

'Wellness at Wistar' Program Promotes Healthy Lifestyles, Cancer Prevention

The Wistar Institute, an international leader in biomedical research with expertise in cancer research and vaccine development, was accredited in August 2008, with the CEO Cancer Gold Standard™ from the CEO Roundtable on Cancer, in recognition of its efforts to improve the health of employees and their families and reduce their risks of cancer.

“As an NCI-designated cancer center, The Wistar Institute is proud to be part of the national effort on cancer,” said Wistar President and CEO Russel E. Kaufman, M.D. “I call on our nation’s executive leaders to join me in adopting these important standards to help employees reduce their risk of cancer. Committing to achieve the CEO Cancer Gold Standard may positively affect our bottom line, but it’s the potential savings in human lives that is the true benefit.”

Each month, Wellness at Wistar focuses on a health awareness topic. In keeping with Wistar’s National Cancer Institute Cancer Center designation, the program emphasizes cancer awareness and prevention. The monthly program consists of an internal newsletter, poster display, and guest speaker or health screening event.

Employee health and wellness has long been a focus for the 116-year-old Wistar Institute. Wellness at Wistar, launched in 2006, formalizes this approach and addresses the key areas required for Gold Standard accreditation. Wellness at Wistar includes components such as:

- A tobacco-free workplace policy
- Employee health benefits that cover smoking cessation, nutrition and weight control programs and/or treatment, fitness club membership, cancer screening tests and exams, and access to cancer care and qualifying clinical trials
- A Wellness at Wistar intranet website, newsletter and other internal communications and education about cancer screening and prevention
- Healthy food choices in the employee cafeteria and vending machines
- Fostering a culture that promotes physical activity

“I’m pleased that we are continuing to meet one of our primary goals of Wistar’s wellness program by educating our employees on pertinent health topics. Our posters, website and monthly lectures provide resources and information which I believe our employees view in a positive light,” said Jo-Ann Mendel, director of human resources.



Photo caption:

Wistar President and CEO Russel E. Kaufman, M.D., has his blood pressure checked at a free screening hosted by Wellness at Wistar in February. The program provided free blood pressure screenings to employees as part of “American Heart” month, designated to raise awareness of cardiovascular diseases. Photo credit: Frederick S. Keeney