

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY®
HUMAN RESOURCES



Benefits & Wellness

Faculty & Staff Survey Report | 2019

*A special acknowledgment to the GVSU Statistical Consulting Center
students and faculty for conducting statistical analysis of the data:
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
2019 Survey	3
Benefits General Findings and Satisfaction	4
Perception of Inclusivity of GVSU Benefits	6
Wellness and Work Life Findings	7
Work Life Data	10
THRIVE @ GVSU	11
Conclusion	12
Recommendations and Analysis	12
References	13

INTRODUCTION

In its 2016-2021 strategic plan, Grand Valley State University aims for a well-established reputation for the wellness of students, faculty and staff at all levels (Strategic Priority 3: Institutional outcome E:Objective 3.E.3*). To monitor progress toward meeting this strategic objective for the University, Human Resources Benefits and Wellness administers satisfaction surveys and tracks medical spending to demonstrate measurable success of benefits plans, programs, and services offered to faculty and staff. The goals of the April 2019 Human Resources Benefits and Wellness survey were to assess a snapshot of faculty and staff attitudes and perceptions of benefits, wellness, and work life services and resources at GVSU, and also to understand changes in attitudes and perceptions from the benefits and wellness survey administered from April 2016. The 2018 Annual Benefits Review and Wellness Report from Priority Health were two other tools used to track faculty and staff participation in the Thrive @ GVSU program to understand potential for managing health care trends. Detailed findings from these evaluation tools, and data compiled by the Work Life Consultant, are outlined in this paper to report satisfaction and feedback, highlight trends, and demonstrate impact for the Benefits and Wellness programs and services.

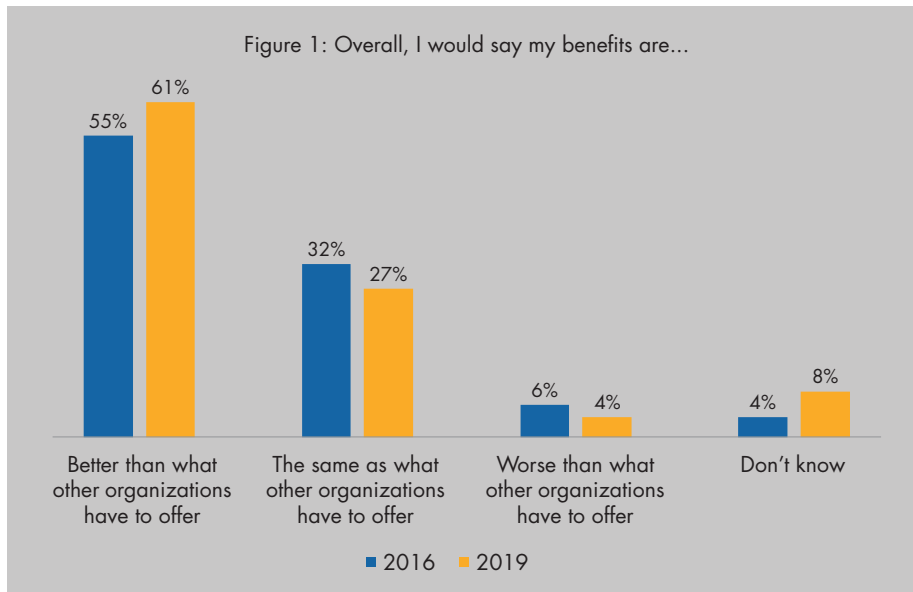
2019 SURVEY

The GVSU HR Benefits and Wellness survey was administered to all benefit eligible faculty and staff in April 2019. The survey asked questions regarding satisfaction in benefits offerings and wellness and work life services and programs. A total of 891 responses were received (35% response rate). Overall findings from the survey indicate satisfaction among faculty and staff regarding the benefits offerings, strong interest level in the wellness and work life offerings, and engagement in healthy lifestyle behaviors.

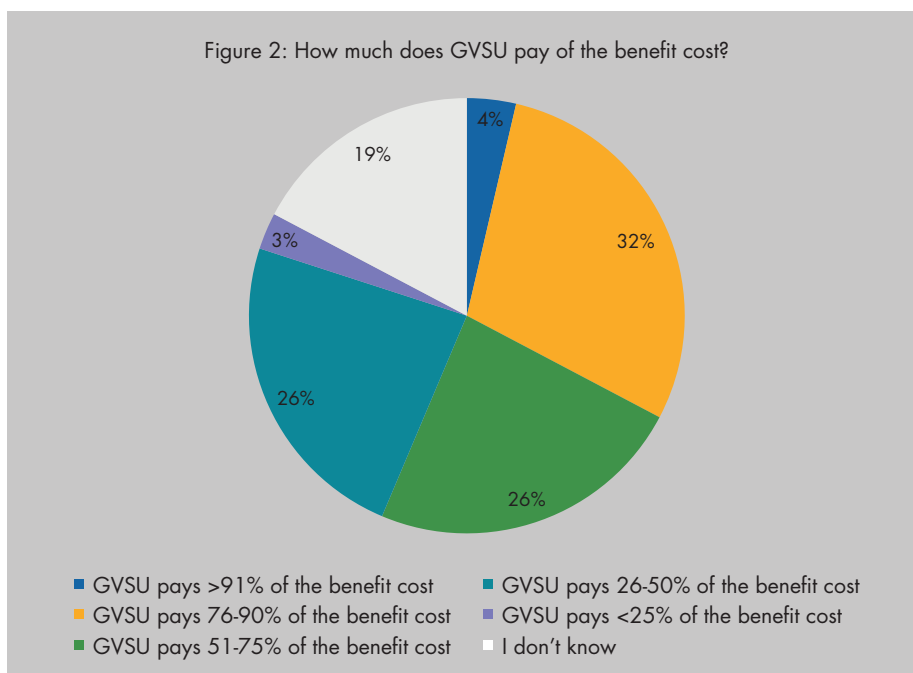
*GVSU 2016-2021 Strategic Plan, www.gvsu.edu/spaa/gvsu-2016-2021-strategic-plan-8.htm

