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# health@work

[chistalexiushealth.org](http://chistalexiushealth.org)

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**DOT physical tips**

**Ergonomic grant & initiative**

**Focus like a pro**

**Company Care**

 **CHI St. Alexius Health.**

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### About CHI St. Alexius Health

CHI St. Alexius Health officially announced the formation of its regional health care system on April 19, 2016. The system is the largest health care delivery system in central and western North Dakota and is comprised of a tertiary hospital in Bismarck, and critical access hospitals (CAHs) in Carrington, Dickinson, Devils Lake, Garrison, Turtle Lake, Washburn and Williston and numerous clinics and outpatient services. CHI St. Alexius Health manages five CAHs in North Dakota - Ashley, Elgin, Linton, and Wishek, as well as Mobridge Regional Medical Center in Mobridge, S.D.

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# Fond farewell: Reflections on timelines and relationships

**T**his June, I will be retiring after 43 years of employment with CHI St. Alexius Health. I want to thank the past and present leadership for the opportunities given for professional and personal growth. And a very heartfelt thank you to all of my coworkers who allowed me to be a part of their professional and personal journeys. Any success that I may have had during this time is greatly due to the leadership, support and friendship of my coworkers. It has been a rich and wonderful experience to share my professional career with so many wonderfully talented individuals.

When looking back I would say the two major lessons have been learned. The first is that every aspect of a professional career and even your personal life has a timeline. I have been very fortunate to have been allowed to dream of and implement a wide variety of new programs and services over the years. The excitement that was experienced with the implementation and growth of these new programs/services was and is very special. But as time goes on some of these cherished programs/services come to an end for a variety of reasons. Understanding this reality helps to appreciate the opportunity that one has been given. So do it well as long as you can!

The second lesson is not to be defined by these programs/services that come and go, no matter how special they are to you, because they do have a timeline. The lesson that I have learned, later that I should have, is that what defines you is how you appreciate and care for those that you spent so much time with. The positive impact that you can have on your coworkers and they on you is phenomenal. All you need to do is take advantage of the opportunities presented each day. There is no timeline on the impact that relationships can have on your life. They will shape you as long as you live.

Health@Work was created for our EAP clients. We have taken the liberty to share other information that we trust will support the health and well-being of your company and its employees. Lindsae Timm is the new Director of Behavioral Health Services at CHI St. Alexius Health. Lindsae will be leading the EAP into the future and you will find her to be a strong supporter of the mission of EAP. There will be more to come about Lindsae in future issues. But do not hesitate to reach out if you have questions for her.

Thank you for the opportunity that you have provided me by allowing me to serve your company and its employees and their families.



*Myron Cullen*



Paul Millner,  
LPCC

# Understanding personalities at work

Working efficiently with different personality types is beneficial to sustain a strong team and healthy work environment. Each person can bring something different to the table, whether it's a strong work ethic, creative innovations, or the ability to take action. It is important not to underestimate these different strengths and contributions.



## Driver

Typically, the more assertive and driven coworkers will be D personality types. These people prefer to be in roles of authority or leadership where they can do the decision-making or in positions where they have the freedom to solve problems, be risk-takers, and create tangible results themselves.

## Influencer

Creative, personable, and expressive types are usually I-type personalities in the workplace. These people thrive in social settings, and therefore enjoy teamwork and collaboration. They are energized through their big, creative ideas and use their charisma to inspire and motivate other team members.

## Supporter

Usually, the most supportive personality types at workplaces will be the S-types, who often put the well-being and happiness of others before their own needs. This type of personality can typically get along with anyone and are agreeable by nature. These people are highly collaborative, patient, and prefer to let others lead the way and take control.

## The Analyst

Most often this personality type will be analytical and conscientious. These people may display personality traits such as being detail-oriented, introverted, and a perfectionist. Because they are introverts, they'd rather work alone than in large groups and prefer written communication rather than face-to-face meetings or calls.

