



Kentucky Personnel Cabinet
Office of the Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: **Crystal Pryor**
502-517-6046

**Journey to Wellness joins forces to support
National Employee Wellness Month**
Fostering the value of creating a healthy workforce

FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 4, 2010) — Today, the Personnel Cabinet's Journey to Wellness program announced it is participating in the second annual National Employee Wellness Month. This initiative is designed to help raise public awareness about the critical role of workplace wellness and how preventive, healthy employee behavior can help improve and combat our nation's rising healthcare costs.

National Employee Wellness Month is sponsored by Virgin HealthMiles, a leading provider of health and productivity programs, in partnership with the Strategies to Overcome and Prevent (STOP) Obesity Alliance and the Institute for Health and Productivity Management.

A growing number of employers have recognized the increased role they must play in encouraging greater physical activity and healthier choices on the part of employees. Increased physical activity has been proven to help prevent the onset of obesity and lifestyle-related chronic diseases, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which accounts for 75 percent, or \$1.5 trillion, of our nation's healthcare costs.

According to the STOP Obesity Alliance, the workplace is one important environment that could be better leveraged to fight obesity. A 2008 survey by the STOP Obesity Alliance and the National Opinion Research Center found employers and employees agree the workplace is an appropriate environment for supporting weight loss efforts and helping curb the toll of preventable chronic diseases.

Commonwealth employees are engaged in a variety of work-site wellness programs through

Journey to Wellness. Journey to Wellness began as a pilot program in the Personnel Cabinet. Due to the success of the pilot, Gov. Steve Beshear soon implemented the program statewide so all employees could enjoy a well-designed, strategic approach to wellness. Today, the program is in its second year and continues to provide engaging, educational and fun wellness activities and programs that assist employees with their greatest health needs.

“Commonwealth employees are setting the bar high, with thousands of employees engaged and participating in the Journey to Wellness and Virgin HealthMiles programs,” said state wellness director, Stephanie Marshall. “Since the commencement of Journey to Wellness, the Commonwealth continues to establish long-term and durable wellness activities that help promote productivity, job satisfaction and the health and wellbeing of employees.”

To learn more about the Commonwealth’s Journey to Wellness, go to <http://personnel.ky.gov>.

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