Benefits General Findings and Satisfaction

Overall, faculty and staff are satisfied with the benefits offered at Grand Valley State University, with 61% indicating benefits are better than what other organizations have to offer, an increase from 55% in the 2016 survey (Figure 1).



GVSU's 2019-2020 benefits budget was \$78,208,375. As a percent cost share, GVSU pays nearly 80% of the benefits cost annually while faculty and staff pay close to 20%. From the 2019 benefits survey, 32% of faculty and staff believe GVSU pays 76-90% of the cost, while 26% each believe GVSU pays 51-75% and 26-50% (Figure 2).



90%

indicate GVSU's medical plan provides good access to the health care they need (as found in both 2016 and 2019 surveys)

86%

feel that GVSU benefits are inclusive and meet their needs

80%

indicate their medical benefits meet expectations or are above/well above expectations, an increase from 75% in 2016

76%

say that customer service from Priority Health meets or exceeds expectations, up from 73% in 2016

75%

report that GVSU's efforts to manage continually rising costs meets or exceeds expectations, an increase from 70% in 2016

73%

indicate communication they receive about GVSU's retirement plan meets or exceeds expectations, similar to 2016

57%

indicate retirement planning workshops and seminars meet or exceed expectations, similar to 2016

A number of open-ended comments reflected a desire for review of expanding maternity leave to parental or "paid leave."

Benefits General Findings and Satisfaction (cont.)

Comparison of satisfaction responses for medical, prescription drug coverage, dental and retirement benefits, for both faculty and staff, are presented in Figure 3 and 4.

[FACULTY]

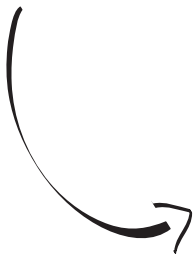
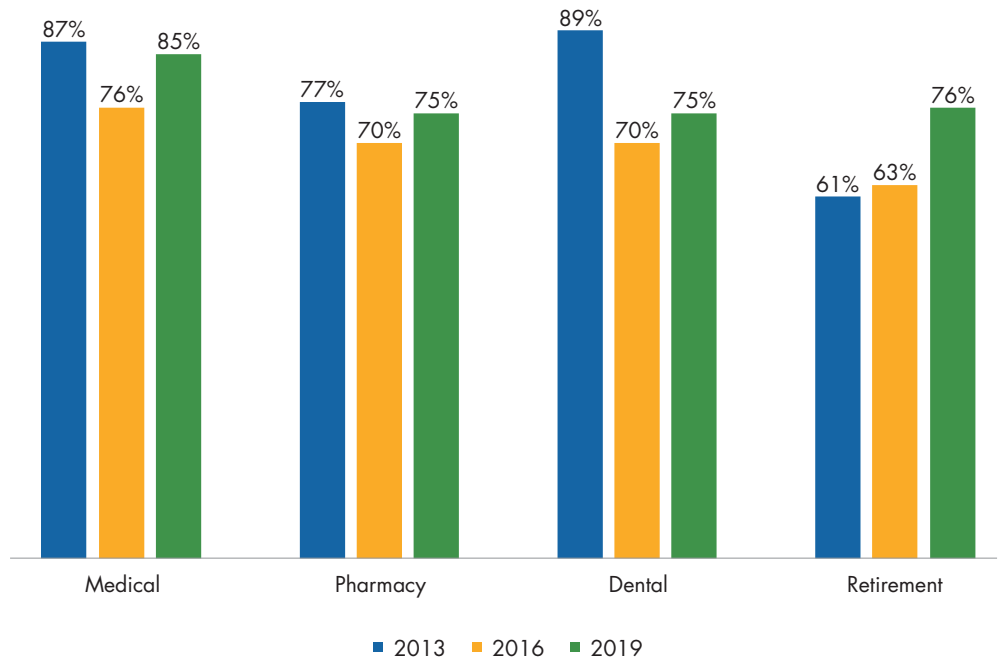


Figure 3: Faculty Satisfaction of Benefits Plans from 2013-2019



[STAFF]