# 5 benefits of understanding personalities

Taking the time to understand the different perspectives and work personalities in the office will ultimately help create a more positive and efficient environment for everybody. Knowing and understanding the different personalities is beneficial in the workplace and in personal relationships and interactions. Benefits of understanding personality types include:



1. **Avoid miscommunication**



2. **Better conflict resolution**



3. **Develop empathy for coworkers**



4. **Appreciate diversity**



5. **Understand your own personality and its interaction with others**



## Key takeaway

Working with different people can prove challenging at times, but understanding the individual personalities of your colleagues and how to work with different personality types can make a huge impact.



**Devin Poitra**  
Clinical Exercise Physiologist

We are pleased to introduce Devin Poitra to Company Care. Devin joined Company Care in December of 2023 and will support our Company Care provider. Devin performs testing and screening services for workers. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Exercise Science from Valley City State University and a Master's Degree in Clinical Exercise Physiology from the University of Mary. Devin holds a Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist certification from the National Strength and Conditioning Association.

### Education

Bachelor's Degree,  
Valley City State University  
Valley City, North Dakota

Master's Degree,  
Clinical Exercise Physiology Education  
University of Mary  
Bismarck, North Dakota



Jessica Clement,  
MS, LPCC



# Focus like a pro: Improving workplace attention

The definition of “focus” includes “to concentrate attention or effort” (Merriam-Webster, 2024). Most of us can think back to many occasions in which we have lost concentrated effort or attention in the workplace.

Staying focused at work allows employees to complete tasks efficiently and accurately. Individuals with a strong sense of focus tend to also experience less stress, as they are able to meet demands and problem solve accordingly.

Recently, while observing my daughter at a basketball training session, I overheard her coach stating that one of the areas that tends to be a major challenge for athletes is focus. He went on to say that even very skilled athletes will never excel (or maybe even play) at their favorite sport due to lacking focus. In this example, a lack of focus gets in the way of being able to pay attention to what a coach is saying and disrupts practice, growth and opportunity.

Losing our attention or focus in or outside of the workplace is very expected on occasion, but how can we maintain focus more consistently to improve performance?

In order to have the ability to focus, our minds and bodies require certain conditions to maintain stamina. Adequate sleep, good nutrition and regular exercise are protective factors that enable us to focus when we have many demands.

## Sleep

For most adults, seven to eight hours of sleep is ideal for cognitive functioning and concentration.

## Nutrition

Hunger can be a major distraction and therefore, regular, nutritious foods help us to keep our attention on our tasks. In addition, experts believe that healthy fats are particularly important for brain health, which can be found in foods such as nuts, olive oil and avocados. We know that sugar and excessive caffeine can result in brain/body “crashes,” so that super sugary coffee drink may not be ideal by late afternoon!

## Exercise

Exercise contributes to improved focus because when we get moving, healthy neurochemicals in our brain are released that stimulate focus and improve energy. Throughout the workday, small bursts (5-10 minutes) of movement can help with momentum and the ability to concentrate better.

# 6 Tips for Sharper Focus

Outside of healthy lifestyle habits, there are a number of small changes that employees can make to help improve focus throughout the workday. Try incorporating these 6 tips into your work week. The recommendation would be to try to stick to changes for a couple weeks and monitor focus levels to see if you notice improvements.



## 1. Minimize distractions.

Distractions get in the way by pulling our attention away from a priority. Common distractions range from checking the weather or social media to a dog barking or a colleague chatting. Pay attention to what pulls you away and try to eliminate temptations. Put your phone in a drawer and/or put it on silent mode, use noise-canceling headphones if appropriate or put a digital or physical “do not disturb” note during certain times of the day.



## 2. Complete important tasks first.

Before you begin each day, write a list of items that need to be completed and rank them by order of importance or urgency. Oftentimes, the most important items require the most mental stamina, so once you get going on one of these tasks, motivation and a feeling of accomplishment should follow.



## 3. Take small breaks.

The Pomodoro method encourages working diligently (i.e. redirecting focus back to your task) for 25 minutes, followed by a 5-minute break. Once four successful cycles are finished, a longer 30-minute lunch break should occur. The short break should include something pleasant, such as taking a quick walk, doing some stretches or enjoying a nice treat/beverage. Employees tend to feel rewarded for their efforts, which improves motivation and focus.



