



*Working together we  
can become the  
nation's healthiest  
community.*



Supporting a culture of health at work results in higher morale and increased productivity.

# Cheshire County

HEALTHY CHOICES AT THE OFFICE / WORKSITE WELLNESS

## Coordinated efforts make for big changes!

### CHALLENGE: A happier, healthier work family

Before Cheshire County became Organizational Champions, they were no strangers to wellness, but what they discovered was, they were focused on programs and initiatives instead of on policy and environmental changes. Misty Hall, Assistant Finance Director, stated "Before we became Healthy Monadnock Champions, we were doing initiatives - such as walking and healthy eating programs - that were not cohesive or organized. As part of Healthy Monadnock, we met as a group to create goals and adopt policies." One change made included a new fitness center in the newly renovated (Keene administration office) building, which means that all 3 sites now have fitness centers available to the staff. There have also been simple changes such as signs encouraging people to take the stairs instead of the elevator.



## Results

With the help of Healthy Monadnock, Cheshire County was able to come together to create wellness goals and adopt policies that will enable them to maintain their new culture of health. Cheshire County was able to streamline their wellness goals in a way that brought successful changes to all 3 sites and almost 500 employees.

## SOLUTION: Create a Culture of Health

Policy change is something that really helped Cheshire County create a culture of health. One policy change made was around healthy meetings. This policy affects all county-sponsored functions (i.e. committee meetings, staff meetings, delegation meetings) and requires 50% of the food available to be healthy. An additional change that Cheshire County has made has benefitted not only their staff, but the public. Cheshire County created a breastfeeding room which they furnished using a mini-grant from Healthy Monadnock. With the mini-grant they were able to provide a room with a refrigerator, soft lighting, and a comfortable chair for women to nurse or pump in. The changes made to the work environment in addition to the policy changes made, brought about a change in the work culture.



## Sustaining Success

“When you make a policy change, it is embedded in the culture instead of a snapshot in time. Now healthy habits are embedded in what we do and not just a six-week slogan. It is this underlying change in policy that will keep us going long term.”

Misty commented. Along with their goal to continue focusing on wellness, they are creating wellness subcommittees that will be able to provide individualized changes based on the location that the staff member works in. “For example,” Misty states “in our department of corrections, we have mostly young males. Their health wants and desires are different than our nursing home facility, which is made up on primarily female employees.” This is one way Cheshire County makes their employees feel important and validated.



## The attitudes of the employees, that is what I think is most important...

*...You can see them using the salad bar, talking about going for a walk at break, using the fitness room, taking the stairs. The atmosphere that has been created - a culture of health - can't be measured in numbers...*

- **Misty Hall, Assistant Finance Director at Cheshire County**