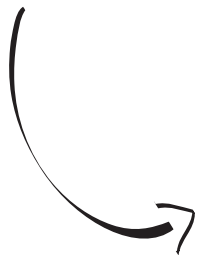
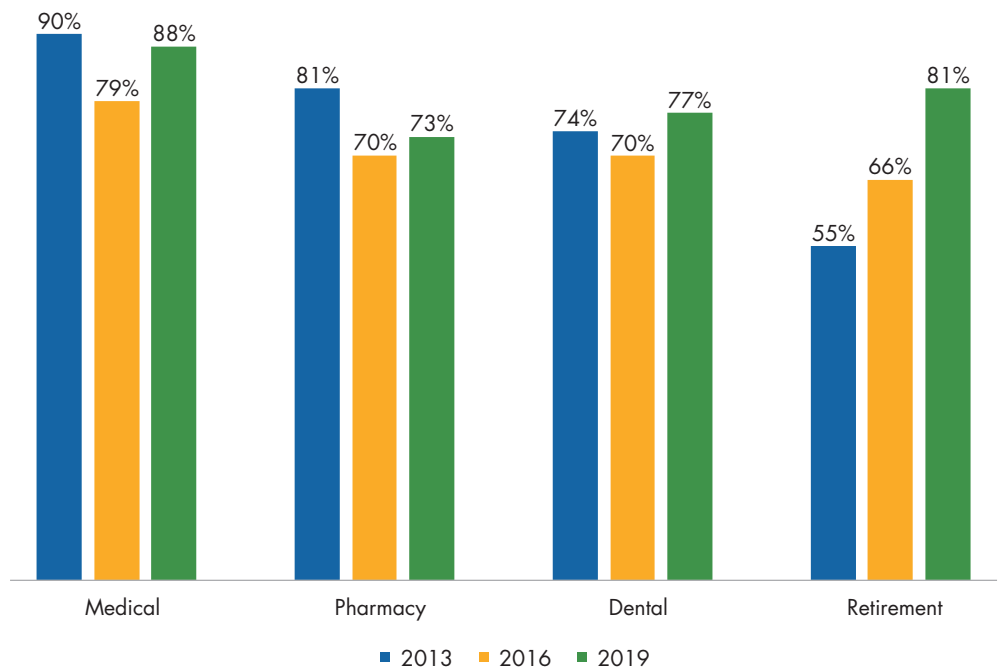


Figure 4: Staff Satisfaction of Benefits Plans from 2013-2019



Perception of Inclusivity of GVSU Benefits

In addition to overall satisfaction with the benefits plans, faculty and staff generally agree that GVSU benefits are inclusive and meet their needs (86%).



Further analysis of responses based on gender and having a child under the age of 26 in the household was also conducted. Participants report high levels of feeling GVSU benefits are inclusive in these categories with gender at 80% or higher, and child status at 87% or higher (Figures 5 and 6).

Though faculty and staff who participated in the survey with children younger than 26 overall indicated agreement with the statement, "GVSU benefits are inclusive and meet their needs," comments indicated a need for attention to parental leave policy and practice. A few comments include:

Figure 5: I feel that GVSU benefits are inclusive and meet my needs (Specific to gender)

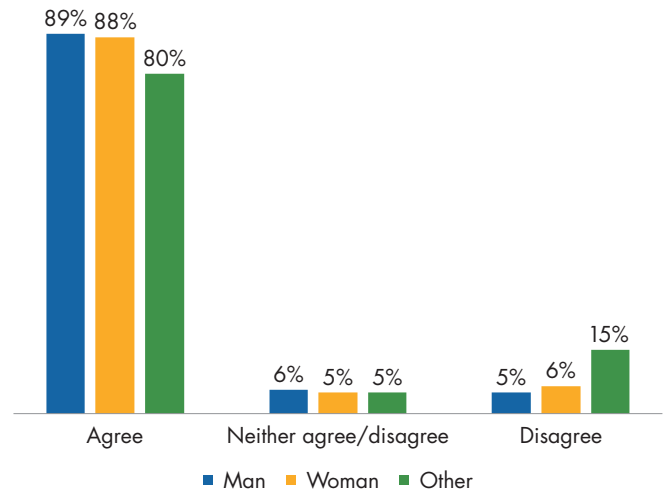
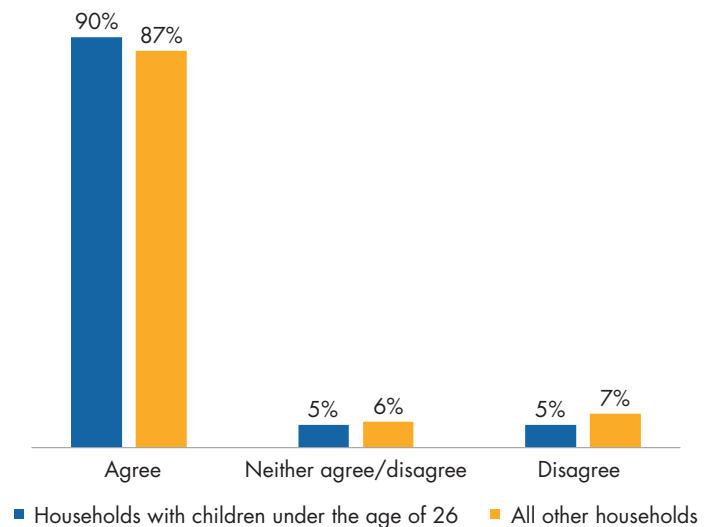


Figure 6: I feel that GVSU benefits are inclusive and meet my needs (Specific to households with children under the age of 26)



I would also like the university to work on a more comprehensive and compassionate plan related to 'paternity leave' or 'second parent' leave for when a new child comes into the family.

