

UC Berkeley Healthy Work Environments Summit: A Conference Report Summary

UC Berkeley - June 27, 2019

On June 27, 2019, University Health Services, the Interdisciplinary Center for Healthy Workplaces, and Human Resources hosted UC Berkeley's first Healthy Work Environments Summit. The event drew 95 participants from across campus to discuss how to positively impact health on campus through improvements in the built environment and by incorporating health considerations into decision making.

This document is a brief summary of the event objectives, the day's activities, and emergent themes and opportunities to move this work forward. This event was part of Berkeley's broader [Healthy Campus Initiative](#).

Conference Objectives

The objectives of the day were to:

- Develop a shared understanding of how communities can redesign work environments to foster greater health and well-being.
- Identify health in all policies (HiAP) and built environment efforts that would have the greatest impact at campus and departmental levels.
- Identify steps we could take to embed health and well-being into daily decision making at UC Berkeley and to elevate healthy work environments to the level of a strategic goal for campus.

Speakers

Three main presentations focused on the commonalities that healthy communities share (Tony Buettner from the Blue Zones Project), how a Health in All Policies approach of incorporating health considerations into institutional decision making can impact health, equity and environmental sustainability (Linda Rudolph and Julia Caplan from the Public Health Institute) and how the built environment affects individual and community well-being (Lindsay Graham, Gail Brager, and Courtney Chandler from UC Berkeley).

Themes from Working Groups

The afternoon was spent having participants meet in small groups to discuss the presentations and how to move work forward at UC Berkeley. The following summary represents those sentiments most commonly-expressed by session participants. More detail about discussions of each issue can be found [here](#).

1) Themes Emergent in discussion of Health in All Policies:

- Defining well-being and adopting guiding policy principles.
- Equity, diversity, and inclusion in policy adoption.
- The role of communication and influence strategies when promoting and adopting policies.
- Organizational hope/resilience in the face of large policy-related challenges.
- Addressing staff psychological health as a fundamental policy target.

2) Themes Emergent in discussion of the Built Environment:

The following targets were commonly identified as opportunities for improvement to the built environment on campus:

- Outdoor spaces.
- Individual workspaces/group office environments.
- Buildings.

Evaluation

Forty-five participants filled out a post event evaluation. Results from key questions can be found below.

- After today's summit, I have a greater understanding of the role of HIAP as a part of campus wellness:
 - Agree - 88.9%; Neutral - 11.1%; Disagree - 0%
- After today's summit, I have a greater understanding of the role of the built environment as a part of campus wellness:
 - Agree- 90.9%; Neutral- 9.1% ; Disagree - 0%
- Please indicate your rating for the day as a whole:
 - Very useful - 80%; Moderately useful - 17.8%; Not useful 2.2%

Next Steps

The Healthy Work Environments Summit provided an opportunity for campus leaders to hear from experts and engage with one another on strategies to improve working conditions for UC Berkeley employees. Both participants and conference planners indicated interest and energy to continue to find ways to positively impact health on campus.

The event committee has identified the following next steps:

- Reconvene UC Berkeley's Healthy Campus Advisory Group to identify priorities and guide future projects.
- Continue implementing current Healthy Campus projects, including the Healthy Beverage Initiative, Diabetes Prevention Program, and Healthy Department Certification Program.
- Work with campus leadership to identify new opportunities for embedding the principles of individual and collective well-being into existing university initiatives and structures.
- Develop metrics by which UC Berkeley can evaluate progress on key areas impacting health on campus.
- Connect campus partners with shared interests, especially in the areas identified by attendees during the summit.
- Continue to document current activities at Berkeley.
- Begin planning another summit event for 2021 to follow up on these and other projects.