

# **NewMedicine's onsite clinic spoils ABC Telecommunications employees with better health – and saves more than \$50,000**

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## **BOX**

### **Client**

ABC Telecommunications: [www.xxxxx.com](http://www.xxxxx.com)

### **Motivation**

To provide rich, cutting-edge benefits to its workforce

### **Solution**

NewMedicine's MedClinic at Work, with no cost to onsite employees

### **Results**

- Nearly half of onsite employees have used the clinic.
  - Employees are better managing their health and wellness.
  - New wellness programs.
  - At least \$50,000 saved in claims costs.
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## **MAIN TEXT**

### **Background**

Founded in 1996, ABC Telecommunications operates more than 22,000 cell phone towers and small-cell wireless infrastructures in the United States and 1,600 in other parts of the world. It leases those structures to wireless-communications companies, including every major wireless carrier, government agencies and data-service providers. Because of its emphasis on technical and strategic innovations, ABC Telecommunications, an S&P 500 company, has become the leader in the industry with annual revenue exceeding \$2 billion.

### **Motivation**

ABC Telecommunications, with 1,450 employees – many of them highly educated technical employees – understands that rich benefits help create a happier, healthier and more productive workforce. "Taking care of your employees pays for itself," said Henry Smyth, VP, Compensation, Benefits & Staffing.

The company is constantly looking for new ways to enhance its already-robust benefits and has focused on creating a culture of proactive healthcare management. "We believe healthcare costs will continue to go up unless companies introduce or support a change in how healthcare is provided," Smyth said.

One day, a member of the board of directors mentioned NewMedicine LLCs' telemedicine offering, MedClinic at Work. The board member had served as a NewMedicine founding board member.

MedClinic at Work offered the possibility for ABC Telecommunications to offer the services of a doctor's office without paying for the doctor or building out a medical clinic. Employees with minor ailments or health concerns could quickly visit the health clinic without leaving the building. Physicals, medical reviews, health/wellness checks and specialist care could be performed hands-on by the paramedic or via live video by a physician, potentially decreasing costs to the company's self-funded medical plan and cutting down on employee time lost due to sickness or doctor's visits.

ABC Telecommunications investigated the product as a possibility for the 500 employees in its largest office, in Columbus, Ohio.

"We're not doing anything in benefits to save money as the end-all," Smyth said. "We'd love to save money. But we want to enhance the experience for the employee. That will fund itself, because they'll just produce more, financially and operationally."

## **Solution**

For more than a year, ABC Telecommunications researched NewMedicine and other onsite-clinic providers.

"NewMedicine doesn't have any competitors in terms of the technology they offer," Smyth said. Other companies offered a large onsite clinic staffed by a physician's assistant and/or physician employed by the host company. That required a huge investment because it meant not only paying those medical professionals, but also a significant building-out project.

That wasn't the solution for ABC Telecommunications.

MedClinic at Work, though, simply requires a small room to house the paramedic, who is available from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. every work day, and the T-Cart that includes a digital stethoscope, 17-inch video monitor, video camera and multi-purpose scope.

NewMedicine employs the paramedic and the "undistracted provider" who sees the patients, a state-licensed member of its e-Care Group of physicians dedicated to ABC Telecommunications' employees. There are no start-up fees, and ABC Telecommunications would pay a flat monthly rate based on the number of employees assigned to the office.

"This made a lot of sense because it fit nicely with that model of being proactive in your healthcare management. It's convenient. There's no reason why you shouldn't go to the clinic if you're not feeling well or get pro-active and manage your health," Smyth said.

Few other companies were offering a telemedicine benefit, meaning it was something special the company could offer employees. And, it appeared the company could save money.

This was looking like a cost-savings, benefits-enhancing option for ABC Telecommunications. Because it required little investment, it was "a low-risk situation."

ABC Telecommunications decided to try MedClinic at Work for the rest of the year to see if it made sense to continue. In April 2011, building management reconfigured a human resources storage closet on the third floor. NewMedicine set up its equipment, which required just a phone jack.