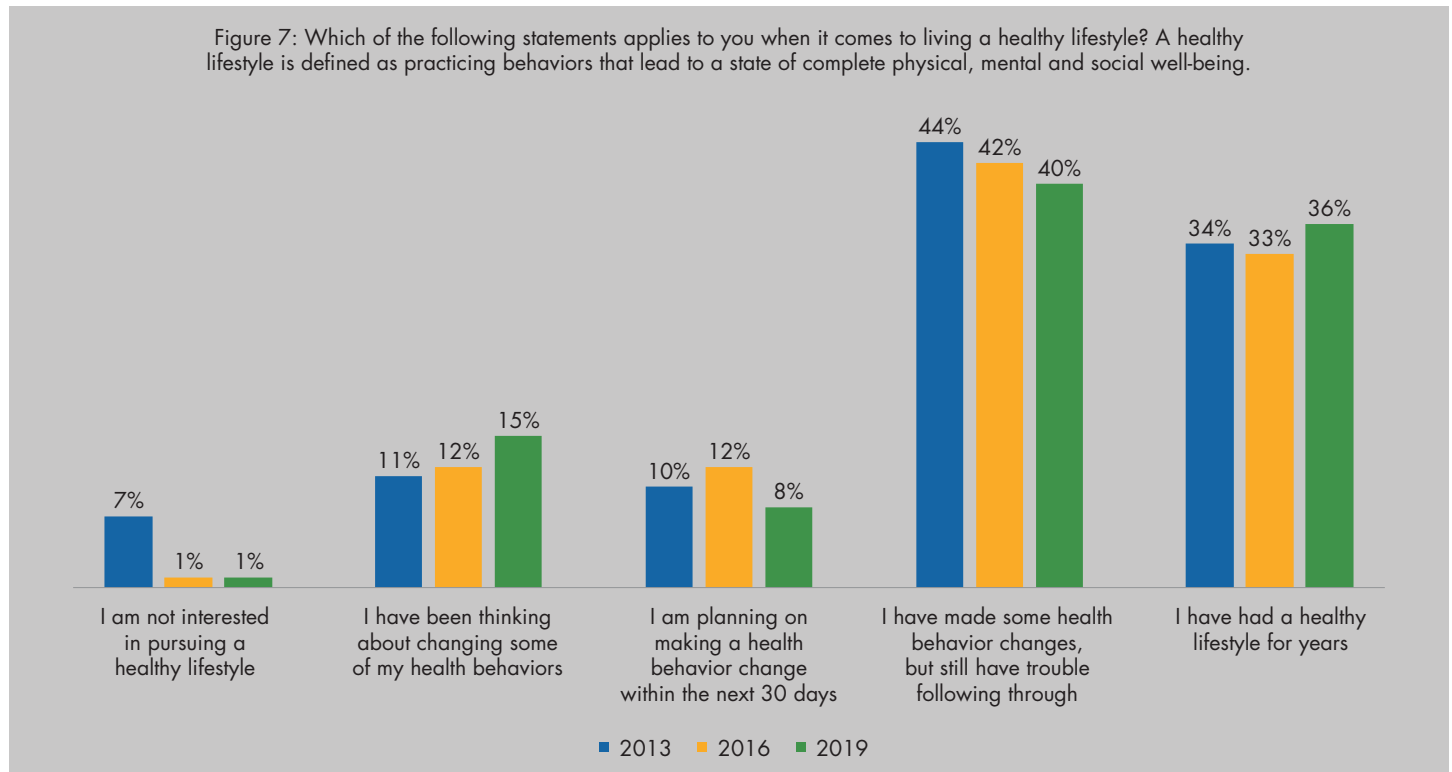
GVSU needs to have infant care. Do you know how hard it is to find care? Places have a year long wait list just to get in.

I would like to see GVSU do better with family leave options. I know it is a complicated issue, but I think GVSU is a great place with smart people. We could be leading the charge of offering inclusive policies and, thus, attracting and maintaining talent.

