

**“WELLNESS BOOT CAMPSM”
HELPS COMPANIES INCREASE PROFITS**

As health-care costs increase for Hawaii businesses, Local company offers timely workshop for squeezing more returns out of mandatory employer-sponsored health insurance costs

HONOLULU, Hawaii July 1, 2009 – Hawaii’s own Benchmark Wellness LLC is offering its “Wellness Boot Camp” for the first time in Honolulu on July 9th; the same workshop that has enjoyed popularity among companies across the U.S. looking to arrest the costs associated with employee health.

Recent statistics point out that 95% of every health care dollar is spent on treating illnesses *after* they occur. Is an ounce of prevention really worth a pound of cure? Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa thinks so, as do many other proponents of worksite wellness programs, including President Obama who is calling for prevention to play a large part of U.S. health care reform. To be sure, seventy-five percent of health care costs can be attributed to five chronic conditions that are largely preventable: heart disease, diabetes, obesity, prostate cancer, and breast cancer.

Skyrocketing health care costs – including insurance premiums, co-payments and prescription drugs – weigh heavily on Hawaii families and businesses. With the cost of healthcare slated to at least double by 2016, employers are scrambling to find ways to mitigate the blow to their bottom line: for every \$1 an employee spends on medical and/or pharmacy costs, employers suffer an estimated \$3 to \$6 in health-related productivity losses. Kailua-based Benchmark Wellness aims to help local companies turn that equation around. And it’s possible—according to the Wellness Councils of America, a \$1 investment in wellness programs saves \$3 in health care costs.

“Only if done right,” says Deanna Moncrief, Principal and Founder of Benchmark Wellness. “Employers have to approach wellness programs delicately, making sure not to start with a cookie-cutter collection of initiatives only to see initial participation wane in the following months,” she adds. “Too often, I’ve seen companies launch a new program without really studying what will work for them, what their employees really need or want, and without benchmarking their goals against other programs that work, and that usually leads to failure and employee disloyalty,” Moncrief says.

Benchmark Wellness is Hawaii’s first private wellness company and provides services such as business health and wellness audits, custom wellness program design and training workshops. The company is offering its “Wellness Boot Camp” workshop on Thursday July 9, 2009 for the first time in Hawaii. Typically for human resources professionals (the workshop awards 6.0 HR continuing education credits), others who have attended include wellness coordinators, CEOs, CFOs, and insurance benefits consultants. To register before July 6th, call (877) 538-5797 or visit <http://www.BenchmarkWellness.com>.

CONTACT:

Deanna Moncrief

Deanna@benchmarkwellness.com