## 4. Keep a tidy work space.

Clutter is a known distraction and a tidy workspace is much more enjoyable. Try to organize your space so work items are easy to find and incorporate pleasurable items to help you feel refreshed. A comfortable and appealing workplace is conducive for productivity.



## 5. Do hourly check-ins.

Instead of writing out just one to-do list each day, check in with yourself every hour and write down the next task at hand. It can be motivating to try to complete tasks within a certain timeframe and to see items crossed off the list. Examples of an hourly goal might be “Respond to 15 emails in 60 minutes” or “Prepare for tomorrow’s meeting.”

Small changes in daily habits can result in positive progress. Remember to try to set reasonable expectations to increase focus slowly. If currently you are only able to focus for 10 minutes before becoming distracted and off-task, set a goal of focusing for 12 minutes. Rewarding yourself for success is another great tool for reinforcing change. Treat yourself with a tasty piece of gum or a water refill each hour, and at the end of a productive week, enjoy a special meal out or lunch with a friend.



*Connine Leingang, PT*

## Initiative and grant for better ergonomics

**T**he ergonomic initiative is a grant program that provides employers resources – which can include financial assistance – to help address ergonomic issues. The North Dakota Workforce Safety and Insurance (WSI) has such a program.



The purpose of the program is to reduce or eliminate workplace injuries, with the most common type of workplace injuries being that of cumulative-type of work tasks/duties. Sometimes what can begin as a minor ache or pain which, if ignored, has potential for creating costly claims.

The Ergonomic Initiative Grant Program consists of two parts: the Ergonomic Initiative Program and the Ergonomic Grant Program. The initiative program needs to be completed before an employer can be eligible for the grant program.



### **Ergonomic Initiative Program**

WSI provides financial assistance for provider services under this program. WSI pays 75% of the provider fees and the employer pays 25%. The provider's work and services will vary depending on the needs of the employer. Factors that determine the work and services include the number of employees, number of job classifications, type of work performed, and claim trending history.

A provider which is typically a Physical Therapist or Occupational Therapist makes a visit to the place of work.

That visit may include:

- Onsite visit to evaluate and discuss scope of ergonomic request
- Site visit to complete an ergonomic assessment to identify potential or existing problems
- Ergonomic recommendations and interventions
- Assistance with selecting appropriate ergonomic equipment
- Ergonomic education and training



### **Ergonomic Grant Program**

WSI provides financial assistance for an employer to purchase ergonomic equipment. The provider must recommend the equipment in the ergonomic assessment which is completed in the initiative program.

#### **Who can apply**

The Ergonomic Initiative Program is available to any employer:

- Who has an active WSI policy with employees or has selected optional coverage on the account.

The Ergonomic Grant Program is available to any employer:

- In good standing with WSI for a minimum of one year
- Completed the Ergonomic Initiative Program

#### **How to apply**

- Employer can complete the Ergonomic Initiative Employer Application online using the WSI's portal, myWSI
- Contact WSI's Customer Service at 800-777-5033
- Email [mywsi@nd.gov](mailto:mywsi@nd.gov)



Seth Zentner

# Preparing for your DOT physical

You wake up one morning for work and grab everything you need for the day. You look in your wallet and realize that your DOT certification is due in just a few days and you need to make an appointment to get it renewed. Make sure you call a registered DOT Provider as soon as you can to get an appointment sooner rather than later. Here is a guide of everything you'll need to prepare for your DOT exam.



## Medications/Conditions

First, take note of your medication and check if there is a risk of sedation with said medication. A note from your provider may be requested stating that the medication does not cause daytime sleepiness and you can safely operate a commercial motor vehicle. If you have been diagnosed with Diabetes, you will need to provide your HgA1c levels as recently as 6 months. An insulin waiver may also need to be filled out by your provider as well as a statement documenting that your diabetes is controlled and you have no complications.

