

"We really invest in these people," he said, to help them "get on the road to better health."

New members get a complete medical work-up, including a physical exam, stress test, bone density test, fitness test, extensive blood work and gathering of all past medical records.

The club has a fitness room for instruction and teaching. The club also employs a full-time lab technician and has the equipment to process 95 percent of the tests in-house, resulting in a turnaround time of a day or less.

At the end of the work-up, the new member meets with what ClubMD calls their HealthStyle team, which consists of a physician, a fitness consultant and a nutritionist. The team works with the member to build an individualized plan, based on the physical exam and lab results.

The team advises the member on setting and achieving goals, with the member making final decisions on what they want to accomplish. The team and member together determine a schedule for reaching their goals, and then the member signs a contract with the team.

The member receives their complete HealthFolio, which includes the results of the physical evaluation; the fitness, nutrition and medical plan; and all medical records. ClubMD gives each member a flash drive, which stores all of this information.



Dr. Scott Zibell

Membership fees are priced at \$5,000 per year, which includes check-ups on a quarterly basis – or more frequently, if desired – as well as sick visits. The club doesn't accept third-party payments; it is up to the member to submit forms for insurance reimbursement.

The club also offers medical advocacy for its members. If a member needs to go outside the scope of what the club can provide, the club has established relationships with specialists in Lexington and nationwide.

ClubMD also offers an executive-class physical, which provides prospective members with a full evaluation for \$2,500. If the individual decides to join, the fee is applied to the price of membership.

The goal of the club's individualized program is to make each person as healthy as they can be, Crase said. He wants to give members a return on their investment.



Plans for expansion

One avenue of recruitment for ClubMD is to get corporations to sign up groups of members. Crase recommends that companies combine a health savings account – which employees can spend on their club membership – with a catastrophic insurance policy.

"The corporate response is better than expected, which is an unexpected surprise," he said.

One of the primary reasons companies are interested in signing up their employees is to get a return on their investment. Healthier employees are happier employees, Crase said.

Poor health practices have a surprisingly large impact on corporate profits – in lost time and productivity, as well as increased health insurance costs, according to a ClubMD marketing brochure that educates companies on the cost to the bottom line of cardiovascular disease, smoking, poor nutrition habits and obesity. A company that attacks poor health habits can improve

Fitness Coordinator Nelson Caudill gives each ClubMD member a complete fitness test. The focus is on wellness and the individual, he said.

morale, cut absenteeism and decrease health care costs.

Crase also intends to branch out and open other clubs regionally.

"If we can make it work in Kentucky, one of the least healthy states, it should be easier to make it work elsewhere," he said.

He is not yet sure when that will happen. ClubMD's current location can handle about 2,500 members, and they are not at capacity yet. Crase is finding that the Lexington market is bigger than he anticipated, which is a good thing.

"It's fun to come to work every day to help people make themselves healthier," he said. ■

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