"The implementation phase was seamless and simple," Smyth said.

Soon, employees were visiting for ear, nose and throat issues, colds, weight-management advice, blood-pressure and diabetes monitoring, blood draws and the health-concerns-detecting health risk assessments.

Turns out, it did make sense to continue the program. “They’re providing a benefit that our employees value,” Smyth said.

## Results

### **Twice a return on investment**

ABC Telecommunications figured that if 25 or 30 employees a month used the clinic, it was worth the company’s investment.

In that first month, the onsite clinic had 24 visits. In December, the number was 51 even with employees taking time away from the office for the holidays. In April 2012, the clinic had 61 visits.

Of the 500 onsite employees, 248 have used the clinic at least once.

Between April and the end of December, ABC Telecommunications saved \$50,000 in claims that would have been paid to a near-site clinic, emergency room or primary-care physician, Smyth estimated.

And that’s not even counting the intangible, immeasurable savings.

ABC Telecommunications calculated that, on average, the company loses 2.5 hours of productive time when an employee goes to a doctor’s appointment offsite. MedClinic at Work visits take between 20 and 40 minutes, and there’s rarely a wait, Smyth said.

And ABC Telecommunications saves uncountable money because medical issues are caught earlier, before they progress and the cost for treatment increases significantly. For example, preventing a pre-diabetic from developing full diabetes can save \$250,000, Smyth estimated.

“All the good things that have happened because of the clinic being here, that is not figured in the cost savings,” Smyth said. “That is just a pure math equation.”

### **A healthier, more productive workforce**

Employees pay nothing to use the onsite clinic. That, and the convenience, makes it more likely employees will seek the healthcare services they need. Employees who otherwise wouldn’t do to a doctor are using the clinic to manage their blood pressure or getting their weight, sugar or cholesterol levels checked, Smyth said.

“You can’t really measure the costs avoidance there,” Smyth said. “Proactive healthcare management is happening because of the clinic.”

MedClinic at Work offers incredible quality, he said, with patients seeing a tenured doctor via video link who can do everything that a doctor standing in the room can do.

Employees can go to the onsite clinic and get a prescription to battle their ailment quickly, instead of waiting days to get in to see their primary-care physician. That means the employees are feeling better sooner – meaning they’re feeling and performing their best sooner.

ABC Telecommunications employees are used to being treated well. They’ve said the MedClinic at Work clinic is another example of the company hitting it out of the ballpark, Smyth said.

“We’ve gotten tons of emails from employees saying they appreciate us putting in the clinic, what a great experience it is, how ABC’s always on the cutting edge. It’s all good feedback.”

**An extra resource – without extra cost**

Allen, the onsite paramedic, twice discerned the need for an employee to seek immediate emergency medical attention for the problems that brought them to the clinic. He recognized what was happening, knew what needed to be done, called the ambulance and made sure the proper care was taken until the ambulance arrived.

When the paramedic’s not saving a life or facilitating exams, he’s conducting health risk assessments – the number of employees getting their HRA has increased since the clinic opened, Smyth said – presenting wellness videos, implementing a blood pressure-lowering campaign or giving advice on what to eat, how to properly exercise and how to prevent diabetes and hypertension. That doesn’t cost ABC Telecommunications anything extra – NewMedicine pays the paramedic to be onsite for eight hours each day.

“That’s a huge help,” Smyth said. “The HR staff is laden with dealing with regulations. So now they can focus on those and let the paramedic take care of the wellness stuff.

“It’s a helpful resource, having him here and really having him challenge us on our wellness programs.”

In the grand scheme of things, the \$50,000 savings is real but piddly for a \$2 billion corporation, Smyth said. “That’s not why you do this onsite clinic. You do it to change behavior and to incentivize the right behaviors, which inherently can only result in healthier employees, which means higher operational success and financial success. This onsite clinic supports that.”

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**Contact information**

To learn more about how MedClinic at Work can help you build a healthier workforce while saving your company money, visit [www.xxxxx.net](http://www.xxxxx.net) or call toll-free 1-877-xxx-xxxx.

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