

Summary – 2012 UNY Wellness Survey

Introduction

In an effort to develop additional wellness tools, the Benefits Office asked clergy and conference staff to participate in a brief survey about the importance of wellness is in their lives.

The goal is to develop additional programs that can be added to the HealthFlex toolbox and be available to all persons regardless of their insurance status.

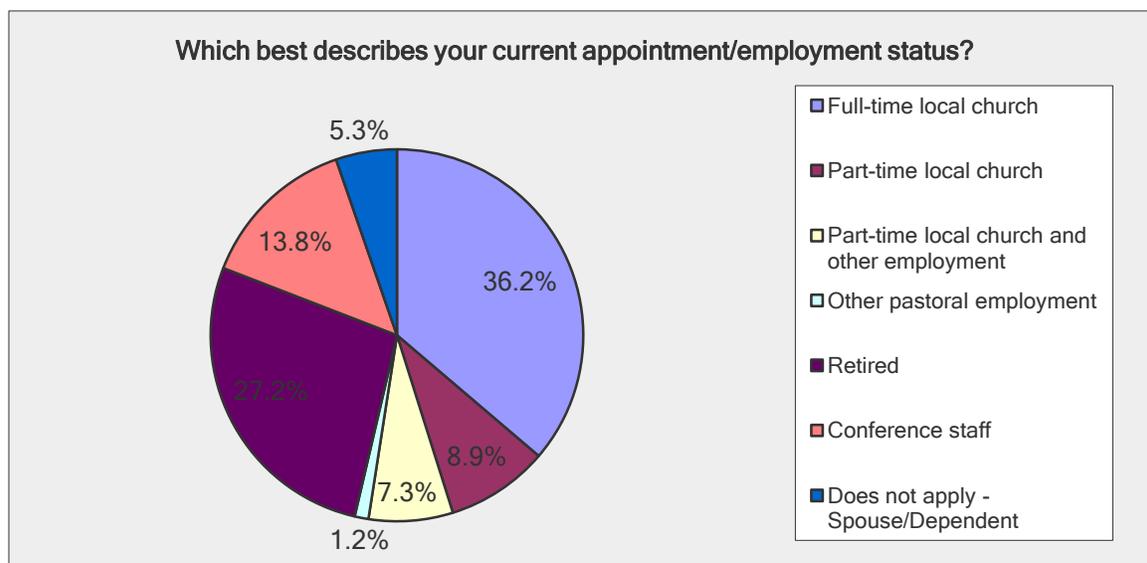
The survey was anonymous and all responses were kept confidential. The survey was SSL-encrypted for security.

The initial survey was sent out to over 1,800 email addresses of the following groups: active clergy, retired clergy, and conference staff. The survey was also linked in our Activate newsletter and E-Advocate email newsletter, which also goes out to surviving spouses and laity.

The survey was opened for responses on September 11th and closed on October 15th. This provided individuals with five weeks to respond.

A reminder email was sent to conference staff on October 2nd and to the entire Conference through the E-Advocate on October 4th. A final email reminder was sent to the original email list on October 15th.

The final count included 252 respondents, of which 80.2 % identified themselves as clergy and 19.8% identified themselves as laity. We also asked the respondents to identify themselves based on their appointment/employment status. The largest group that was represented was those appointed to a full-time local church at 36.2%. There was also a large segment of retired individuals at 27.2%. Conference staff made up 13.8% of respondents. Part-time local church with/without other employment made a combined 16.2%. There were a few other pastoral employments at 1.2% and spouses/dependents allotted for 5.3%.



Five Areas of Wellness

When presented with the five areas of wellness (Emotional, Financial, Physical, Social and Spiritual), and asked to rank from 1 to 5 with 5 being the most important, this is how each area averaged:

Spiritual - 4.05
Physical - 3.34
Emotional - 3.24
Financial - 2.46
Social - 2.35

Spiritual health was clearly the most important, on average, with social health being the least important. There was a slight difference between conference staff and clergy. Conference staff ranked emotional wellness slightly higher than physical wellness, and had even less interest in social wellness. Clergy also ranked spiritual as the highest but physical and emotional were almost tied at 3.2% and financial and social were also close for least important at 2.5 and 2.42%.