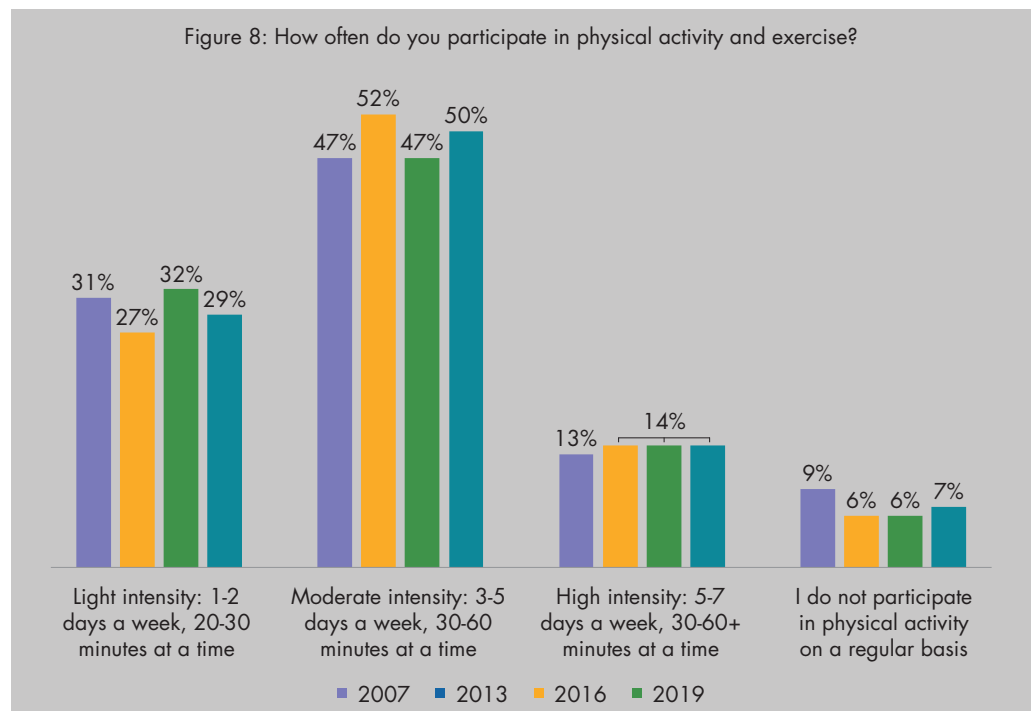


Wellness and Work Life Findings

An overwhelming number of faculty and staff feel that Grand Valley State University values their overall health and well-being (90%). Many faculty and staff also indicate they receive support from their immediate supervisor regarding their overall health and well-being (71%). When it comes to behavior change in 2019, 40% of faculty and staff report they have made some health behavior changes, but still have trouble following through with them (Figure 7).



When asked about time spent participating in physical activity, half of the faculty and staff report moderate activity levels (Figure 8). Between 2007 and 2019 trends appear to remain the same between the percentage of faculty and staff who engage in light intensity (around 30%), moderate intensity exercise (around 50%), high intensity (around 14%) and no participation in physical activity on a regular basis (7%).

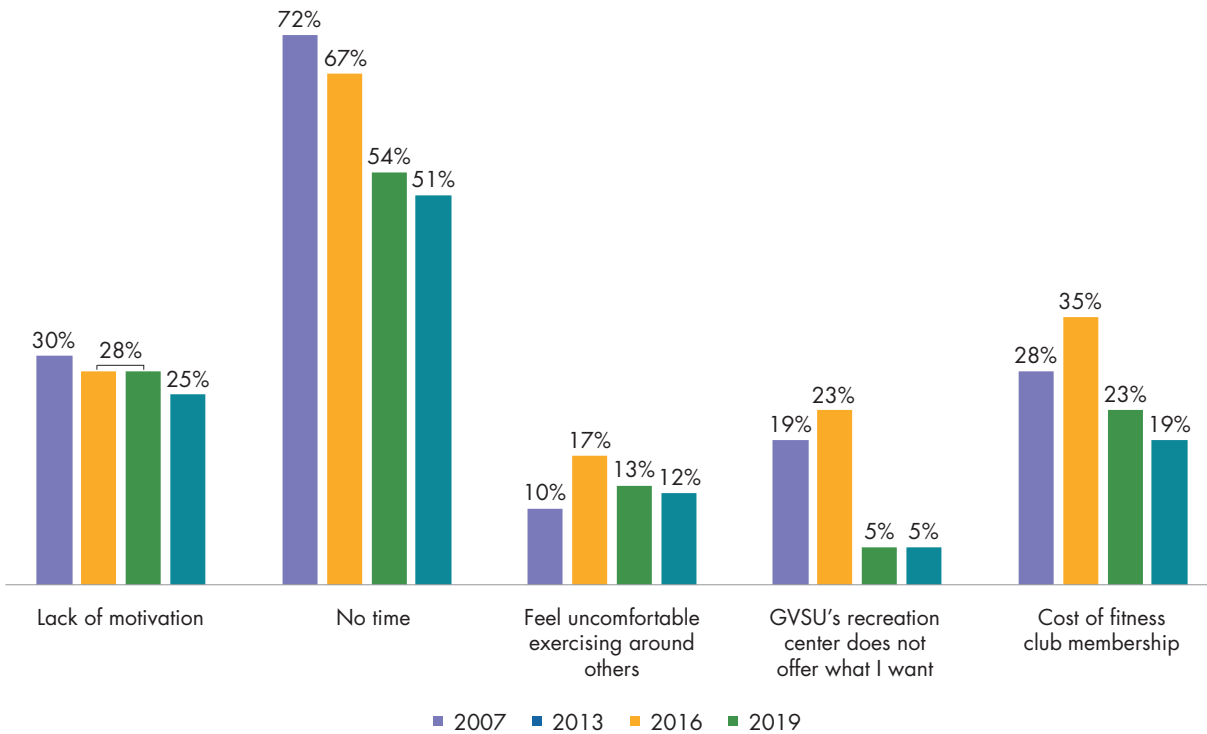


Wellness and Work Life Findings (cont.)

Many faculty and staff participate in physical activity, however, barriers still remain. Top barriers to exercise continue to be no time and lack of motivation (Figure 9). The number reporting no time as a barrier decreased over the years, down from 72% to 51%. Also, the barrier "GVSU's recreation center does not meet my needs" decreased from 23% in 2013 to 5% in 2016 and 2019 possibly due to recreation center renovation and additions.

