

【2017年4月入学】社会学研究科応用社会学専攻入学試験問題 (2017年2月実施)

外国語 (英語)

<受験上の注意事項> 1. 答案用紙の記入の仕方					
研究科名	専攻名	課程	受験科目名	受験番号	氏名
社会学研究科	応用社会学専攻	前期課程または 後期課程	外国語 (英語)	自分の受験番号	自分の氏名
2. 解答方法 解答は答案用紙に記入すること。					
3. 持ち込み許可物件 一般的な英語辞書の持込を認めますが、辞書機能付の電子手帳等の携行は認めません。					
4. その他 問題用紙・メモ用紙も提出すること。					

— 外国語 (英語) — (横書き)

次の論説を読んで、問いに答えなさい。

(1) 下線部 much progress として本文に示されているものは何か、100字以内で述べよ。句読点は字数に含まない。

(2) 重要な点をおさえながら、論説全体の要旨を600字以内で要約せよ。句読点は字数に含まない。

No one sees the connection between unhealthy lifestyles and rising medical costs more clearly than healthcare workers, and yet they're hardly models of vim and vigor — a Thomson Reuters Healthcare report last year found hospital employees to be “generally sicker than the rest of the U.S. workforce.” Now the giant healthcare provider Kaiser Permanente and a coalition of unions led by the United Healthcare Workers are trying to tackle this problem. They recently signed a contract that creates a novel incentive for workers to get in better shape, testing the notion that peer pressure may be a more effective way to promote healthy lifestyles than individual rewards or penalties.

The Kaiser deal reflects a widespread effort by employers to slow the growth of healthcare expenses, in part by shifting more of the cost onto their workers, in part by reducing the demand for treatment. A survey by the National Business Group on Health found that almost three out of four employers offered workers incentives last year to participate in health improvement programs; the average incentive has increased from \$260 in 2009 to \$460 in 2011.

Some unions have been notorious for trying to insulate their membership from the fitness push. The United Auto Workers, for example, has fought against efforts to ban smoking at job sites. More subtly, by bargaining for insurance plans with little or no out-of-pocket costs, unions reduced the financial incentive for their members to stay in shape. That approach isn't sustainable, however, and it ignores the trade-off between healthcare costs and wages. The more a company spends on insurance policies with low deductibles and co-pays, the less it can spend on payroll.

The contract signed this month by negotiators for Kaiser and the union coalition heads in a different direction. It sets a modest fitness goal for its members — a 5% improvement in body mass, cholesterol, blood pressure and smoking rates by the end of 2016 — and promises financial rewards if the workers collectively stay on target. Although the details have to be ironed out, the rewards will be pegged to the savings that Kaiser sees in its healthcare costs. It's hard to say how much of a bonus workers stand to reap, but considering how much the company spends on employee healthcare, the savings could be significant.

The incentive is unusual because it's based on the group's progress, not each employee's. That's a departure from the typical approach, which stresses individual responsibility and rewards (or, less often, punishments). The theory is that workers will be more motivated if they know that their efforts will affect their colleagues' pay as well as their own, and that groups of people are more likely to stay committed to diets and exercise than individuals. Of course, the group approach means that the rewards won't necessarily match the effort that each person makes (or doesn't make). But that's already the case with group insurance plans, where the premiums paid by the healthy subsidize the care received by the sickly.

It's important for companies to experiment with different approaches to wellness because it's not clear yet what incentives will be effective in combating today's biggest health threat — obesity — over the long term. The potential benefit for business is clear, with some companies reporting dramatic savings (both from lower healthcare costs and higher productivity). But relatively few employers are actually measuring the effectiveness of their wellness programs, and those programs have been attracting only a fraction of their workers. So there's much progress still to be made.

The UHW, a division of the Service Employees International Union which represents 150,000 hospital, nursing-home and home healthcare workers, is trying to reposition itself as an advocate for better care and lower medical costs in society at large, rather than just looking out for its own members' interests. Along those lines, it's backing a new initiative by Gov. Jerry Brown to get Californians into better shape. But as UHW-West President Dave Regan recently mentioned, the current fitness of healthcare workers makes them a poor advertisement for the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. The union's contract with Kaiser shows that it's ready to start rectifying that.

Can we all get healthy together?, from Los Angeles Times, May 28, 2012. Copyright © 2012 Los Angeles Times. Reprinted with Permission.

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1. United Healthcare Workers (UHW) アメリカの医療労働者組合
2. United Auto Workers (UAW) 自動車労働者組合

以上