the Wellness Council of America.

*"I have found this a convenient service that minimizes the time I need to be away from the office for treatment of minor health issues."  
(October 2011 Employee Survey)*

## Noteworthy UHS Facts...

- ❖ Earned four consecutive full, three-year accreditations from the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC), 2001 - 2013
- ❖ Full conversion to electronic medical record system (MEDICAT) for coding, medical notes, billing, etc.
- ❖ Accepts and directly bills both major Kent State University employee insurances (Medical Mutual of Ohio and Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield)
- ❖ Offers reasonable, discounted self-pay rates for uninsured employees
- ❖ State of Ohio-certified as a Workers' Compensation provider
- ❖ All clinicians are licensed and Board-certified by the State of Ohio in their fields
- ❖ Served as Incident Command for three campus-wide public health emergencies (2006, 2008, and 2009)
- ❖ Has maintained an average score of 3.49 out of a possible 4.0 for patient satisfaction throughout the past four years (see Appendix 7)



## Did you know...

### During fiscal year 2010-11, University Health Services ...

- ... handled 20,343 patient appointments
- ... filled 12,704 prescriptions
- ... provided care for 182 employees with work-related injuries
- ... provided service to 1,023 KSU employees
- ... provided approximately 1,500 seasonal flu shots to faculty and staff of the Kent and Regional Campuses
- ... as an auxiliary unit, provided \$170,000 of full tuition coverage for UHS employees and their dependents
- ... served as a clinical training site for KSU graduate and undergraduate students in nursing, medicine, pharmacy, physical therapy and health promotion
- ... worked with a number of academic programs in the research and writing of grants
- ... provided adjunct faculty members for the Colleges of Nursing, Public Health, Education, Health and Human Services, as well as the Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED)
- ... strengthened working relationships with local and regional Boards of Health

See **Appendix 8** for additional UHS information.

## UHS Budget Highlights



- Converted from Educational and General (E&G) to auxiliary status in FY2004
- Total current operating budget of \$4.3M of which \$3.1M is derived from student fees (tuition allocation) and \$1.2M from departmental revenues.
- Average year-end (June 30) budget performance since conversion to auxiliary status (FY2004) -- the past eight fiscal years -- is a **\$126,878** favorable balance.

## Recommendations

In addition to a Spring Semester 2012 roll-out of an Employee Health Initiative focused on increased utilization of UHS, the EHPC discussed potential healthcare service expansion areas that could make good ‘business sense’ for Kent State University over the next two to four years. The Committee recommends that the following University Health Services-related areas be further explored:

- Expanded **pharmaceutical** services by UHS, including increased usage of generics;
- **Incentives** for employees who use UHS services and/or participate in University-established employee wellness programs;
- Expanded **case management** (consultation and provider collaboration) services for employees;
- Expansion of **eligibility** for services to include employee spouses and dependents as well as Kent State University retirees; and
- **Mental health** services for employees.

The Committee also reviewed the University’s escalating group health insurance costs for employees (see **Appendix 2**) and discussed apparent benefits—including maintaining dollars within the university—of strengthening workforce health and wellness strategies. While beyond the immediate scope of the Committee’s charge, certain recommendations evolved from Committee discussions, including:

- Stress **inter-departmental collaborations** and make greater use of **institutional expertise** in identifying, developing, promoting, and implementing employee wellness programs;
- Continue, in full or part, many of the **wellness program concepts and recommendations** put forth in the Division of Human Resources’ July 2010 ‘State of the University’s Health Management Strategy’ (see **Appendix 9**); and
- Reconvene the **Health Management Planning Committee** (as constituted in the July 2010 report) collectively representing numerous decades of health and wellness expertise and inter-Division membership—two key elements of long-term success.



## Employee Health Planning Committee Members

**Amelie Anderson**, Director, HRIS Records & Support Svcs/Assistant to an Executive Officer, Human Resources  
**Angela DeJulius**, Chief University Physician, University Health Services  
**John Gosky**, Executive Director, Administration, Enrollment Management and Student Affairs  
**Karen Mercer**, Director, Marketing Research and Strategy, University Communications and Marketing  
**David Ochmann**, Associate Counsel, Office of General Counsel  
**Mary Reeves**, Director, University Health Services and Student Accessibility Services, University Health Services  
**Loretta Shields**, Director, Benefits and Compliance, Human Resources  
**Carla Wyckoff**, Manager, Communications, Human Resources and Office of General Counsel

# Appendices

- Appendix 1 : Employee Health Services Survey and Survey Results
  - Appendix 2 : KSU Health Plan Cost Trend, 2006 - 2012
  - Appendix 3 : U.S. Preventive Services Task Force: Recommended Health Screenings
  - Appendix 4 : Sample University Health Services Promotional Materials
  - Appendix 5 : DeWeese Health Center Facility Overview
  - Appendix 6 : The Advisory Board Company, Washington, D.C. (2011, October). Providing On-Site, Non-Specialty Health Services to Employees. *Custom Research Brief*.
  - Appendix 7 : University Health Services Patient Satisfaction Survey
  - Appendix 8 : University Health Services: A Brief Overview
  - Appendix 9 : Human Resources' "State of the University's Health Management Strategy: July 12, 2010"
  - Appendix 10 : UHS Employee Health Initiative *PowerPoint* Presentation, March 2012
-