

means to retaining or reducing health insurance costs.

“Healthcare costs affect a business’ bottom line,” says Jody Perrecone CHIP corporate client manager. “By empowering employees to make healthy lifestyle choices, employers see less absenteeism, fewer workman’s comp claims, reduced coronary risk, and reduced need for medications.”

Many local companies have been involved with CHIP from the beginning, which has helped the program take off in Rockford. “We offer CHIP and have had a good response,” says Lori Heiser HR generalist at Bergstrom, Inc. “Without a doubt the people who have been through the program are the best advocates for it. What I like is that you get the information you need and can adapt the program to fit your life.”

Diehl is pleased to be a part of the Rockford community. “We want to help reduce medical costs in Rockford.”

Another important component of the community aspect of CHIP is the involvement of local restaurants, grocery stores and bakeries. “We partner with many local businesses including Mary’s Market and Great Harvest for whole grain breads, Woodman’s and Logli’s for fresh food choices, and countless restaurants for healthy menu items,” says Perrecone. “We don’t benefit from any of these businesses, except for the fact that we are able to make it easier for people to make better lifestyle choices.”

### *What You Can Expect*

The CHIP program, which has been reviewed in six medical journals and validated as a very sound program, is intense with two-hour classes four times a week for four weeks. But, when you consider that it has taken 40, 50 or 60 years to develop your current lifestyle, four weeks is a drop in the bucket. During those four weeks Diehl lectures on everything from “Eat More and Weigh Less” to “The Gift of Forgiveness.”

What is unique about the CHIP program is that it teaches the “whys” of lifestyle changes and then gives participants the “hows” to accomplish the change. Participants aren’t told what to

do. They are given information and then make their own choices.

“Everyone ends up customizing the information to suit their food allergies, tastes, work schedule, and such,” Greenlaw says. “From running the question and answer session for CHIP graduates, I have learned the successes and areas that need to be customized and personalized.”

CHIP participants receive Health Screenings before and after the sessions. “These screenings give irrefutable biometrics – blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose,” Diehl says. “When people see what has happened in four weeks they are shocked into joy. People are taking less medication [under a doctor’s supervision] and are feeling better. This is because the CHIP program attacks the causes rather than treats the symptoms.”

The average CHIP participant sees a 12 to 20 percent drop in cholesterol, 12 to 15 percent reduction in blood pressure, loses seven pounds, sleeps better and has higher energy levels. These reductions can have a significant effect on health and can translate into the decreased risk of heart attacks and strokes. Under their doctor’s care, participants can potentially reduce or eliminate medications.

After the classes are completed participants can join the alumni group, which helps them use what they have learned. This support system is an important component of the program. It has been shown in one study of Rockford CHIP alumni that over an 18-month period, program participants demonstrated significant improvements in both nutrition and physical activity behaviors.

### *Changing Lives*

Jim Hanson Jr. took the CHIP program in March 2006 after dragging his feet for three years. “My wife, Colleen, went through the program in 2003 and at that time I didn’t want to,” Hanson admits. “I think I distracted her from living the CHIP lifestyle.”

Colleen Hanson agrees with that. “I attended CHIP on the advice of Dr. Greenlaw because I suffered from Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD),” she says. “He gave me the option of

## Eat for Health

*Basic Guidelines for a Lifetime of Good Eating*

### Eat Less:

- **Fats and Oils:** Strictly limit fatty meats, cooking and salad oils, dressings, and shortening. Use margarine and nuts sparingly. Avoid frying (sauté instead with a little water in a non-stick pan). Especially avoid saturated and trans fats.
- **Sugars:** Limit sugar, honey, molasses, syrups, pies, cakes, soft drinks and sugar-rich desserts like pudding and ice cream. Save these foods for special occasions.
- **Cholesterol Foods:** Progressively eliminate meat, sausages, egg yolks, and liver. If used, limit dairy products to low-fat cheeses and non-fat milk products. If you eat fish and poultry, use them sparingly.
- **Salt:** Use minimal salt during cooking. Strictly limit high-salted products like pickles, crackers, soy sauce, salted popcorn, nuts, chips.
- **Alcohol:** Avoid alcohol in all forms, as well as caffeinated beverages such as coffee, colas and black tea.

### Eat More:

- **Whole Grains:** Freely use brown rice, millet, barley, corn, wheat, and rye. Also eat freely of whole-grain products such as breads, pastas, shredded wheat, and tortillas.
- **Tubers and Legumes:** Freely use all kinds of potatoes and yams (without high-fat toppings). Enjoy peas, lentils, chick peas, and beans of every kind.
- **Fruits and Vegetables:** Eat several fresh, whole fruits every day. Limit fruits canned in syrup. Limited fiber-poor juices. Eat a variety of vegetables daily. Enjoy fresh salads with low-calorie, low-salt dressings.
- **Water:** Drink eight glasses of water a day.
- **Hearty Breakfasts:** Enjoy multi-grain cereals, fruit and whole wheat toast. Jumpstart your day.