

# Availability and Use of Workplace Supports for Health Promotion among Employees of Small and Large Businesses

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# Introduction:

- The work environment has a strong influence on employee health
  - Majority of small business owners (93%) believe their employees health is important to their bottom line
  - Most (78%) don't offer any health promotion programs or only provide "awareness" resources (Mattke et al., 2013; NSBA, 2012; Claxton et al., 2013; Hipp et al., 2015)
- Small employers struggle with financial security and have limited resources, creating barriers to providing workplace programs (Legg et al., 2015)

# Introduction:

- Workplace health programs often report improvements in employee health (physical activity, weight control, diet)
- Programs are commonly available, but participation is generally low (Spence, 2015; Hannon et al., 2012)
- Little is known about programs offered by different industries
- Little is known about work and personal characteristics influence on participation in programs

# Purpose:

- To examine the *availability* and *use* of workplace health promotion supports by employees from small and large employers
- To examine the *availability* of supports across various industries
- To examine the *use* of supports based on employer size and personal factors

# Methods:

- Secondary data from SHOW-ME study of 2,015 employees
- Survey
  - personal demographics
  - job information
  - self-reported diet and physical activity
  - workplace supports
    - *Availability* of 31 supports at their workplace
    - Personal *use* of 16 supports
- Types of supports: informational, wellness initiatives, environmental, and workplace policy

# Methods: Industry and Employer Size

- Standard industry code and size (number of employees) from online tool (Ref USA)
- Employer size listed for the parent company (overall) and for the work address (location)
- Size defined as small ( $<100$ ) or large ( $\geq 100$ ) employees
  - large company/large location (LL)
  - large company/small location (LS)
  - small company/small location (SS)

# Analysis:

- Distributions of *availability* and *use* of supports by employer size: (LL), (LS), (SS)
- Explore *availability* of supports across 10 industry groups
- Assess use of supports by employer size, adjusting for personal factors (age, gender, BMI, income) using Poisson regression models



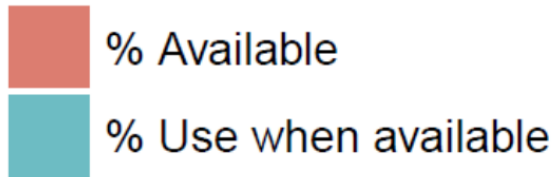
# Results:

- Analysis on 1,796 participants
- Female (67%), mean age (48 years), mean income (\$56,700/year)
- Body mass index:
  - normal (32%), overweight (31%), obese (32%)
- Employer size:
  - Large sized overall 81%
  - Large size by location 53% (LL)
  - Small size by location 28% (LS)
  - Small sized overall (and location) 20% (SS)

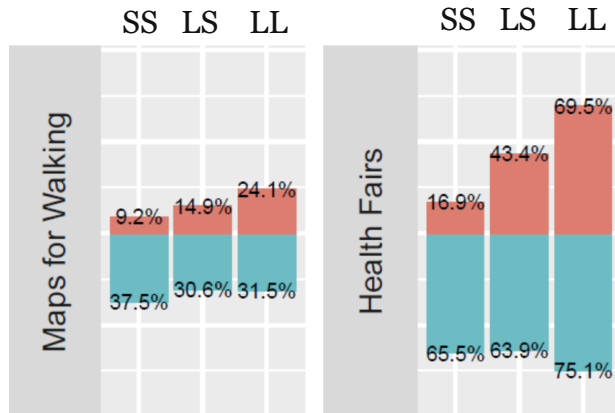
# Results:

## Availability and Use of supports

### Legend



### Informational



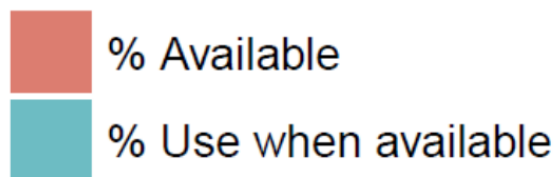
### Wellness Initiatives



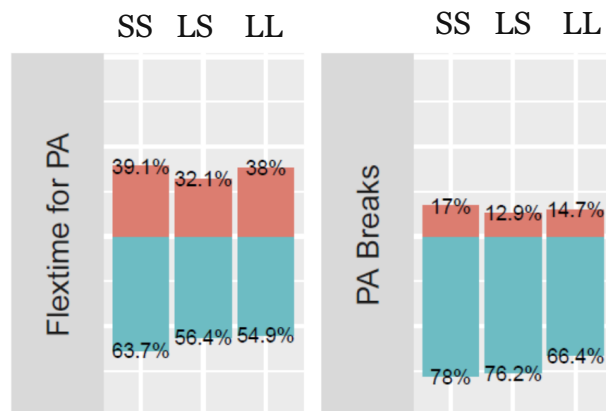
# Results:

## Availability and Use of supports

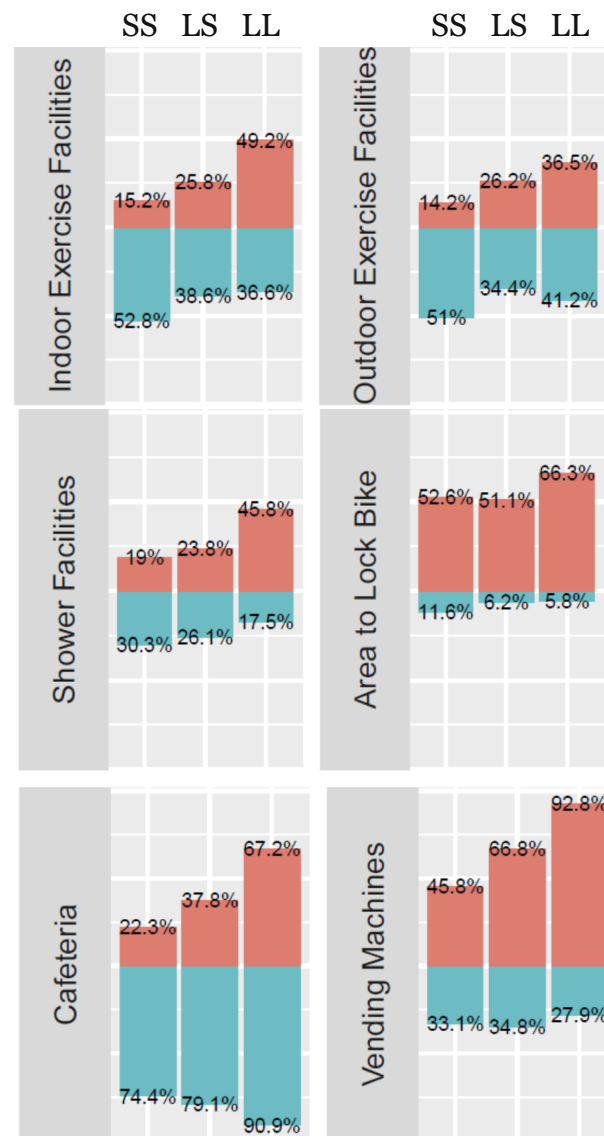
### Legend



### Policy



### Environmental



# Sample distribution by industry and within small sized employers

NAICS Sector	% Total sample	% SS in sample	% in US small business	% in MO small business
Health Care and Social Assistance	24	24	13	15
Service	7	15	19	19
Trade	12	14	16	17
Professional	11	13	13	11
Blue collar and Agriculture	5	8	15	15
Accommodation and Food Services	6	8	15	15
Educational Services	18	7	2	2
Manufacturing	5	6	7	7
Finance and Insurance	6	4	3	4
Public Administration	6	2	n/a	n/a

Compared to US and MO statistics, the sample has a higher proportion employed in Healthcare and Education and lower proportion for Food Services and Blue Collar

# Supports available by industry

NAICS Sector	SS %	Health Fair (%)	Challenge Events (%)	Personal services (%)
Health Care and Social Assistance	23.7	65	61	63
Service	14.9	26	28	27
Trade	14.3	30	35	37
Professional	13.3	42	40	42
Blue collar and Agriculture	8.1	39	37	44
Accommodation and Food Services	7.8	19	17	21
Educational Services	6.5	71	61	56
Manufacturing	6.2	51	44	49
Finance and Insurance	3.6	60	58	56
Public Administration	1.6	68	67	71

Greater proportion of supports among industries with fewer sized employers

# Supports used by employer size:

## Comparing small employers to large employers

### **More likely to participate**

Challenge events  
Exercise programs  
Free/reduced gym membership  
Incentives for public transit  
Indoor exercise facilities  
Shower facilities  
Vending machines  
Flex time for physical activity

### **Less likely to participate**

Health Fairs  
Cafeteria

# Supports used by personal factors:

## **More likely to participate:**

### Males

- Free gym membership
- Shower facilities
- Area to lock bike
- Vending machines

### Females

- Health fairs
- Challenge events

### Obese participants

- Challenge events
- Vending machines

### Normal weight participants

- Area to lock bike

# Supports used by personal factors:

## **More likely to participate:**

### Lower income

- Incentives for public transit
- Incentives to bike/walk
- Outdoor ex. facilities
- Shower facilities
- Vending machines

### Higher income

- Health fairs
- Challenge events

### Older participants

- Health fairs

### Younger participants

- Exercise programs
- Indoor ex. facilities



# Discussion:

- More supports offered by large employers
- More supports used by employees of small employers
- Employees of large employers at small-sized locations (LS) were offered more supports (like large employers) and used more supports (like small employers)
- Available supports differed by industry; in part due to employer size
- Use of supports varied by employer size
- Lower income employees used different supports than higher income employees
- Participation preferences differed by demographic factors

## Conclusion:

- Small employers may lack resources but may benefit from fewer employees, few organizational layers, and informal culture to implement supports quickly
- For large employers, having more supports does not guarantee better worker health
- Low income employees prefer some healthy supports
- Employers may promote better health by designing workplace health programs with employee input that meet the needs of the workforce and of the organizational structure (overall size and size by location)

# Thank you!

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