Though generally healthy, faculty and staff are less likely to report a high level of positive energy at work than the other categories. Only 34% of respondents indicate they start the day feeling fully rested.

Figure 9: What are some barriers that prevent you from regular exercise?
(Check all that apply)



Overall, faculty and staff at Grand Valley State University are generally healthy. In the 2019 Benefits survey administered in April, faculty and staff reported healthy behaviors:



89% never use tobacco



76% eat breakfast everyday



88% keep moving forward even when they encounter setbacks



85% devote whatever time and effort is needed to do a job well done

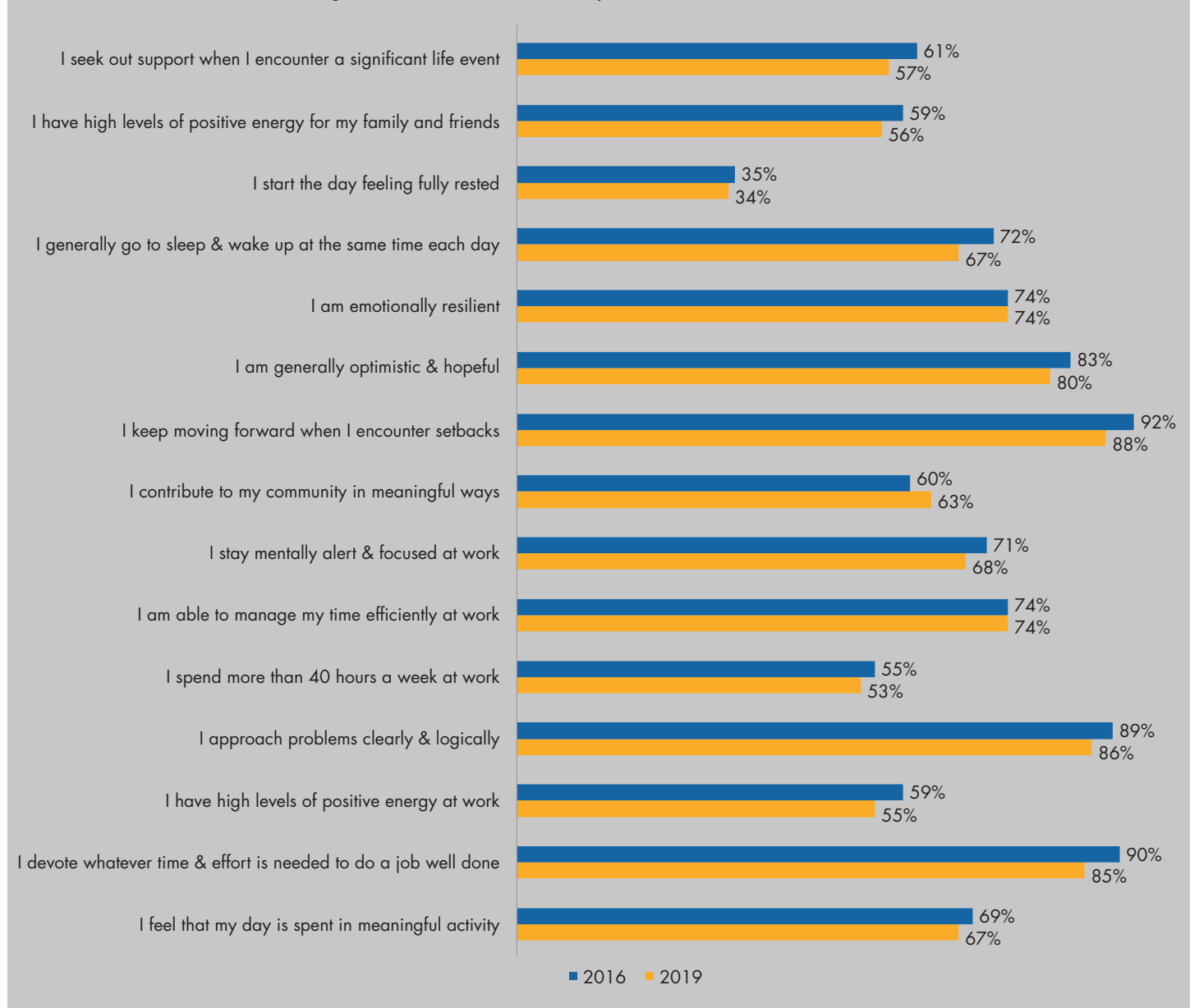


53% exercise aerobically three or more days each week

Wellness and Work Life Findings (cont.)

Faculty and staff were also asked to report emotional resiliency and mental health indicators in both 2016 and 2019 surveys. Areas for improvement continue to be starting the day feeling fully rested and having high levels of positive energy while at work as well as helping faculty and staff seek out support when they encounter a significant life event. GVSU faculty and staff continue to report high levels of devoting time and effort to do a job well done and report they keep moving forward when they encounter setbacks. Details are provided in Figures 9 and 10. Though generally positive in terms of overall responses, further analysis demonstrates consistently lower percentages in this area reported by women, people of color, those who identify as other and younger people. This may speak to a need in targeted marketing around these populations.

