

IIEH

RISK
IDENTIFICATION

AGGRESSIVE
INTERVENTION

INCIDENT
PREVENTION

Adidas' goal was to create a world-class corporate wellness program for the employees of its U.K. headquarters. But cardiologist Dr. L. Dorian Dugmore has created a curriculum for the corporation that's become a model for other companies and clubs as well.

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**Today, Adidas is known for its shoes,
but tomorrow, it may be known for its heart**

By Robina A. Gangemi

The anecdote is one that Dr. L. Dorian Dugmore shares with others frequently: A cardiologist standing beside a river sees a man being swept by, dives in, and rescues him. A second man appears in the water, and is also rescued. Then a third. Then a fourth. Finally, a passerby stops, congratulates the cardiologist on his heroic efforts, but suggests that it might be more productive to go upstream and stop the person who's pushing the hapless victims in.

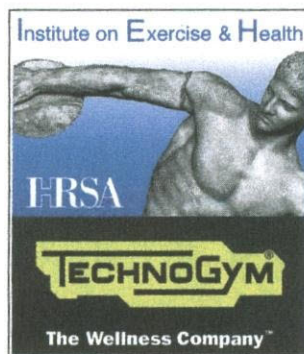
The moral: when it comes to the heart, prevention is a more effective approach than rescue and rehabilitation.

It is this philosophy that informs both the personal and professional life of Dugmore, a cardiologist, researcher, writer, public speaker, director of the Adidas U.K. Wellness Medical Center in Stockport, England, and a member of the IHRSA Institute on Exercise and Health (IIEH) Medical/Scientific Advisory Committee. For more than 25 years, Dugmore has studied and worked in the fields of cardiovascular rehabilitation, exercise, and wellness, and, as a sportsman, applied what he's learned; he's served as a World Games soccer coach four consecutive times, and will compete in his 20th marathon in London this year. "For lack of a better phrase, I walk the talk," he told one reporter. "It's more effective to lead by example."

Dugmore has been doing just that—laying a scientific foundation for preventive protocols, and erecting programs on it—for virtually his entire career, but his experiences in Toronto in the early '90s were pivotal. Serving,

first, as the program director of the Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, and then, as director of cardiac rehabilitation and wellness for International Managed Healthcare, Dugmore was able to focus on, and address, the needs of highly stressed executives. The result was Project LIFE (Lifestyle Interventions For Executives), a program that involved comprehensive medical and lifestyle assessment, aggressive intervention, and frequent reevaluation. The initiative not only produced dramatic outcomes for some 70 CEOs, but had a positive, filter-down effect on their respective companies as well. The Project LIFE findings, coupled with studies of CEOs in the U.K. and Australia, also provided a template for the Adifit Life Program, the three-step Adidas curriculum that embodies all of Dugmore's experience.

Adidas was anxious to set up a state-of-the-art corporate wellness program at its U.K. headquarters in Stockport, and to have it serve as a beta site for other Adidas facilities. Adidas provided the space—an old, underutilized third-floor gym that has since been transformed into an inviting warren of attractive rooms with plants and piped-in music; and Dugmore provided the smarts, setting up a company, Wellness Coach Ltd., which has recruited healthcare professionals from throughout the world to staff the operation. The Adidas U.K. Wellness Medical Center opened last summer, with a complete catalog of exercise, nutrition, stress management, smoking cessation, and other wellness services tailored specifically to





Dr. L. Dorian Dugmore, creator of the Adidas program

company's needs. "We did interviews, held focus groups, and circulated questionnaires to pinpoint exactly what our clients wanted to do," notes Dugmore. Another unique aspect of the Adifit program is that involves nearly every employee and every department—from human resources to the staff restaurant.

Dugmore's goal: nothing less than a corporate wellness best practice that can serve as a model for companies and clubs throughout the U.K., and, conceivably, elsewhere. "We think that it's got great potential," he says, "and could be offered in a variety of health-care settings."