What Motivates and Encourages?

We gave the respondents the choice to tell us what motivates and encourages them to engage in wellness activities. They could choose as many answers that applied. The top choice was “increasing overall feeling of physical well being” with 89.7%. This was by far the top motivator. The next two closest around 48.7% and 49.1% were increasing lifespan and spiritual connectedness to body. Almost 36% said role-modeling behavior for their family was a motivator. Cash incentives came in last at 29.1%. There were several write in answers, which included being active, avoiding illness, being there for their spouse, stewardship of bodies, social activity, fear, and to improve job performance.

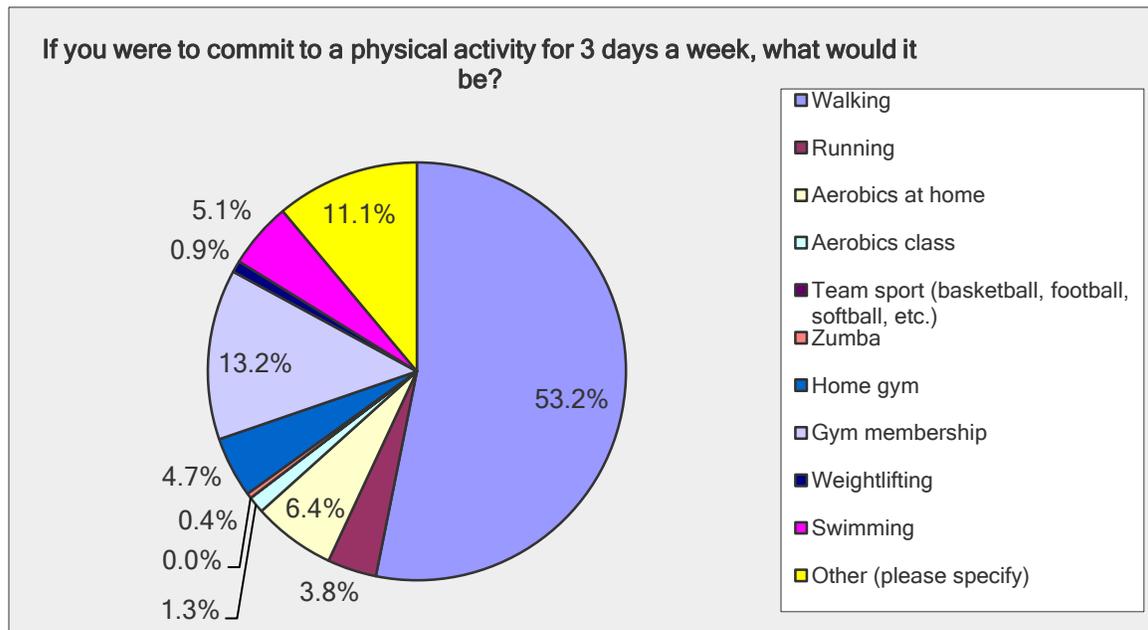
It appears, overall, most people are motivated by the desire to be active and feel good.

What motivates/encourages you to engage in wellness activities? (Choose all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Increasing Lifespan	48.7%	114
Increasing overall feeling of physical well being	89.7%	210
Role modeling behavior for family/children/friends	35.9%	84
Spiritual connection to body	49.1%	115
Cash incentives	29.1%	68
Other (please specify)	7.7%	18
	<i>answered question</i>	234
	<i>skipped question</i>	18

Committing to Physical Activity and Steps towards Wellness

We asked respondents if they could commit to a physical activity for 3 days a week, what would it be. Only allowed to answer one question, walking was the top choice with 53.2%. It was followed by gym membership at 13.2%. Over 11% provided their own answers, which ranged greatly. Several people said they would engage in a combination of a few different physical activities. Other responses, which were mentioned several

times, included riding a bike, gardening, physical labor, water aerobics, tennis and golf. Interestingly enough, not one person chose team sports such as basketball or softball. It may be that even though individuals may engage in team sports, they did not choose it because those types of activity are not conducive to being played 3 times a week.



What small steps have you taken with your wellness?