Figure 10: Emotional resiliency and mental health indicators



WORK LIFE DATA

To address emotional resiliency, mental health, and work life issues for faculty and staff, a Work Life Consultant is available as a part of the wellness services at Grand Valley State University. The Work Life Consultant provides supportive tools, plans wellness events, and develops presentations to support all faculty and staff in times of need, and also in maintaining wellness and balance.

Between January 1–June 30, 2019, the Work Life Consultant had 192 contacts, 82 of which were new (Figure 11). Referrals primarily came from the employee as a self-referral, or as a supervisor or colleague referral. A number of referrals also came from presentations or trainings conducted by the Work Life Consultant* (Figure 12).

Figure 11

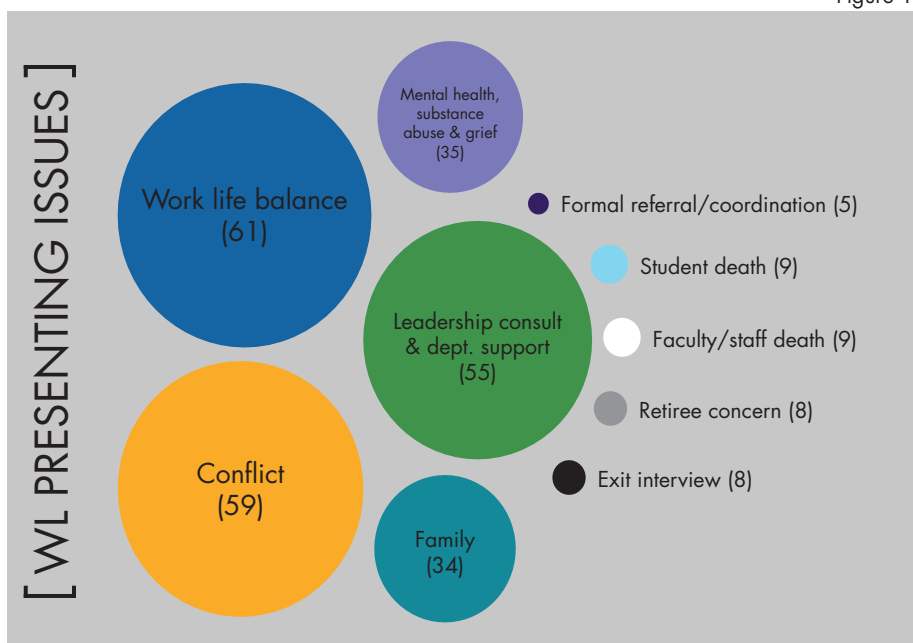
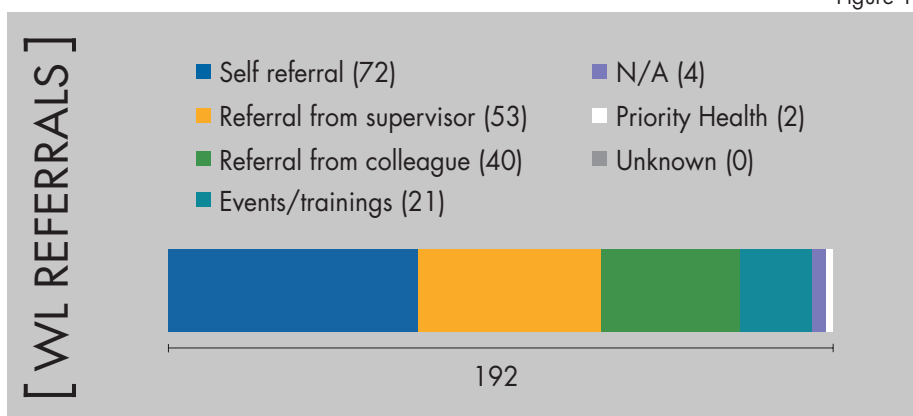


Figure 12



In addition to individual consults, in the same six-month time period, there were 35 work life workshops and trainings with a total of 415 attendants (non-unique). Of the presentations and events, 19 were requested by leadership or employees and 16 were scheduled as part of the work life programming. Examples of requested events include LGBT focus groups and CLAS Unit Head workshops. Work Life workshops included the Communities of Support and Practice appreciation breakfast, retirement workshops and the Excellence Series trainings.

