

Health and Wellness Coordinator

Are you looking to start a health and wellness program at your institution, but you're not sure how to get started? A great first step would be to appoint a health and wellness coordinator. This person would be responsible for developing ideas and programs to promote wellness for students and staff, as well as taking the lead on implementing those initiatives.

Where can you find someone to be your health and wellness coordinator? Maybe you have a person already on staff that would be interested in implementing a wellness program at your institution and would be willing to take a few hours a week to get the ball rolling. It could be a student (or group of students) that is interested in promoting health among students and staff. Larger institutions may even want to hire someone part-time or full-time if they see the need for it.

Once you have someone in place to oversee and develop your health and wellness program, they can begin to work with students and staff on what type of services and initiatives they would like to have available. The sky is the limit and many ideas will be unique to your particular institution, but here are some examples:

- Start a vegetable garden on campus or partner with local farms to provide healthy produce for students and staff
- Provide mental health counseling options for students and staff members. This can often be done utilizing online telehealth services.
- If you don't have a gym on campus, partner with a local gym to provide discounted membership options for your students.
- Start a fitness-related club (or clubs) on campus to promote community and physical activity. This could be a run club, pickleball club, hiking club, surfing club, or whatever your students would be interested in.
- Organize a team for a church or YMCA adult sports league. Options could include softball, basketball, volleyball, soccer, etc.
- Partner with a local physician to provide routine checkups and sick care to your students if you don't have a clinic on campus.

Hopefully this gives you some ideas to consider when getting started. Once you have a health and wellness coordinator in place, they can start to develop programs targeted towards your specific institution. Considering the growing number of people struggling with mental and physical health problems, any service you can provide to promote overall well-

being will be helpful for students and staff. Feel free to start slow, get people involved, and have fun!