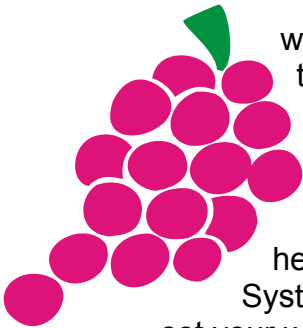


Updated June, 2005

Dear Nutrition Program Providers for the PERS 5 A Day Challenge:



Thank you for agreeing to present nutrition information programs to worksites across North Dakota. This is proving to be a great opportunity to improve the nutrition environment in worksites as well as increasing your and your agency's exposure to the community.

Wellness benefit funding for programs such as the PERS 5 A Day Challenge is being made available to agencies that have health insurance through the North Dakota Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). To view a list of agencies that are eligible to participate, set your web browser to:

<http://www.state.nd.us/ndpers/employers/other-resources.html>

and choose "Participating Agencies Listing". Eligible agencies are those with an "H" in the right-hand column.

Your name is part of a list that will be available to interested agencies that request information from PERS. The list will be posted as a PDF file on the PERS 5 A Day Challenge website hosted by NDSU Extension found at <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pers/>

Please read all of the accompanying information and review the website carefully!! This will help prevent confusion and help you and the worksite to experience a smooth and productive relationship. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions.



The Nutrition Education Sessions

In your role in this program, you will present two one-hour sessions to a participating worksite. The first presentation was developed by NDSU Extension Service and is graciously being shared with public health nutritionists. It is the program, *What Color Is Your Food?* The handout for this program may be found at <http://www.ext.nodak.edu/extpubs/yf/foods/fn595w.htm> and is provided to participants in their participant packet. The lesson plan has been distributed. If you do not have this resource, please contact me.

The second session encourages employees and employers to change the worksite environment to make fruits and vegetables more accessible. This is available as a Microsoft word file. If you do not have this resource, please contact me.

The Process

The worksites will contact you to set up times for the presentations. Or, feel free to approach local agencies to let them know about the program. Ideally, you will present the *What Color Is Your Food?* session as a kick-off to the four-week Challenge and the second worksite environment presentation around four weeks later as a wrap-up to the Challenge.

We have arranged for PERS to reimburse you or your agency for your efforts. The PERS 5 A Day Challenge program includes \$100.00 to cover the cost of the two sessions (\$50.00 for each one). If the agency requests you to repeat any of these sessions at different times or at a different site, you must negotiate that on an individual basis with the agency. Funding is not available to cover mileage to present these programs. Once you have completed both presentations, please send an invoice directly to PERS

Kathy Allen
North Dakota Public Employees Retirement System
400 East Broadway Avenue
Suite 505
P.O. Box 1657
Bismarck, ND 58502-1657

A sample invoice is available at the PERS website <http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pers/>

Please work closely with the worksite coordinator, as you will need to find out the number of participants to expect at the first session. In order to participate in the PERS 5 A Day Challenge, employees MUST attend the first session. Once you know the number of participants, please contact Julie Garden-Robinson, preferably by email: jgardenr@ndsuxext.nodak.edu, to order one participant packet for each employee at the presentation. In the subject line, note "PERS packet order". Please carbon copy, or "cc" the message to Hope Eppler: heppler@ndsuxext.nodak.edu



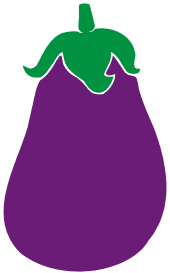
Julie Garden-Robinson, Ph.D., L.R.D.
Food and Nutrition Specialist
NDSU Extension Service
EML 351
Fargo, ND 58105-5057
Phone: 701-231-7187, Fax: 701-231-7453
Email: jgardenr@ndsuxext.nodak.edu

The NDSU Extension state office in Fargo bills PERS directly for the packets. Each one costs \$6.00. In order to keep expenses down, the packets will be sent to your area via the County Extension mail service. Please use this system in cooperation with your local county Extension office. County mail is delivered once per week.

You should each have a participant packet. The packets include the *What Color Is Your Food?* handout, instructions, a 5 A Day Challenge Tracking form, and various handouts providing information on preparation, the DASH Diet, seasonal

availability of fruits and vegetables, and a flexible cutting board. **You** will deliver and hand out the participant packets at the kick-off session.

Each program participant will also pay \$1.00 to you at each session to cover the cost of food samples. It is up to you to collect this from the employee participants at each site. Food samples are recommended to help spark interest and participation. Examples of food samples that you may present include a fruit smoothie or a fruit kabob, or use your imagination! You may work out the details of handling the reimbursement for these supplies with your employer. If the agency is large and has its own foodservice facility, you may wish to make arrangements to have that facility prepare the fruit/vegetable samples.



Information about Participating Agencies

It is a huge public health accomplishment for PERS to be providing funding for preventive health services to employees.

The PERS Wellness Benefit Program will pay agencies for expenses for the 5 A Day Challenge Program based on the size of the agency. PERS will cover 100% of the first \$500, or the actual cost, whichever is less, plus 75% of the cost exceeding \$500 to a maximum benefit of \$1,000. For example, if the agency has 66 participants in the program, then the \$500 will pay for all the packets and the nutrition education sessions.

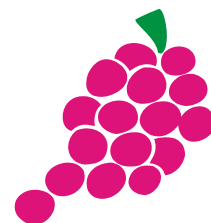
At the kick-off session, please encourage participants to take the Pre-survey, found on line at the website

<http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pers/>

We want to collect data from as many participants as possible to measure the outcome of this program. Preliminary results indicate that 91% of those completing the post-survey were trying to eat five fruits and vegetables daily! Also please briefly review the hand-outs that outline how participants can find their current baseline and set goals for increasing the number of fruit and vegetable servings daily.

We encourage you to contact eligible agencies in your area to let them know about the availability of the program and the funding for it available from PERS. September, National 5 A Day month, is a great time to build on the momentum of the program. We also think that many agencies may be interested in presenting this program in January, the traditional time for New Year's Resolutions!

Please help us evaluate the program. Please complete the presenter evaluation form that accompanies this memo and return to me.



Thank you again for your participation in the program. It has been a great pleasure to work with this collaboration between the North Dakota Department of Health, the NDSU Extension Service, public health nutritionists, Healthy North Dakota, and the ND Public Employees Retirement System. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have:

Karen Ehrens, LRD
Ehrens Consulting
233 West Ave C
Bismarck, ND 58501
Phone/fax: 701-223-2616
Email: karen@ehrensconsulting.com

