

The Wellness Center at City Hospital

Integrating fitness and health



Wellness Centers come in all shapes and sizes and offer services to all sorts of people. The Wellness Center at City Hospital in Martinsburg, West Virginia is a hospital-based facility which offers members the benefits of a health club with the backing of a medical hospital. Opened in 1999, the Wellness Center offers services to hospital patients along with the rest of the community. "Prevention has always been a big part of the mission of the hospital as well as providing wellness services to the community to keep them healthy," says Teresa McCabe, Director of Marketing for City Hospital. "When designing the building to house our new radiation oncology treatment service, we decided to make provisions for a wellness center in the building, not only for our employees but also for the community."

Members come from throughout the community and join because of doctors' referrals or treatment continuation as well as many other reasons. "We are a unique facility and attract a diverse group of members. The main reason people join is to keep healthy or get healthy," says The Wellness Center Director Christal Hutton. "Because we are affiliated with the hospital, that offers people a reassurance that what they are doing is safe and healthy."

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The center recently received a major makeover by nearly doubling the size and adding new equipment. "We have almost 2,200 members right now," says Hutton. "[The membership] has definitely grown since we expanded the facility. We have probably gotten 500 new members."

The center is mainly used by older adults, and the average member is 56-years-old. These members utilize the cardiovascular equipment, selectorized weight-assisted machines, free weights, aerobic classes, Pilates, Tai Chi, group cycling, Yoga, a therapeutic pool, sauna, child care center and massage therapy. Membership fees can be paid on an annual or monthly basis along with an enrollment fee. Members also receive a fitness assessment and two sessions with a health fitness instructor when they enroll. During this time, staff members work on an appropriate program based on the fitness assessment and teach members how to use the equipment to get the best results.

Hutton staffs the center with health fitness instructors who all have four-year degrees in a health-specific program and are accredited by a national organization. The center also has fitness technicians to help members with equipment. "Every six months, we reassess members and re-do their program based on the progress they have made, and what is working and not working for them," Hutton explains.

A very big draw for the center has been the addition of equipment from Technogym, which includes computerized equipment and a Smartkey, which keeps track of specific programs for individuals.

Over the past year, Hutton says the members have been very happy with the changes as well as the ongoing services and programs offered at The Wellness Center. She says they will be adding more programs and possibly an Olympic-sized pool in the future. But for now, they are concentrating on the current members and getting them in shape and healthy.

For more information about The Wellness Center, visit www.cityhospital.org. To learn more about Technogym equipment, log on to www.technogym.com. ■