An open-ended question regarding how individuals are already working towards wellness was overwhelmingly answered with walking and changes in diet. In fact, 98% of respondents said they have in some way increased their physical activity, mostly through walking. Many also mentioned utilizing gym memberships, at-home workouts, hiking, and some even made a point to park farther away so they walk more. Approximately 35% said they've changed their eating habits or diet in some way. A few mentioned continued support by their doctor and controlling chronic illness. Other people utilize prayer and meditation, social interaction with other people, counseling, taking Sabbath and time management. One enthusiastic respondent has taken the following steps towards wellness: "super healthy diet, great psychotherapy, a spirit of play and love work." Some individuals mentioned social wellness, such as "maintain friendships outside of the church, maintain some activities outside of the church."

Barriers to Maintaining a Consistent Wellness Program

Not knowing how active our respondents currently are, we wanted to explore what barriers they come up against when trying to maintain a consistent wellness program. We provided a list of nine choices, with the option to choose all that apply. Time, including work and family obligations, was the largest barrier with 59.3% of responders making this choice. Next at 33.3% was lack of motivation. Although not a majority, almost a quarter of respondents said they already have a consistent wellness program. The smallest barrier was lack of information, which only 2.2% of respondents chose.

Although most people have the information they need to pursue a healthy lifestyle, some noted additional barriers: lack of resources (15.2%), physical disability (14.3%), type of incentive (4.8%), geographical location (11.3%) and social circle (3%). Several responders wrote in their answers and included a variety of barriers, everything from bad weather to “I love to eat!” You can’t fault them for being honest.

One individual stated we should pray for the illness within the conference and give it up to the Lord, so people aren’t carrying it around 24/7, and instead focus on the spiritual battles and needs going on within the community and Conference, such as cronyism, lack of integrity and self-serving agendas. One individual also stated that a barrier to maintaining a consistent wellness program is the stress that is added through frequent messages from others that assume they are not well!

Which of the following are barriers to maintaining a consistent wellness program? (Choose all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Time (work obligations, family obligations)	59.3%	137
Lack of motivation	33.3%	77
Lack of information	2.2%	5
Lack of resources	15.2%	35
Physical disability	14.3%	33
Type of incentive	4.8%	11
Geographical location	11.3%	26
Social circle	3.0%	7
I have a consistent wellness program	24.7%	57
Other (please specify)	10.4%	24
	<i>answered question</i>	231
	<i>skipped question</i>	21

Health Champions/Success Stories

We were interested in why people aren’t lining up to tell us about their success stories, and volunteering to provide health champion stories in “Activate.”

Over 20% of respondents feel they are still in progress, with a close 19% saying they don’t want to be in the spotlight. Only 12.3 % said they haven’t reached their goal left, and 7.5% felt their story wouldn’t be useful. Eight people (3.5%) said they are interested and would contact the Benefits Office to let them know. One-fifth of the respondents wrote in their answers. Ten people stated they have never even heard of the health champions and/or “Activate.” Several individuals appeared perturbed at the request. One individual went as far to say this part of our program is “crass and self-serving.” Another individual said:

