The Internship and Career Center created a Wellness Library that has a variety of exercise, stress relief, stretching and recovery items for staff members to use. The department’s Wellness Ambassador, Ashley Odell created a way to check out items using an online system for a maximum of 10 days at a time. All items were housed in a cabinet in an easily accessible common space and included such items as yoga mats, exercise balls, under-desk cycle, step counters, foam rollers, meditation pillows, meditation bell, aromatherapy diffusers and oils.

The intended outcome was to encourage self-care at the office by providing tools to promote stress management, exercise, stretching, and movement during the workday.

Ashley says “It has been a struggle for many Wellness Ambassadors to take the time out of their day to participate in programs, so the intention for the library is to allow integration of wellness activities into daily tasks for staff, and provide items that take a minimal amount of time and effort to provide positive effects.”

These items will be available for use by staff, and therefore have the potential to make a lasting and persistent impact. These small tools into the workday made people in the department more mindful of making sure they take care of themselves.

So far, 16 out of our staff of 32 have used items from the wellness library, and several of them used multiple items or used items more than once. By establishing the library with the use of the mini grant, Health was promoted by the provision of tools to promote stress management, exercise, stretching, and movement during the workday.

Some of the outcomes from the library:

- One staff member had cramps in her legs and back and used the roller to stretch her muscles and relieve soreness
- Several staff members have reported that the aromatherapy is a calming or energizing (depending on the fragrance) influence on them
- One staff member logged hundreds of steps using the counter, promoting her to move more throughout the day
- One staff member is using the kettle bell to promote muscle strength in between work tasks
- Another staff member is using the exercise ball to sit on to engage her core while at her desk
- During the weekly meditation sessions, a meditation bell is rang to set the mood and allow for deeper meditation, and the cushions are available to participants who do not want to sit in a chair
- Yoga session have been held and staff members have access to yoga mats from the library

After creating the wellness library, the department has a higher interest in wellness, curiosity about the benefits of some of the items, and a consciousness of the variety of self-care techniques. It has also given an impression to new staff that the ICC as a place that cares about staff health, which has promoted connection to the workplace.

“My hope was that every staff member would use the library at least once. This goal is close to being met, but just having the library seemed to make staff feel that the department cares about their health.” — Ashley Odell