



State of Illinois
Department of Central Management Services



2022 NASPEs

Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award
Innovative Program
BeWell Illinois | Feel Like a Million



NOMINATION INFORMATION

Title of Nomination: Be Well Illinois | Feel Like a Million

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NOMINATOR INFORMATION

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DETAILS

Please provide a brief description of the submission.

At the beginning of 2021, the Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS), through the Bureau of Benefits (Benefits), launched **Be Well Illinois**, the State of Illinois' (State) new comprehensive wellness program, to support employees and retirees on their journeys to live healthier, fuller lives – in mind, body, and soul.

The program was designed to build a culture of wellness within the State and each month we share educational resources including wellness webinars, monthly health awareness causes, financial wellness, healthy eating, and exercise programming.

In May 2022, **Be Well Illinois**, in partnership with one of our healthcare vendors, Aetna, kicked off a new interactive wellness program, **Feel Like a Million**. The **Feel Like a Million** is a board game-themed program that allows State employees and dependents to participate in daily challenges designed to boost energy and help folks feel their best.

The **Feel Like a Million** program has an interactive mobile app that automatically syncs activity, and provides you alerts throughout the program period. Participants are able to join teams for participation in weekly team challenges, watch their progress through the game board, share encouragement with other participants through a social media “wall,” and strive to catch the leaders on the leaderboard.

How long has the submission been in existence?

Feel Like a Million, in its current iteration, has been available since October 2021. CMS began working closely with the vendor in February 2022, and the program communications kicked off in April 2022, with challenges running from May 2 to June 12, 2022.

Why was this submission created?

“We believe that healthier employees lead longer, more active and fulfilled lives, inside and outside the workplace,” said CMS Director Janel L. Forde. “Our priority through **Be Well Illinois** is to make wellness opportunities more accessible to plan members and help them get the most from their benefits.” **Feel Like a Million** takes this wellness mission one step further and puts it literally in the palm of your hand.

Why is this program a new and creative method?

Since its inception, **Be Well Illinois** has been building on the improvements CMS has made in wellness over the last several years, to help employees, retirees and their dependents take a more active role in managing their healthcare and day-to-day wellness. Creating the **Be Well Illinois** brand, with a one-stop [website](#) and [Facebook](#) community allows us to provide this focused and fresh content and resources to all our members and their dependents, as well as the opportunity to build wellness brand awareness and buy-in, separate from routine insurance information. This enhanced focus on improving the State's comprehensive wellness program resulted in CMS receiving the [2020 Gold level AETNA Workplace Well-being award in August of 2020](#).

Be Well Illinois regularly meets with and challenges all our health carriers to determine what additional resources, tools or challenges we can bring to our members to help them move the needle on their health and wellness. This continued engagement encourages carriers to be creative and competitive to bring new and innovative opportunities to the table, which we are then able to vet and provide to our members, as determined.

These challenges to provide creative methods for increasing wellness came to fruition with the rollout of **Feel Like a Million**, the first such time an app-based wellness program was available to Illinois.

What was the program’s startup costs?

CMS was able to implement **Be Well Illinois** with existing resources partially due to the generous support of each of our 10 carriers. Similarly, during planning and brainstorming period, we implemented an approach called “Benefits Bonanza” where we encouraged and challenged each carrier to be creative and strategic, providing up to three discreet ideas for partnership, prioritized by timing and/or virtual vs. in-person, and identify any months, issues or particular interest or alignment for Be Well with their own business strategy. This gave our carriers the opportunity to build on existing strengths, while focusing additional resources and efforts on new and innovative ideas, specific to the State’s population. Our framework can be shared broadly and is transferable to other organizations.

Purchases of goods specifically to support the wellness program are covered by a wellness fund which exists within one or more health plan contracts. Our Wellness Program Manager was a funded position, although vacant for several years, which we were able to transition to primarily support the **Be Well Illinois** program, including **Feel Like a Million**. Marketing and IT support are part of ongoing relationships which already exist in the State and CMS. Broader expansion will likely be driven by redistributing cost savings/avoidance.

What are the program’s operational costs?

Feel Like a Million has no additional program costs.

How is this program funded?

Feel Like a Million is funded via regular State personnel costs and a wellness fund which exists within our health plan contract with Aetna. That said, CMS notes that in 2019 the State negotiated over \$600M in 4-year healthcare health savings via labor (33 union) negotiations. At the same time, CMS also reactivated the Joint Labor Management Advisory Committee to collaboratively achieve additional savings while continuing to deliver high quality healthcare to our covered lives. Our intention was to put “wellness” at the forefront of all healthcare conversations and to help stakeholders recognize and appreciate the importance of preventative care (wellness) and avoided costs.

Did this program originate in your state? NO
Are you aware of similar programs in other states? YES
If yes, how does this program differ?

A recent search reflects the University of Texas system has used the same program. **Feel Like a Million** is an easily replicable program for other States, as its standardized design is applicable to all entities looking to motivate and engage with their employees in a fun and interactive way.

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Innovative State Human Resource Management Program

How do you measure the success of this program?

Participation rates are the primary measure of the success of this program, and, though it is early, the program is doing quite well. Just two days into the program more than **700 participants** have registered and more than **50 teams** have been created.

How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

Feel Like a Million has existed since 2008 and revamped in 2021 to update resources and refresh the look. CMS did not utilize the earlier version, and the current version has changed since rolling out in October 2021.