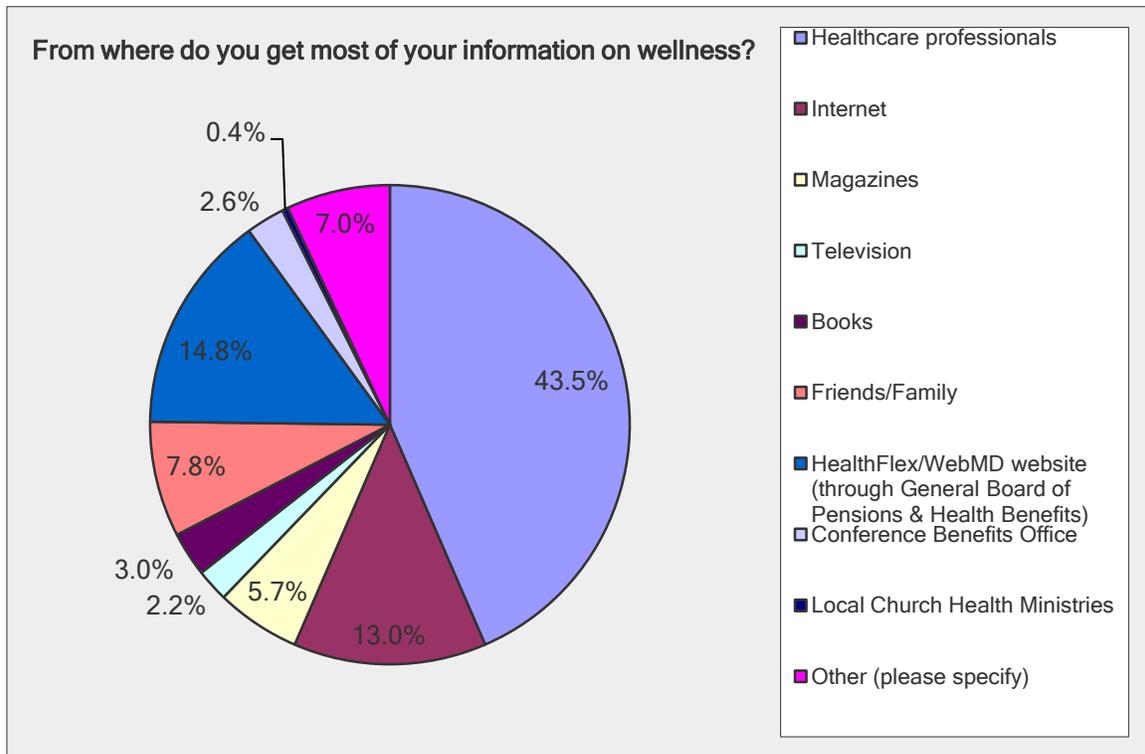
“Hahaha - good question. People who step forward, to my experience, in this conference, are judged poorly and ridiculed rather than prayed for and lifted as they example leadership with good modeling. Health and wellness is part of that modeling. I have never seen so many obese people in one place as I saw at AC last summer - so, to me, this speaks to how fragile and frightened we are as a body of Christ in leadership.” There were several who said they were computer illiterate, and a few who mentioned they just don’t have the time.

Wellness Information Resources

As we continue with wellness initiatives like “Activate,” and the programs through HealthFlex, we were interested in finding out from where individuals are getting their information on wellness. Healthcare professionals ranked the highest with 43.5% of respondents, followed by HealthFlex/WebMD (through GBOPHB) at 14.8% and the Internet at 13%. Only 2.6% (or 6) respondents said they get their wellness information from the Conference Benefits Office. Even less (.4%) get it from local church health ministries. In between were magazines (5.7%), television (2.2%), books (3%), and friends and family (7.8%). This shows that most people get their information through their health providers and health insurance.

One individual advised they get most of their information from prayer and then family and the Internet, saying:

“This is a spiritual effort my friends. We need to be in prayer about how we live our lives everyday and the physical health of the body is part of that. We cannot be physically well unless we live our faith first - our fried chicken (speaking to physical health) second. If we want to get serious – let’s publish a ‘healthier casseroles for the church dinners; cookbook, make conference policy that we are not going to serve red meat at any event, insists on a mile walk at every event etc. Let’s get serious about the physical connected to the spiritual and speak our commitment to this effort.”



How Likely are you to attend a Wellness Retreat?

Last year we attempted to market Renew “U”, a program geared towards clergy about holistic health (spiritual, financial, emotional, physical and social). Due to low registration numbers, the event was cancelled. Since a year has passed and the Conference Board and Benefits Office has been working harder to create a culture of wellness, in this survey we asked if respondents would be likely to attend a wellness retreat which would focus on the five areas of wellness. Out of all who responded, only 4.7% (11) said they would definitely attend. Another 9.4% said they would be very likely to attend, with 46%, almost half of respondents saying they would consider attending. Almost 40% said they are not likely to attend or would definitely not attend. Although we probably won’t get everyone on board, the interest is there to consider possibly having a retreat in the future. The key is creating a culture where individuals will want to attend, and feel their time will be well-spent.

