

Onsite Clinic - Frequently Asked Questions (Source: Bruce Hochstadt, MD, Mercer)

Objectives: What are employers hoping to achieve by opening a clinic?

Typical objectives:

- Improve access and convenience
- Save money – moderate trend, lower spend
- Reduce lost time and absence, improve productivity
- Improve health outcomes – individually and in aggregate
- Promote wellness and importance of screening and preventive services
- Provide a higher quality of care (than that received in the community)
- Boost employee retention, recruitment and morale
- Redirect care from expensive, sub-optimal and time-consuming settings
- Serve as the primary locus of care delivery for workers and dependents

Employer characteristics: Is our company likely to benefit from a clinic?

Characteristics of likely candidates:

- Facilities with 750 or more employees
- Geographic areas facing primary care shortages
- Locations where workers spend hours traveling to and from external care settings
- Low utilization of proactive primary care services related to screening, prevention, and risk reduction
- High emergency room utilization, especially for non-emergent medical conditions
- High absence and lost time, especially for unscheduled medical-related issues
- High retention / low turnover – companies and industries in which workers tend to remain for many years
- Older populations which consume greater levels of care in general
- Conversely, younger populations in need of wellness and preventive services, as well as young families with increasing demands on their time

Eligibility: Who can use the clinic?

Onsite clinics do not need to be restricted to just employees at the site. Other parties who might use the health clinic include:

- Employees from other locations (presumably nearby)
- Covered dependents (children will depend on whether pediatrics is offered)
- Retirees, who live locally
- Employees of nearby employers (either on a fee-for-service or fixed fee basis)
- Contractors

Location: Where should the clinic be situated?

Key considerations:

- Ease of access and high visibility drives higher utilization
- Separate door to the outside for sick employees and dependents
- Security and safety concerns for non-employees being on-site
- Private, professional setting

Critical Success Factors: If you build it, will they come?

Clinics require ongoing efforts to ensure their success. A common source of onsite clinic disappointment is low employee utilization or capture. Key success factors include:

- Effective communication / broad awareness
- Privacy and confidentiality assurances
- Strong executive support / involvement
- Superior service delivery
- Enthusiastic clinicians
- Attractive plan design / incentive
- Appealing clinic location / layout