

February Well Aware eNews

Welcome to the February issue of the *Well Aware eNews*! Read on to learn about—

- this month's wellness champion—who used the support of her coworkers and team to win a Lifestyle Award during the *Go for the Gold* physical activity challenge;
- this month's seminar/webinar from Cigna where you will receive an overview of heart disease, including its symptoms and ways to prevent it;
- an update to diabetes management program requirements;
- another chance to Quit for Good;
- how sleep needs change over a person's lifetime; and
- more!



Don't Miss It

This month's free seminar/webinar—Take it to Heart

Be better informed with this invaluable overview of heart disease, its symptoms, and ways to prevent it.

Wednesday, February 15, 2017
 10:00–11:00 a.m.
 Bethesda Bus Depot
 10901 Westlake Drive
 Rockville, Maryland 20852

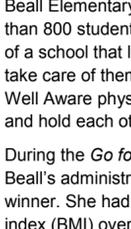
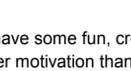
Thursday, February 23, 2017
 10:00–11:00 a.m.
 Randolph Bus Depot
 1800 Randolph Road
 Silver Spring, Maryland 20902

Thursday, February 23, 2017
 4:00–5:00 p.m.
 Webinar

Please register for the seminar or webinar by e-mailing **Well Aware** with the date and time you plan to attend. If you register for the webinar, you will receive a link in your Outlook e-mail as well as an Outlook calendar reminder.

Spread the word with our **printable flyer**. See the **Wellness Webinar Library**.

Presented by:



Wellness Champion: Changes Her Lifestyle for the Win

Gina Gill, administrative secretary, Beall Elementary School

Beall Elementary School is a busy school with more than 800 students. To keep up with the daily demands of a school that large, Beall staff know they must first take care of themselves. They regularly team up for Well Aware physical activity challenges to help motivate and hold each other accountable.

During the *Go for the Gold* challenge last fall, Gina Gill, Beall's administrative secretary, was a Lifestyle Change winner. She had the greatest decrease in body mass index (BMI) over the course of the 10-week challenge. She credits her success to the support of her team. Her motivation to change her lifestyle came not only from her coworkers but from her family.

"Personally, for me, I decided to get more serious about my health and wellness after the birth of my 10th grandchild," Gina said. "I want to be around for a long time for them!"

Gina's team, the Beall Dragons, credits the challenge website as part of the reason they stay motivated. During *Go for the Gold*, they enjoyed checking the website to see where their team was in the challenge standing board or in tracking their BMI changes in the weight loss tracker.

As challenge veterans, Gina and her team have some advice for others participating in the challenges.

"If you are looking for a great way to improve your health and have some fun, create a team and participate in the challenge," Gina said. "There is no greater motivation than living a healthy life. Winning prizes for our school has been an incredible benefit of working together and improving ourselves."

Gina recommends that challenge participants ask their teammates for support and encouragement when they need it.

"We support each other and continue to push each other to the maximum," Gina said. "My team is always there when I need that extra motivation to keep pushing."

Did You "Go Red" Today?

As announced in last week's issue of *The Bulletin*, the American Heart Association (AHA) is holding its yearly National Wear Red Day today, **Friday, February 3, 2017**, to call attention to heart disease.

According to AHA, "Heart disease and stroke cause 1 in 3 deaths among women each year, killing approximately one woman every 80 seconds." It doesn't have to be that way however; AHA tells us that "80 percent of cardiac and stroke events may be prevented with education and action."

Even if you didn't wear red today, you can "Go Red!" at any time by knowing your cardiovascular risk; take action now to live a longer, healthier life.

Do your part to educate yourself, your friends, and your family this year. Join the movement to end heart disease and stroke in women because it's not just a man's disease. Let's *all* Go Red!

G: Get Your Numbers

O: Own Your Lifestyle

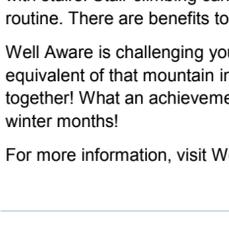
R: Realize Your Risk

E: Educate Your Family

D: Don't Be Silent

Share pictures of your coworkers participating in National Wear Red Day by **e-mailing them to Well Aware**.

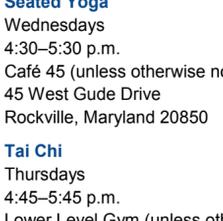
Watch this video to learn more.



You Really Can Quit for Good!

It is always a good time to quit! The Quit for Good tobacco cessation program is a free eight-week class for MCPS staff and their spouses. This class covers everything from nicotine replacement therapy, coping techniques, stress management, nutrition, and more.

For more information, please visit Well Aware's **Quit for Good web page**. The next class will begin Monday, May 1, 2017, at 4:30 p.m., in the Maple Room at 45 West Gude Drive, Rockville. **E-mail Well Aware** to reserve your spot.



Flights to Fitness: The Everest Challenge

Stair climbing can be a wonderful way to keep fit. Most of us work in or live near a building with stairs. Stair climbing can be done anytime throughout the day as a break in your routine. There are benefits to your heart, your mind, as well as your leg muscles.