Connection between Faith and Self-Care

One of the most important and relevant questions in our survey was “How does your faith fit into your self care?” To one individual it was also the most important, stating “Finally, the question that should have been first. Faith is the cornerstone of our living - so why would it not be the key to good health care?” It was an open-ended question which again allowed for a variety of different answers. Here are some of the highlights:

A big part of being faithful is being a good steward of body, soul, mind, spirit... it's all connected

As a Methodist with emphasis on free will -- I am responsible for taking care of my own well being -- eat well, exercise regularly, get enough sleep, fasten my seat belts but still have good health insurance coverage!

As a pastor, I cannot offer care to others from a place of emptiness. I have to make time to care for myself spiritually, emotionally, and physically if I want to have any hope of offering care to another individual.

Big time: belief in Loving Creator who has plan for me, both physically & spiritually; honored & loved as Being of God; One-ness with Creation

Body is the Temple of the Holy Spirit!

Caring for my health is a spiritual responsibility and enables me to live the life God is calling me to live.

Caring for one's self shows that I value myself as much as I value others. It also shows that I value what God has blessed me with.

Daily prayer and affirmation time, believing I am worth taking care of Faith and spiritual wellness are more important to me than physical. Virgin Healthmiles is great, but the spiritual component is missing.

Faith is first. Family is second. Work is third. Then everything else comes after that.

God gave me the gift of life and I need to be responsible with that gift.

*God has given us physical bodies in which we live and move and have our being...
We are to be healthy so that we can follow Jesus faithfully and wholly.
Have not thought about it. Guess it does not fit, needs improving*

*Helps me to reconnect with what's really important in life, calms me emotionally,
makes me happy*

*I began exercising some 15 years ago when God spoke to me saying, "Your body
is my temple, and I don't like the shape it's in." That's been enough motivation for
me.*

*I believe God gave me my body as a temple and should use it as a "living
sacrifice" but sometimes I forget and just want to eat chocolate and watch tv. That
doesn't help at all. But I know God gave me this body as a gift and I should take
care of it.*

I believe that all areas of wellness have a spiritual component.

I believe that God will help me handle any situations that come into my life.

I believe that keeping myself fit is part of my commitment to God, my creator.

*Being fit helps me to focus on continual development of faith and knowledge of
Biblical and spiritual truths.*

*I can't share my faith if I can't get out of my own way! I walk with a friend from
the church and we have begun introducing ourselves in the community, listening
To others' stories or sharing ours when we can.*

*I don't have compartments in my life. I am a whole person, so if one area of care
is off I don't consider myself healthy. I look after my spiritual growth with
regular disciplines, but I also will pray on runs when I'm not with a group.*

*I enjoy listening to Christian music while walking and/ or do prayer walks around
town.*

*Recently, care of my faith is the only self-care I ha been able to do; any and all
energy that may have been focused on physical and emotional self-care have been
spent trying to make sure our family is physically safe. It is hard to encourage -
and expect - clergy and their families to spend time exercising and such if they
are having to face the reality of parsonages that are ill-maintained and contain
health hazards themselves...and in fact, it feels to me that we have been penalized
by the way this system is set up - we don't have the finances needed to join a gym
because we've spent it on fixing the parsonage with little/no help from the
trustees, so we do not qualify for cash incentives or other benefits because we
haven't had the resources needed to do what is needed to qualify for them. It's a
double whammy which leads to the question of, really - why should I care? No
matter what you are encouraging me to do, I still don't have what I need to be
able to succeed - not only can I not succeed, but my family would have to pay*

financially for whoever success we would get rewarded, further exhausting our resources to fulfill the basic requirements just to qualify.

Regular Sabbath-keeping, which includes more time for walking, hiking, playing with the kids, etc. than other days of the week.

Self-care is a stewardship issue! I have also observed that when I feel better physically, all the other areas of my life do better (or at least so it seems). Better self-care enables me to do more, and costs less time than being unhealthy. It is also a better example. When my body is feeling sluggish, my faith is also sluggish.

We are not divided into three neatly separate parts (body, mind, spirit). We are one.

When I put God first, I feel that helps me make better choices in all areas of my life

When self-care is getting elbowed out, spiritual care is too. Ironically, the demands and expectations of my "spiritually oriented" work often preclude physical and spiritual self-care. I have to be very intentional to make room for either. I feel that the work culture of the church is essentially unhealthy and I worry about the example that sets and the message it extends.