## Vision/Hearing

Your vision and hearing will also be tested during your exam. Make sure you bring your glasses or wear your contacts during the exam. If you are blind in one eye, a federal vision exemption paper is required as well. If for some reason you have significant hearing loss during your DOT Exam that may indicate that you need hearing aids, a hearing test will be required within 1 to 2 months of the appointment.

## Sleep Apnea

Any sleep apnea disorders also need to be reported. Any recent sleep specialist consults study or copy of a sleep study should be brought in so the DOT physician can review the findings. If you use a CPAP machine, the

physician will need to see the usage stats for at least the past 30 days. The company that manages the CPAP machine should be able to obtain these stats for you. Compliance means 4 or more hours per night, or 70% of the time.

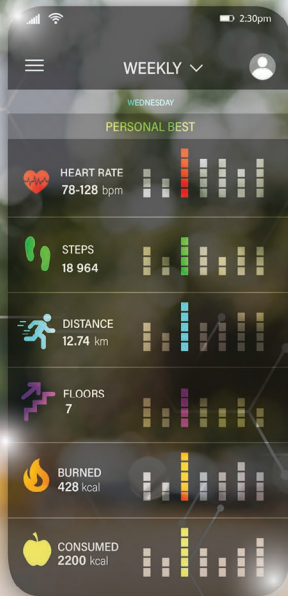
## Other Tests

There are a few other tests that will be done during your exam. Your blood pressure will be checked; guidelines show that you should have a blood pressure of 140/90 or less. If your readings are higher, you will need to see your primary physician so you can be treated to control your blood pressure. A urinalysis will also be performed to check for blood,

## Submit ASAP

Your last step is to submit your exam to the DOT so they can have it on file. Do this as soon as you are done to avoid any delays.

It's very important to make sure you have everything for your appointment, so there are no delays in getting your DOT certification in a timely manner. Ideally, you want this all handled beforehand to avoid getting your certification for less than 2 years or not at all. Next time you become aware that you're in need of a DOT exam, I hope that you now have the knowledge and understanding needed to prepare you for what's to come before and during your recertification.



# Know your numbers for improved wellness

**W**hat comes to mind when you think of your wellness? Is it directly attributed to your physical traits? Do you think of your dietary habits and physical fitness as a way to evaluate your wellness? Is it how you deal with relationships and social availability? To some, having a deep connection to a religious belief is a necessary part to their idea of wellness. Maybe it's a combination.

No matter what your definition is, finding a balance in life while looking for growth requires constant attention. It's not always easy, but that's ok.

I often hear close friends and family talk about losing weight in order to improve on one aspect of their wellness. They may choose to eat a more organic diet, and increase the amount of time in the gym to improve on their fitness levels. Those who see results both on the scale and in the mirror are quick to endorse their lifestyle.

Now don't get me wrong, the thought of feeling good about yourself should never be overlooked. Mental health is key to your overall wellness and whenever a positive change can be made, celebrate this accomplishment. But do you really know how that new diet and your activity level is really affecting your body? I mean, do you know your blood pressure data over time and heart rate response to exercise? Have you had a full fasting lipid panel reviewed in the last year by a healthcare professional, or glucose test completed? Ignoring how your recent diet and exercise routine is affecting your body's physiological response can lead to future health problems.

It is recommended you have a yearly physical completed by your provider. I would also recommend having labs completed before and after starting a dietary/exercise program. This will give you a better understanding of your body's progress. Take the time to know your numbers. Understand how that new diet is really working. Is it time to change up your gym routine? Record your improvement in a journal, reevaluate monthly and make changes when necessary. Remember to enjoy your wellness journey.



Shane Ornelas

## **Company Care**

*Keeping Your Workforce Healthy*

# Going above and beyond for our communities businesses

At CHI St. Alexius Health Company Care our skilled experts work to save your business time and money while keeping your employees healthy and productive. Customizable services to fit your company's needs.

Services Offered:

- Occupational Medicine
- Injury Management
- WSI Case Management
- Ergonomics
- Employee Assistance Program
- Wellness
- Sleep and Tobacco Cessation
- Organizational Health

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