Well Aware is challenging you to choose a mountain and climb it! We will climb the equivalent of that mountain in flights of stairs. Or, form a team and climb Mount Everest together! What an achievement that will be! What a way to stay in shape during the cold winter months!

For more information, visit Well Aware's **Flights to Fitness web page**.

Stress Less this Winter

Don't let high stress lead to the winter blues. Try these alternative ways to stress less and beat the blues.

Guided Meditation

Mondays
 5:00–5:45 p.m.
 Maple Room (unless otherwise noted)
 45 West Gude Drive
 Rockville, Maryland 20850

Seated Yoga

Wednesdays
 4:30–5:30 p.m.
 Café 45 (unless otherwise noted)
 45 West Gude Drive
 Rockville, Maryland 20850

Tai Chi

Thursdays
 4:45–5:45 p.m.
 Lower Level Gym (unless otherwise noted)
 45 West Gude Drive
 Rockville, Maryland 20850

To register for any of these classes, **e-mail Well Aware**.

Know Your Numbers Through Wellness Initiatives

We live our lives by the numbers: phone numbers, PIN numbers, and social security numbers, to name a few. But do you know the heart health numbers that could literally save your life? Healthy numbers mean a healthy heart. If you follow a healthy lifestyle—eat a balanced diet, get regular exercise, and avoid smoking—you can even turn bad numbers around.

And, as part of the Wellness Initiatives program, you can reduce your contributions to your health insurance while learning about these vital numbers. To take full advantage of these incentives, complete a health risk assessment and biometric health screening yearly and, if you smoke, consider quitting.

For more information on the Wellness Initiatives program and upcoming health screenings, visit the **Wellness Initiatives for Employees web page**.

Spring Physical Activity Challenge Will Be Here Soon!

Last fall, MCPS employees trained hard in the *Go for the Gold* physical activity challenge! With another challenge just around the corner, think of the progress you can make before the end of the school year! Gather your team or get yourself ready for the individual competition. Registration begins on March 6, 2017.

Diabetes News

InStep with Diabetes

Well Aware and Kaiser Permanente are partnering again to hold a diabetes educational program to help pre-diabetics, diagnosed diabetics, and caretakers of diabetics. We have helped staff members lower their A1C levels, control their sugar intake, and lose body fat.

Join us for this four-week course focusing on nutrition and diabetes.

Mondays, March 6–27, 2017

4:30–5:30 p.m.
 Maple Room
 45 West Gude Drive
 Rockville, Maryland 20850

Diabetes Management Program Update

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) employees who have diabetes and are covered by a CareFirst or Cigna medical plan have the option of participating in a diabetes management program to have their copayments for diabetic supplies waived.

In order for copayments for diabetic supplies and medication to be waived in 2018 and each year thereafter, MCPS employees who are diabetic and covered by a Cigna or CareFirst medical plan must meet two requirements. They must maintain participation in their medical plan's diabetes management program, and use medications prescribed to treat their diabetes exactly as their doctor has instructed without missing any days.

As announced in early January, CareFirst and Cigna began tracking your adherence to these requirements on **January 15, 2017**. Your copayments for diabetic supplies will continue to be waived throughout 2018 if, between January 15, 2017 and January 1, 2018, you—

- contact your medical plan by telephone at least once to talk with a diabetes management program representative, and
- do not miss any days between prescription refills, i.e., you have refilled your prescription regularly to ensure you have enough medication for daily use.

Maintaining regular use of prescription medications is a key component in controlling diabetes. By meeting these two requirements every year, CareFirst and Cigna members with diabetes will continue to receive diabetic supplies without a copayment while more closely managing their disease.

If you have diabetes and are covered by CareFirst or Cigna medical plan and would like to participate in a diabetes management program, or you would like to confirm your status as a program participant, please contact your health plan as explained in the **CareFirst or Cigna** flyer.

Questions? Please **e-mail the Employee and Retiree Service Center**.

Join Us for Zumba!

Join Well Aware for Zumba at Weller Road Elementary School, Washington Grove Elementary School, Newport Mill Middle School, or Rocking Horse Road Center! **E-mail Well Aware** for details.

Sleep Solutions

Poor Sleep Is Not a Normal Part of Aging

Getting older does not mean that you have to be tired all of the time. As you age you still need the same amount of sleep you needed as a younger adult: between seven and nine hours per night. There are many things you can do to ensure you get a good night's sleep. Here are a few suggestions:

- Follow a regular sleep schedule. Go to sleep and get up at the same time each day. Do your best to follow the sleep schedule on weekends and when traveling.
- Try not to watch television or use your computer, cell phone, or tablet in your bedroom. The light from these devices may make it difficult for you to fall asleep.
- Keep your bedroom at a comfortable temperature—neither too hot nor too cold.
- Stay away from caffeine late in the day. Caffeine, found in coffee, tea, soda, and chocolate, can keep you awake.

Watch this video to learn more about sleep and aging.