Working with the elderly in the church and helping them to stay active also makes me more conscientious about keeping myself in better shape both as a role model and so that I can continue to help and guide them with faith issues as well.

How Can the Conference Assist with Wellness?

We also asked what respondents would like the Conference office to offer to assist in their personal wellness goals. Approximately 15.5% said there is nothing or nothing more that the Conference office can do to help. Only 3.3% said the Conference office is doing fine, great, or excellent. A handful of individuals said additional financial assistance with gym memberships, weight watchers, and lower health care costs would be helpful. This was an open-ended question that garnered a wide range of responses, such as:

You are all excellent. Great work!

100% WHOLE GRAINS, LOW SUGAR, LOW FAT, LOTS OF FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES AT ALL DISTRICT AND CONFERENCE FUNCTIONS AS NORMATIVE--RATHER THAN SOMETHING WE HAVE TO REQUEST. WHY NOT HAVE THE PEOPLE WHO CHOOSE TO EAT UNHEALTHY HAVE TO BE THE ONES TO MAKE THE REQUEST FOR A "SPECIAL" DIET

A concise synopsis of what benefits come with and are available through our health insurance in writing ON PAPER

A retreat would be nice to get away (mentioned earlier in survey).

Accountability partners who share similar goals. Info on quality supplements, what exercises are most productive, etc.

Activate is a great idea

An insurance plan that includes fitness membership at a fitness center with a workout room and swimming.

An occasional "How's it goin'?"

As a surviving clergy spouse I have very little contact with anyone or anything in the Conference office.

Assistance coordinating regional groups related to specific wellness activities, including art/writing/creativity, spiritual support/accountability, exercise, support groups, etc.

At 87, I know my time is short. I don't see that the Conference office can do anything more for me.

Being more consistent in monitoring the churches and trustees for parsonage safety would be good - you can't tell someone to get healthy physically by eating right and exercising if they are still going to have to live in an unsafe or neglected environment. Wellness isn't about just personal habits and efforts, but also about making sure we can have what we need to be safe and well all around.

Better health care options / dental plan that is affordable.

Can't really think of anything. UNYAC seems supportive of health goals. Cheaper health insurance.

Continue good insurance plans, keeping in mind the differences between active and retired clergy

Continue to keep us informed of opportunities.

Continue Virgin Health Miles.

Encourage pastors to live sustainably and in connection with nature, reduce expectations that pastors travel hundreds of miles from where they live to attend conferences and meetings by using technology and where possible, reducing meetings overall.

Grants for gym memberships Help me pay off student loans so I can afford my own gym membership

Greater access to assisted living homes, hospitals, etc.

Help us keep up with the latest information on being healthy at every age, especially in the area of non-drug alternatives to health issues.

Honestly, for me, the incentives, the stories of success, the frequent negative messages about clergy health tend to backfire. Rather than motivating me, I feel defeated before I begin--and that assumes I've not begun, which is not true. I do have habits to take care of myself, but I'm frequently told to engage in exercise and to do many other things for my health. All those messages assume I'm not doing it. For a while, the incentives motivated me, but now they are more annoying and I tend to ignore them. I question whether the real reason for the incentives is to save money rather than help me truly live life abundantly in Christ. Many people who look unhealthy from some standards live happily and in a vibrant relationship with God. I truly am doing my best with the means I have to juggle lives family, spiritual, and work responsibilities.

Honestly, there have to be better premium plans available. Because I am relatively healthy and I rarely see a doctor it feels like the churches contribution and mine is totally wasted because I rarely get past the \$500 deductible - so lots of money yearly is paid out and I still have no dental, minimal eyewear coverage and limited support with my doctor bills. Yes, I've heard I should be grateful that I am healthy - but \$30K a year seems wasteful for someone who is healthy. Yes, I realize one catastrophic or even normal surgery would change all that - but I have to believe there is something else available if we shopped it and did not just take what all other Methodist churches are using. We know that pastors are a difficult group, so why do we continue to align ourselves there?

I am not sure how the Conference office can assist me in my personal wellness goals. I am not sure if my personal wellness goals really matter. I know I have difficulty believing my emotional/mental well being matters at all.