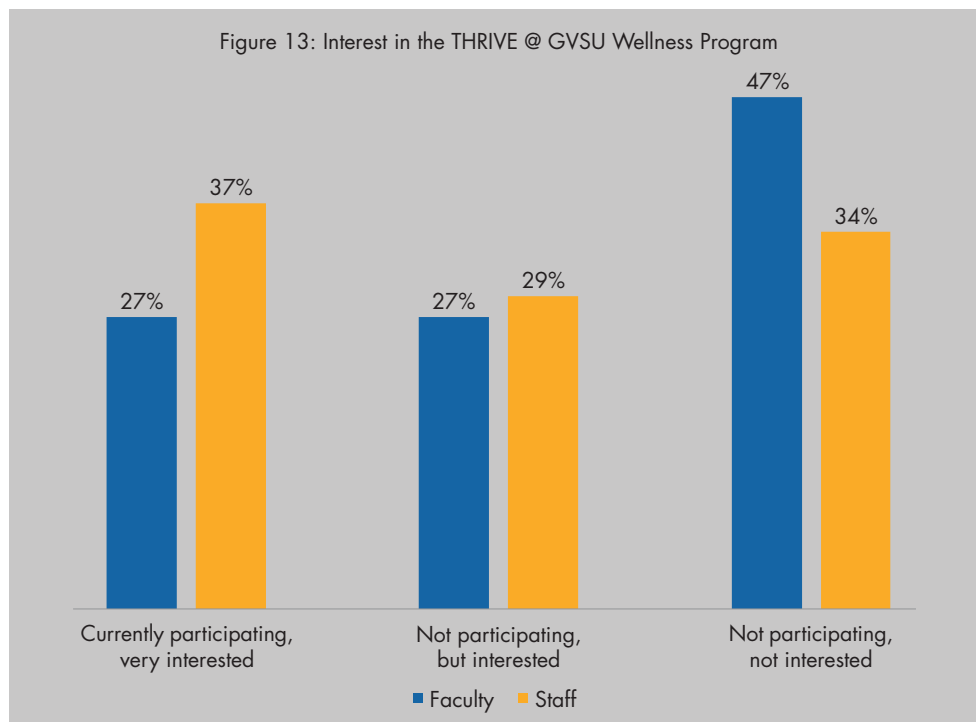


*Work Life Data provided by the Work Life Consultant from January 1–June 30, 2019.

THRIVE @ GVSU

In addition to a robust Work Life program, GVSU offers wellness coaching for faculty and staff as a medical benefit. THRIVE @ GVSU is a program offered by Human Resources to support healthy lifestyles through a strategic effort from benefits, wellness and work life offerings, resources and services. Rolled out in 2018, the program today consists of engaging with a Priority Health wellness coach for three months to develop a wellness vision and goals to support the faculty or staff member's vision. The program is voluntary and free for benefit eligible faculty, staff and household members.

Prior to the THRIVE @ GVSU program model, faculty and staff could earn rewards for completing an online health assessment and coaching. Positive feedback and goal achievement from wellness coaching participants in 2017 and 2018 indicated the need to continue to offer and increase participation in coaching to assist more faculty and staff in meeting their goals and increasing their health and well-being. Results from faculty and staff focus groups and survey work completed in the spring of 2018 indicated the online health assessment was a barrier to participation in the program. With the goal of engaging as many faculty and staff in the coaching program a priority, the health assessment requirement was removed as a barrier to participation. Figure 13 illustrates faculty and staff interest in the current program format from the 2019 Benefits and Wellness survey.



Initial results from the THRIVE @ GVSU program demonstrate positive trends. In the fall of 2018, a total of 1,530 members (1,070 employees and 460 spouses) signed up for the program during the open enrollment period. As of September 30, 2019, 773 members engaged in the program, 713 members completed it, and 550 redeemed their \$100 gift card from Priority Health. Participation numbers in the previous program format were half of what they are now, with around 250 members completing the coaching program. THRIVE @ GVSU demonstrates initial success in engaging more people in coaching. Comprehensive data including coaching goal and health outcomes will be available in November 2019.

CONCLUSION

Overall, findings from the April 2019 GVSU Benefits and Wellness survey indicate high satisfaction levels with the benefits plans. Faculty and staff feel valued by the University and their supervisors when it comes to the support of their health and well-being. Generally, faculty and staff engage in healthy behaviors, though rest is a key area of improvement for all employees. A number of employees also indicated a need for improvement in the family leave policies at the University to better align with best practice models.

Participation in the THRIVE @ GVSU program more than doubled in 2019. Though final numbers and impact will not be available until November 2019, preliminary data demonstrates that faculty and staff who engage with a wellness coach benefit and succeed in meeting wellness goals.

The Work Life program and services reach a large number of faculty and staff across campuses. It is requested for consulting, training, and guidance by supervisors and leaders across the University.

Recommendations and Analysis

Based on faculty and staff feedback, and to align with national best practices for supporting employees, focus on family leave and policies will be important in the coming years to ensure GVSU maintains the status of a top employer. Currently, the Work Life program is available to assist faculty and staff in their efforts for child care. Data shows faculty and staff are taking advantage of the program, as 22% of the Work Life presentations focus on child and elder care issues.

Levels of physical activity for faculty and staff have stayed the same over the reporting periods, demonstrating how difficult it can be to change behavior when it comes to increasing physical activity levels. Though 50% of GVSU faculty and staff report moderate activity, this number is still positive compared to 27% of all Michigan adults who report no physical activity at all (America's Health Rankings, 2018). Because physical activity data does not demonstrate measurable increases in the amount of moderate exercise for faculty and staff, and there is a high need for improvement in "rest," focus in the coming years will to promote and connect faculty and staff with wellness coaches. This will ensure support for specific wellness goal setting around areas that impact rest, including emotional strength, financial, social and life goals.

To demonstrate return and impact of the benefits and wellness programs and services, continued medical and pharmacy modeling will help determine return on investment for the university and its strategic goals. In addition, focus on chronic conditions through disease and condition management is also vital when supporting faculty and staff health and costs for the university. Also integral to long-term viability, is visible support from top administrators, middle management and a supportive campus environment. With this context, programs, resources and services offered by Human Resources will help GVSU to maintain a healthy workforce to educate students to shape their lives, their professions and their societies.

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