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By Michelle V. Rafter

Featured Article

Apps for Social Wellness Programs

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If you're considering launching a social wellness program, get ready to sort through an ever-growing list of services and apps. "The list is endless, and new ones are popping up all of the time or migrating from B to C to B to B," says Fran Melmed, a human resources industry consultant who's getting ready to debut her own app.

Here's a sample of what's available:

Hotseat: Melmed's app, called Hotseat, lets employees set alerts to get up and move during the workday. Workers can use the app alone, in groups or for team challenges. The network lets employees monitor and share their progress; employers keep track through a Web portal. Melmed's company, Context Communication Consulting, is due to show Hotseat at a June wellness conference and is negotiating a partnership with wellness vendor Limeade, she says.

Keas: A startup online social game platform created by the former head of the now-shuttered Google Health groups employees in teams of six to meet health and fitness challenges, earn points and share updates through a Twitter-style news feed. By the end of the first quarter, the venture-backed, San Francisco-based company expected to have 50 clients representing approximately 150,000 covered lives (employees and dependents), including Bechtel Corp., Pfizer Co. and SuccessFactors Inc. In early May, Keas partnered with Brain Research Inc. to incorporate brain fitness games into its offerings.

Limeade: One of the first social wellness platforms, Limeade lets employees set health or fitness goals, monitor their progress and share how they're doing in an online community. The 6-year-old company has approximately 50 customers, according to a *Puget Sound Business Journal* report, including Chipotle Mexican Grill Inc., Holland & Hart and Intuit Inc. As part of a recent executive team build-out, the Bellevue, Washington, company hired a former general manager at Johnson & Johnson's Wellness & Prevention Inc. division as senior vice president of operations and "customer

delight."

ShapeUp: The 6-year-old, venture-backed Providence, Rhode island, company offers a virtual, private social network that employees can use to create profiles, share health goals and fitness interests, and participate in group challenges. The company has 250 company and health plan clients, including Aetna Inc., CVS Caremark, and Sprint Nextel Corp. For now, ShapeUp works on desktop computers and on mobile devices via a mobile-optimized website and text messages. A mobile app will be out "later this year," says company co-founder and chief medical officer Rajiv Kumar.

Virgin HealthMiles: Billionaire entrepreneur Richard Branson's 7-year-old health venture offers multiple social wellness options, including a 12-week activity program, pedometer and heart rate monitors that work with an online activity journal, biometrics tracking stations, an incentive program and an online portal that ties them all together. HealthMiles has more than 120 U.S. corporate clients representing 700,000 employees, including Coca-Cola Co., Georgia-Pacific and SunTrust Banks Inc..

WalkingSpree: The online corporate walking program platform is built around a USB pedometer that employees wear while they walk and then plug into a PC or MacOS device to connect to an online network. There they can join clubs, check in on friends, keep a journal or blog or win prizes. Clients include Chaney Industries Inc., Verisk Health and American Financial Group Inc., which WalkingSpree says [saved \\$9.27 in employee health care costs for every \\$1 spent](#) on the program.

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