I appreciate your current efforts. I am concerned about the continuation of vital relationship & inclusion strategies for retired and elderly clergy/surviving spouses. This should be staffed. I also have a concern for our newest clergy, young families, less than full-time compensated clergy, and geographically isolated clergy (and families)-- particularly if the employer has caused this isolation by demands of appointment or itinerancy. No person should "fall through the cracks" and all should have a knowledgeable advocate. This should be organized and staffed.

I don't understand how my personal wellness became a goal of the Conference. Maybe articulating the Conference's interest in its clergy in theological terms, such as "to help us live together into the abundant life that Christ offers" rather than in "we can't afford to provide healthcare for our clergy- y'all are too fat and lazy" terms would be a good start.

I have enjoyed the incentives and the help in keeping track of steps with Virgin Health Miles and hope that it will continue to be available to us when our retiree health insurance changes on Jan. 1st.

I just have strange diseases and it is hard to find a doctor who knows what to do I know its been fun to connect with some of the other clergy that run. I've both had good conversations about fitness goals and training and I've even connected a couple time with clergy from other cities either coming and racing with me or going to race with them. If there could be some way to connect clergy, or even

have a database available for us to see who else does what we like to do that could be helpful.

I live in Florida, so assistance from the Conference office might be limited. However, any help would be welcome.

I think you're doing pretty well just now - making us all aware of the issues - nudging us to do better. It was good to talk with colleagues at annual conference as we waited for the Quest diagnostic tests. It's fun to see folks with their pedometers - and talking about how far they're walking. I wasn't able to connect my pedometer online, so I'm not using it.

I try to do what I can. I think it would be good if the conference would help pay for joining a wellness program, (YWCA, or other place to exercise) as it is very helpful for maintaining health and wellness.

I would enjoy more inter-office type "challenges" or incentives. While the Healthmile stuff is great, I'm not motivated by larger programs, I'm motivated by those directly around me.

I'll always be ok with greater cash incentives! I think we're moving in great directions under Vicki's leadership. We're encouraged and given incentives without too much guilt / shaming.

It is hard to say because of my lack of technological ability. Some of us who are older just haven't transitioned well into the new ways of getting information. Just keep information, programs and options coming and let me choose according to my interests and needs.

Keep up the encouragement for all of us to pursue personal wellness goals. Offer perhaps more opportunities to attend workshops, either in person or via Internet in order to hear and learn of ideas and activities that may help us reach our personal wellness goals.

Maintain Virgin Health Miles; include incentives to promote physical activity which does not have to be financial incentives but personal incentives to motivate; provide info in newsletter on ways to improve personal wellness.

More conference staff wellness events - maybe more bowling or a softball league, or walks at lunch.

More hours in the day; fewer pass-a dish meals

More opportunity and activities other than walking

More time at AC for healthy activities.

Nothing in particular, although, as a larger issue, support for clergy to spend more quality family time is always appreciated (like not scheduling clergy gatherings on school holidays).

Occasional events to affirm wellness

Offer classes that do not require a great deal of travel, and make the classes open to church congregations. A group of college students offered a Fall Prevention (balance) class at my church, and it was well attended.

Prayer and encouragement.

Provide decent health care to lay staff; offer financial incentives to the pursuit of good health.

Put less demands on us... paperwork, meetings, etc.

Reinstate higher cash incentive and retirees get cash credit for Quest Tests same as full time pastors. As retirees, our health is important too !! -- or is it, because we are on Medicare, it is not that important financially when you crunch the numbers and cash is short?

Self-care workshops (Like Roy Oswald used to do with Alban Institute)

Since it seems there is little direct communication from the Conference Office or the Cabinet with individual retirees, that may be an item to address. Realizing the amount of time needed for other responsibilities, this seems small, but a phone call once or twice a year would be appreciated.

Small scholarship/stipend to offset spiritual retreats.

Stop scheduling meetings (i.e. annual conference) from 8 am till 9 pm and then tell us to care for ourselves...kind of a mixed message!! All the emphasis on wellness is excellent!

Stress the importance of the pastor taking a personal Sabbath to the local congregation.

The conference benefits office has helped me beyond any expectation. The job she does now is more than sufficient for me :) She keeps me on my toes....

