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**Health Department of Northwest Michigan News Release**

**Health Department Northwest Michigan named Healthy Michigan worksite**

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan recently received a Healthy Michigan Worksite Award for efforts to improve the health of its workforce. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Healthy Michigan Worksite Award recently recognized the health department for using Designing Healthy Work Environments at Work (DHEW) tools and actively investing in wellness programs designed to improve the health of staff.

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan, one of three statewide gold medal winners, was cited for demonstrating a commitment to enhancing its culture of health by focusing on the work environment along with organizational practices and policies.

“Our employees are our biggest assets, and they are dedicated to keeping our communities healthy,” said Lisa Peacock, Health Officer for the Health Department of Northwest Michigan. “We know that for them to do their important work, they need a healthy workplace! This award reflects our culture which values employees and strives to create an environment that supports their health in every way,” she noted.

Lynne DeMoor, a nutritionist and Community Health Coordinator who helps oversee LiveWell, the wellness program for the Health Department of Northwest Michigan, said wellness is a value shared by the employees in the work they do in the community and in their actual workplace.

“Having a workplace that focuses on physical and mental health for our employees helps us serve our community and fulfill our mission of promoting well-being, preventing disease, and protecting the environment,” DeMoor said.

The LiveWell program uses a strategy of nudging employees to take steps to improve their health. Healthy nudges are delivered through weekly emails, healthy potluck lunches, lunch and learn sessions, monthly challenges and even bathroom stall reading inserts. This month’s challenge is “March Gladness,” which emphasizes the importance of noting gratitude. The health department also has a Wellness Policy that includes suggestions for healthy meetings, active meetings, and environmental considerations.

Cutline:

*The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information, visit [nwhealth.org](http://nwhealth.org).*

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Health Department of Northwest Michigan staff show off their salad in a jar recipe at a potluck recently. This event, and many more, is part of the reason the health department received a Healthy Michigan Worksite Gold Medal Award for efforts to improve the health of its workforce.