The three basic components of the Adifit Life Program include:

The First Step

The initial component of Adifit is called, rather straightforwardly, The First Step, and takes place in a portion of the complex known as the Lifestyle Center. Here, every new employee spends about 45 minutes at a computer, sometime during their first week at work, participating in an interactive lifestyle evaluation. The information they provide is analyzed, utilizing Health Checkpoint and Fitech software programs, and yields a comprehensive, nine-page report providing an overview of a wide range of factors, including family medical history, nutritional and exercise habits, cardiovascular risk—even radiation exposure and driving risk. The report also suggests appropriate interventions to improve the employee's health, fitness, and well-being. Staff follow-up is nearly instantaneous: "We ask if

they'd like to go to The Next Step in order to measure, precisely, the items identified in The First Step," explains Dugmore.

The Next Step

Employees who elect to embark on the Adifit journey proceed through a series of Cardiokinetics-equipped labs, where they undergo testing for cholesterol, body composition, cardiac function, and resting metabolism. Making use of either a Technogym Bikerace or Funrace program, linked to a Medgraphics EKG and gas-analysis testing package, they are then tested from rest to exhaustion. Returning to the Lifestyle Center, they're joined by staffers—their Wellness Coaches—who spend about an hour reviewing the test outcomes. It is at this point that the program's use of behavioral counseling techniques comes into play. "We show the participants their results, inquire how they feel about them, and ask what they'd like to change," says Dugmore. "Then we tell them what we can do to help them alter their diet, exercise routine, medications—whatever they need. The possibilities are endless, but we focus on five basic elements: weight control, stress reduction, minimizing cardiovascular risk, maximizing cardiovascular health, and general health improvements, such as smoking cessation."

The LIFE Step

The final phase of the program, harkening back to Dugmore's tenure in Toronto, is referred to as The LIFE Step, but now LIFE stands for Lifestyle Intervention For Employees. While Steps 1 and 2 provided the information, understanding, and direction necessary to initiate a participant's program, Step 3 offers the education, exercise, and oversight required to realize it. And, reflecting Dugmore's "integrated"

approach to wellness, the effort enlists as many corporate resources as possible. The Adidas restaurant posts calories and grams of fat for the food it serves. Dugmore employs the headquarters' Dazzler Center, a high-tech, 120-seat auditorium, to stage multimedia seminars. And, in the Wellness Medical Center's gymnasium, participants pursue their personalized exercise routines on the latest Technogym cardiovascular and strength-training equipment, which permits them to track their progress precisely. Thus far, some 400 employees, or 60% of the work force, have received "keys" to the Technogym system, and more than half of them use it regularly. "That's excellent participation," explains Dugmore. "Most corporate programs report only 15%-20% compliance."

The center is just now beginning to retest employees, but Dugmore, convinced that he can improve on the results he saw in Toronto, is excited by the preliminary findings.

Dugmore, the cardiologist, researcher, and sportsman, already seems well on his way to achieving the goals articulated in one Wellness Coach brochure: "We need to change our approach as we head towards the millennium, and really begin by asking corporations what they want, identifying key needs. These should then be blended into a wellness program that embraces these needs. The end result should ideally be the beginning of a corporate wellness culture." And the means to this end? "A combination of quality assessment, effective follow-up which focuses upon behavioral modification, and subsequent tracking of progress, in order to meet predetermined and mutually agreed upon goals," the Wellness Coach concludes. ■

Robina A. Gangemi is a contributing editor for CBI.

The Wellness Best Practice

IIEH

The Wellness Group of the IHRSA Institute on Exercise and Health (IIEH) has developed a set of guidelines to help clubs create scientifically valid wellness programs, and, each year, selects one from among those clubs that apply to receive the IIEH Best Practice Award. For details on this year's award winner, see "Making Wellness History," pg. 68. For details on the competition or the IIEH, contact Cathy Masterson McNeil at IHRSA 9800-228-4772 or 617-951-0055).