The Wellness Retreat is a great idea! If we could try out new ideas on how to integrate the spiritual and the physical - using Yoga, explain Reiki, etc. - information and practicum would be great!

THEY ARE DOING A GREAT JOB > IT IS NOW UP TO ME>>>>>

Would it be possible to have a way to keep us more accountable by district, or by some other measure?

Yes and no. I understand the challenge/responsibility is my own, but by having the conference work at creating opportunities for wellness to be fun, informative and inspirational, it is a great help!

Yes, find a model of advocacy for health care as social justice that will help us learn new habits, model it to others and speak it with our lives - as advised for everything we do. Do not separate our business practices from our spiritual lives and scriptural learning. I don't need a 10-minute coaching session from a lovely young person who says, "Yes you can do it - just have celery instead and walk 5 minutes longer next time." Find a strong position through scripture, subsidize more deeply the cost of our BCBS because we are an org that care about this issue for people, publish health related cookbooks for church suppers (peanut butter and choc pie does not have to appear on our pot luck buffet) and declare a position on some type of food: "the year of nothing fried" for example. Let's covenant through our clergy that physical wellness is so important that in addition to the walking program - we are putting down the fried foods for one year to get off them for good (to include meats, vegetables, snack foods) and send around a nutrition educator to help us. It is like smoking cessation - need a social movement in public health to make it happen. Let's be public health for us - we have a network in place. Sorry for the tirade - but our efforts to this point are of this world and barely helpful. Why not rely on what we do - prayer, hope, education, gathering, speaking from the pulpit. We just fed million of people through last year's effort - what did we feed them? And with so many hungry - does it matter to anyone that we are, as a group, ill with obesity? What is that dissonance? Time to pray our way into another perspective of living our faith - not paying attention to our illness, anxiety, isolation that keeps us eating to obesity to calm the fears. Just a few thoughts.

Motivators and Participation

Interested in knowing which is a better motivator, we asked respondents to choose between financial incentives or feeling better, to which 73.9% chose feeling better and only 26.1% said financial incentive. The incentive is important to a good minority but most individuals are more concerned with their overall well being.

Our final question inquired about what programs individuals are currently using. The most used program is the Virgin HealthMile walking program with 71.2%. A large majority, 64.7% have participated in the Blueprint for Wellness screening, and 74.1% in the HealthQuotient. A little under half have used HealthFlex/WebMD and Health Coaching, and 28.8% have used weight watchers.

Have you participated in any of the following (Check all that apply)?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Virgin HealthMiles Walking Program	71.2%	121
Blueprint for Wellness Screening	64.7%	110
Weight Watchers	28.8%	49
Health Quotient	74.1%	126
HealthFlex/WebMD health management tools	46.5%	79
Health Coaching	42.9%	73
<i>answered question</i>		170
<i>skipped question</i>		82

Conclusion

It is apparent from the feedback we've obtained from clergy, clergy dependents and conference staff that there is a wide variety of opinions on almost every topic, particularly what the Conference office is doing (or not doing) to help individuals with their wellness and health care costs. Some individuals were quite clear that they think the Conference is too involved, almost to the point of making people feel bad as if they are not already doing enough for their health on their own. There are other individuals who believe the Conference isn't doing enough and wants more information, more cost savings, and wellness programs. The majority of responders, however, seemed to be in the middle, pretty much aware that they have to contribute to their own wellness program (and most are already doing so through diet and exercise), but also recognizing that the Conference provides them with resources they can use.

It appears the walking program is the most used and relevant for what individuals are already interested and motivated in doing. However, many suggested the Conference assist with costs for gym memberships. In the end it appears, most people recognize the needs for a holistic wellness plan by the Conference but the question the Board of Pensions and Health Benefits and the Benefits Office needs to answer is what would be the most cost-effective way to do that, while also driving concrete results in the lives of clergy and staff.

The results of this survey are being provided to the Conference Board of Pensions and Health Benefits to review, with the goal of recommending additional tools that can assist clergy and conference staff (whether enrolled in health insurance or not) with their wellness, to reach the ultimate goal of creating a real culture of wellness at the Upper New York Annual Conference.