CDC and Employer-Based Wellness Programs

**Summary:** Requires the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to study and evaluate best employer-based wellness practices and provide technical assistance to promote the benefits of worksite health promotion to employers.

**Next steps:**
- March 23, 2012 (and at regular intervals thereafter)– First CDC report due on a survey of national worksite health policies and programs to assess employer-based health policies and programs, as well as recommendations of the Director of CDC for the implementation of effective employer-based health policies and programs

**Additional information:**
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Worksite Wellness program -- [http://www.cdc.gov/Features/WorksiteWellness/](http://www.cdc.gov/Features/WorksiteWellness/)
- Listing of a variety of worksite wellness programs -- [http://stateofwellness.org/](http://stateofwellness.org/)

**Long summary:**
**Sec. 4303. CDC and employer-based wellness programs.**
The Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) must provide employers with technical assistance, consultation, tools and other resources for evaluating such employers’ employer-based wellness programs and to train employers on how to evaluate such wellness programs. Secretary must give priority to evaluations of wellness programs funded through CDC before evaluating privately funded programs unless an entity with such a privately funded program requests such an evaluation.

**No mandated wellness programs.** Explicitly prohibits federal workplace wellness requirements or programs.

**Legislative text:**
**SEC. 4303. CDC AND EMPLOYER-BASED WELLNESS PROGRAMS.**
Title III of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 241 et seq.), by section 4102, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

"PART U—EMPLOYER-BASED WELLNESS PROGRAM"

"SEC. 399MM. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR EMPLOYER-BASED WELLNESS PROGRAMS.
"In order to expand the utilization of evidence-based prevention and health promotion approaches in the workplace, the Director shall—"
“(1) provide employers (including small, medium, and large employers, as determined by the Director) with technical assistance, consultation, tools, and other resources in evaluating such employers’ employer-based wellness programs, including—
”(A) measuring the participation and methods to increase participation of employees in such programs;
”(B) developing standardized measures that assess policy, environmental and systems changes necessary to have a positive health impact on employees’ health behaviors, health outcomes, and health care expenditures; and
”(C) evaluating such programs as they relate to changes in the health status of employees, the absenteeism of employees, the productivity of employees, the rate of workplace injury, and the medical costs incurred by employees; and
”(2) build evaluation capacity among workplace staff by training employers on how to evaluate employer-based wellness programs and ensuring evaluation resources, technical assistance, and consultation are available to workplace staff as needed through such mechanisms as web portals, call centers, or other means. As revised by section 10404;
"SEC. 399MM–1. NATIONAL WORKSITE HEALTH POLICIES AND PROGRAMS STUDY.
"(a) IN GENERAL.—In order to assess, analyze, and monitor over time data about workplace policies and programs, and to develop instruments to assess and evaluate comprehensive workplace chronic disease prevention and health promotion programs, policies and practices, not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this part, and at regular intervals (to be determined by the Director) thereafter, the Director shall conduct a national worksite health policies and programs survey to assess employer-based health policies and programs.
"(b) REPORT.—Upon the completion of each study under subsection (a), the Director shall submit to Congress a report that includes the recommendations of the Director for the implementation of effective employer-based health policies and programs.
"SEC. 399MM–2. PRIORITIZATION OF EVALUATION BY SECRETARY.
"The Secretary shall evaluate, in accordance with this part, all programs funded through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention before conducting such an evaluation of privately funded programs unless an entity with a privately funded wellness program requests such an evaluation.
"SEC. 399MM–3. PROHIBITION OF FEDERAL WORKPLACE WELLNESS REQUIREMENTS.
"Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, any recommendations, data, or assessments carried out under this part shall not be used to mandate requirements for workplace wellness programs.”.