

## July Well Aware eNews

Welcome to the July 2022 issue of the *Well Aware eNews!* Read on to learn about—

- a webinar on the difference between celiac disease and gluten sensitivity and who might benefit from the gluten-free diet;
- ways to stay active this summer;
- opportunities to attend free on-site summer biometric health screenings;
- the MCPS Employee Assistance Program's no-cost and confidential, virtual or in-person counseling;
- other mental health resources through our medical insurance plans; and
- more!



### Don't Miss It

#### This month's free webinar— **Gluten Sensitivity, Celiac Disease, and the Gluten-free Diet**

Gluten-free diets have become quite popular. Attend this webinar to learn the difference between celiac disease, which is an autoimmune disorder, and gluten sensitivity. Learn about the gluten-free diet and the nutrients that need to be supplemented when not eating gluten. Find out about other conditions that might be alleviated with a gluten-free diet (e.g., other autoimmune diseases, autism, wheat allergy, and obesity) and how to know if you might benefit from eliminating gluten from your diet.

**Wednesday, July 20, 2022**  
4:30–5:30 p.m.

Please **email Well Aware** to register for the webinar. After registering, you will receive a link to the webinar in your Outlook email as well as an Outlook calendar reminder.

Spread the word with our **printable flyer**. Visit the **Wellness Webinar Library**.

*Presented by:*  
**Kaiser Permanente**

## Ways to Stay Active This Summer

Summer is a great time to get back into walking, biking, jogging or just playing outside with your kids. Getting active now will make it easier to keep it up when we get back to our more hectic schedules in the fall. From Zumba and yoga to tai chi, Well Aware and CareFirst are offering you some options to help you get fit this summer. For a class list and schedule, **email Well Aware**.

### Wellness Initiatives

#### Don't Miss Your Chance to Attend a Free Biometric Health Screening This Summer!

After suspending them more than two years ago due to COVID-19, Well Aware and MCPS-provided health plans will hold on-site biometric health screenings this summer. Beginning in July, we will offer these screenings to help you complete your Wellness Initiatives biometric health screening so you can save 1 percent of the total cost of your health insurance in 2023. **See a list of screening dates and locations.** Not quite ready to attend an onsite health screening? Even though the screenings will resume this summer, MCPS employees still are able to register for and complete **Biometrics Incentive Alternative 2023 Benefit Year** training on **Professional Development Online (PDO)** (course number 90899), in lieu of a biometric health screening. Employees who complete the training by **October 7, 2022**, will pay 1 percent less of their health insurance costs in 2023.

Employees who are able to complete their yearly physical at a Well Aware screening, with their doctor or at a MinuteClinic for CareFirst members, also have until **Friday, October 7, 2022**, to complete the screening or physical and receive the premium discount.

The Wellness Initiatives program provides employees covered by an MCPS-provided medical insurance plan with incentives to reduce their health insurance costs. By completing steps 1 and 2 below, your contribution to your health insurance will be reduced by 2 percent. Be sure to take advantage of the rate reductions by—

- **Completing a biometric health screening OR its alternative by October 7, 2022.** Attend an on-site health screening, see your doctor for an annual physical (or, if you are a CareFirst member, have your physical at a CVS Minute Clinic), **OR** register for and complete the **Biometrics Incentive Alternative 2023 Benefit Year** training. If you do, you will pay 1 percent less of your health insurance costs in 2023.
- **Completing the health risk assessment on your medical plan's website by October 7, 2022**, to pay 1 percent less of your health insurance costs. This is the **Real Age Test** for CareFirst, and the **Total Health Assessment** for Kaiser Permanente.

**Kaiser Permanente and CareFirst members: Be sure to log in to your medical plan's web page to consent to your participation in the program. Without your consent, your information will not be reported.**

Take the Wellness Initiative! **Learn more**.

## The MCPS Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Is Here for You

For many of us, the summer months are a time of relaxation to recharge from the school year. Summer also can bring feelings of anxiety about what the next school year may bring. Many of us have been increasingly stressed and worried—about our health and safety, the economy, or everyday activities. Please know the MCPS Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to support the emotional well-being of you and your household members. The EAP is open during the summer months with a range of available options, including no-cost and confidential virtual or in-person counseling.

You can reach the in-house EAP Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. at 240-314-1040 or our EAP partner, Kepro, 24/7/365 at 866-496-9599.

**Visit our website** to learn more about EAP's services and resources related to any personal issues you might be experiencing. **Read our latest issue of *A Healthy Outlook***, EAP's quarterly newsletter. Kepro offers **webinars and resources** on legal and financial matters, eldercare, and more. To access them, use passcode: MCPS.

## Check Out Our Online Health and Wellness “Toolbox”

In 2021, Well Aware established the *Well Aware Wellness Toolbox*, a web page with many resources to help MCPS staff adjust to the return to schools and offices once it was safe enough to do so. The *Toolbox* continues to provide physical and mental health resources, lists of free exercise and mindfulness classes, links to resources for improving sleep, nutrition, and more. The toolbox is updated each Monday to reflect Well Aware's weekly virtual class schedule and recorded Zumba and yoga classes.

MCPS staff are encouraged to take the time for self-care. Studies show that self-care is essential to well-being, especially during times of uncertainty and transition. Check out the **Well Aware Toolbox** to see what self-care resources will work best for you!

## Have You Visited Wellbeats Yet?

MCPS staff has free access to Wellbeats! Wellbeats offers a 24/7 virtual fitness, nutrition, and mindfulness classes. These classes can be streamed on your personal devices at home, school, or on the go. You can schedule classes in advance and invite your coworkers to join you; you also can download classes to play when you are offline. See **this flyer** for log-in information, enjoy this **welcome video**, and this video showing that **Wellbeats is for All. Get started today!**

## Mental Health Resources Available Through Medical Insurance Plans

Taking care of your mind is just as important as taking care of your body. To do both well requires living a healthy lifestyle, paying attention to how you feel, and doing simple things to take care of yourself.

MCPS and its medical insurance partners have resources for physical and mental health needs. Both medical plans also offer video visits, which make mental health care more accessible. Whether you are a member of CareFirst or Kaiser Permanente, we have outlined many resources available to you. **Learn more**.

## Montgomery County Offers MCPS Employees Free Access to Its Recreation Facilities

As a permanent MCPS employee, you have free access to all Montgomery County (MC) recreation facilities, including swimming pools and gymnasiums. You also are eligible for a 20 percent discount on an annual pool pass for your family members.

Interested? **Learn more** and visit the **MC Recreation website** for general information. You may **apply online** for the individual Total Rec Pass. The **Employee Family Pool Pass application** also is available online. Both passes are valid for one year; you need to reapply each year to continue your access to the facilities.

## Share Your Wellness Stories and Encourage Your Coworkers Through Twitter!

Well Aware is proud of MCPS employee for all of the hard work they are doing to lead healthy lives. It is time to share your stories and your spirit! Or, perhaps you need some extra motivation to begin a staff wellness program at your school, depot, or office, or to turn life-long unhealthy habits into healthy ones. Follow @mcpswellaware for incredible stories, wellness ideas, encouragement from your MCPS coworkers, tips on living a healthy life, or for updates on MCPS staff wellness programs. Follow the hashtag #mcpstaffwellness for tweets!

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