



EBOOK

Evolving the Conversation

Social Determinants of Health and
Member Health and Wellbeing

Social Determinants of Health

While we have long acknowledged the impact of social determinants of health, COVID-19 and political change have exposed the depth of racial disparities; lack of equitable access to educational, economic and job opportunities; the complexity of societal norms and attitudes; transportation, public safety and physical infrastructure issues; natural environment changes; housing and community challenges; and, numerous other defining characteristics of “place” and their impacts on individual and group health and wellbeing.



For nearly two decades, Virgin Pulse has led the evolution of health and wellbeing beyond simple "diet, exercise, and medication" to a suite of more than 30 health and wellbeing channels and scores of topics, all of which recognize, reflect and address each individual's unique situations. We've recently expanded these topics to include staying safe, contributing to the community, acting sustainably, embracing diversity, learning new things, and many more.

We affirmed this year that our tools, content and experiences must evolve continually to ensure they are meaningful to all members. As part of our Winter 2020 product launch, we refreshed all our diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) content. We launched new content to facilitate successful interactions in health care, the workplace, and other settings across social, physical and environmental communities.

We also recognize that we cannot create products that address the social determinants of health if our leaders and workforce lack a personal frame of reference. Our Science Advisory Board has expanded to include leaders like Dr. Jessica Isom, M.D.-M.P.H; Dr. Isom is a thought leader on the connection between diversity, equity, inclusion, and physical, mental and social health. We share her passion for eradicating racial and ethnic mental health disparities, mitigating the impact of implicit racial bias on clinical care and using a community-focused population health approach. Our people teams are also innovating to attract talented employees from diverse communities worldwide.

Ways in which Virgin Pulse addresses social determinants of health through our products include the following:



Coaching

Virgin Pulse health coaches and guides train on the social determinants of health. Participant interactions evaluate and enhance health literacy, understand challenges to closing gaps in care, and connect them to relevant resources like EAP.

Together we explore a member's goals, behaviors and motivations within the context of their social and environmental influencers. We partner with members to translate general health recommendations into actionable steps, co-creating healthier routines and habits that fit their lifestyle and circumstance, wherever they live, learn, work and play. Coaches also provide a vital source of emotional and mental wellbeing support by identifying strategies for coping and caring for themselves.

In beginning a coaching relationship, we ask questions to understand each individual's physical and social realities. In doing so, our guidance and advice are thoughtfully personalized to that person's situation. For example, we don't make general comments assuming someone can access fresh produce if they don't.

Our coaching programming ensures members experience positive social support and social influence, leading to life-long health behaviors and improved health status.

Onsite coaches support social norms in the workplace to help influence populations to improve in healthier ways.



Individual and peer group programming

Virgin Pulse healthy habit challenges, peer recognition and interest groups empower members to engage in health and wellbeing within their desired topic area, space and comfort zone. Participants build community through recognition, teaming up and challenging each other through community activity, physical fitness and virtually any other action of interest. Through the Virgin Pulse platform, members can create or join interest groups – anything from reading clubs to cultural interests to volunteer groups.



Digital navigation

Virgin Pulse introduces members to the relevant employer, community, or health plan resources specific to their needs, such as food access, transportation benefits for medical appointments, housing and more. Clients can promote and reward volunteerism, completing learning modules and other custom activities.



Custom surveys

Clients can include custom surveys to identify social determinants of health and make data-driven modifications to programs and benefits to align with their populations' unique needs. Virgin Pulse Culture Check offers an opportunity to assess employer-specific social determinants of health to gain a rich view into how their environment, culture, norms, and more support or hinder their wellness goals.



We know that social determinants of health bring forward complex challenges and powerful opportunities for organizations. This recognition is central to our commitment to innovation in this area. We welcome additional conversations to share specifics.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

From a broad view to specific examples, the following are just some of the ways that we support diversity and inclusion in our products and content:



Embracing diversity

More than 37 wellbeing topics are available on the Virgin Pulse platform, including diversity and inclusion. Clients can also create custom content and healthy habit trackers around diversity and inclusion; we are always ready to offer the tool and support. A few examples are:

- Daily Healthy Habit Tracker - Bias Awareness "Did you take note of your unconscious bias today?"
- Daily Card - "Did you take time to learn about a new culture today?"
- Daily Card - "We all come from different backgrounds that make us who we are. Ask your friend if you can spend time with them during the holidays. Take part in a family event that teaches you about their background. Showing you care enough to learn about another person's life goes a long way in building friendships."
- Healthy Habit Challenge - New Foods; "Did you try new foods from a culture that's different than your own?"



Accessibility

We meet people where they are on their health journey. We believe in the power of accessibility, paired with self-guided learning, to empower members to explore their interests and needs through digital and live solutions.



Health is universal but access to healthcare is not

Virgin Pulse content is written to increase health literacy, and our platform is intentionally built to empower people to be better advocates for themselves and close gaps in care. Rather than pushing information out to participants and hoping they will read it, small steps and continual nudges are the building blocks of a more health aware and empowered individual for life. Benefits navigation, live support, approachable content and an easy to use interface further enhance accessibility.





The images that we choose for the platform and member communications reflect the communities we serve

We believe members must see themselves reflected in their health and wellbeing solutions. We always strive to show the diversity of age, gender, body type, race and ability represented by our members; an example is non-binary gender options with inclusive language.



We reflect our diverse, global footprint

Through our 20 localized languages to destination challenges designed to inspire curiosity and learn about different cultures and places around the country, region and world, Virgin Pulse is committed to changing lives for good across the globe.



Condition-specific health topics

Our scientific advisory board and solution designers are continually working to enhance our ability to address the disproportionate impacts of diabetes, hypertension and tobacco use.



Localizing content for different locations

While all content developed for the Virgin Pulse program is universal, we take pride in our efforts to localize the program experience as much as possible for members. With 45 global enterprise clients, we understand the importance of offering content and materials in the member's native languages and adaptable to local and social attributes.

Meaningful alternatives



We recognize member capabilities may limit participation in step-specific challenges and activities. Virgin Pulse offers meaningful, reasonable alternatives and opportunities to engage. Our designs also align with universal readability and accessibility best practices.

We consult with clients to tailor the program design and pinpoint ways to make it personalized and relevant, reviewing health goals, cultures and regional considerations. We can also work closely with local managers to determine the right wording and messaging and adapt to specific needs, i.e., reflect different communication channels or avoid sensitive topics. Also, local administrators have access to a suite of tools that enables them to create their own culturally relevant events, health tips, challenges, surveys and more.



Engaging with experts

To reflect diverse member and client needs, the Virgin Pulse team regularly engages with trusted sources and our Science Advisory Board to ensure that our products, service and solutions reflect the communities we serve.

Like any wellbeing effort, diversity and inclusion require a personal commitment to change and maintaining a daily focus until the new habit has become an integral part of everyday life.

As your Homebase for Health, we at Virgin Pulse are here to continue providing support and resources on the critical topic of diversity and inclusion. Virgin Pulse has always been and will continue to be an ally with matters related to diversity and inclusion - both as an organization and with the solutions and services we make available to our customers and members.

+ Healthy Habit examples:

Did you challenge a stereotype today?

Did you take time to learn about a new culture today?

Did you take note of your unconscious bias today?



If you have any diversity and inclusion groups or programs currently being offered to members, Virgin Pulse can integrate and promote the relevant initiatives to help drive awareness and utilization.

CHANGING LIVES *And* BUSINESSES FOR GOOD

Ready to take your health and wellbeing member experience to the next level? Talk to an expert at Virgin Pulse to get started.

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