How-To Guide for Day of Dancer Health

a health & wellness community event for professional dancers
Dancers’ bodies are their instruments, their professional “tools.” Like athletes, they need to keep bodies and minds in top condition to excel at their craft—to do their work. Yet most dancers never get the chance to be treated by health and wellness professionals trained specifically in assessing and treating the issues that arise in the life of a professional dancer.

In 2015, Dance Resource Center of Greater Los Angeles and Dance/USA Task Force on Dancers Health Co-Chair, Dr. Nancy Kadel, gathered a dynamic group of medical professionals, physical therapists, and sports/performance medicine students who volunteered their time for day devoted to LA area dancer health and wellness. **It was the first time ever a freelance dance community (which comprises 98% of the LA dance scene) had access to Dance/USA’s Task Force on Dancer Health Preventative Screening.**
Why?

This guide provides inspiration and a road map to producing an event like Day of Dancer Health in your community.

The event:

- Provides a free day dedicated to comprehensive health care information on all aspects of a dancer’s overall health and wellness.
- Makes available Dance/USA’s Task Force on Dancer Health’s Pre-Season Post-Hire Health Care Screen for Professional Dancers, a one-on-one preventative health screening assessments specifically designed for professional dancers.
- Introduces professional dancers to a network of locally based Physical Therapists and other medical, health and wellness professionals who specialize in dance.
- Educates professional dancers on best practices for a sustainable career in dance.
- Offers guidance and resources about health insurance coverage.
- Helps prolong a dancer’s working life and can reduce workers compensation claims.
For Who?

- All professional dancers in your community, whether that be:
  - Freelance dancers
  - Concert dancers
  - Commercial dancers
  - Dance company members
  - Choreographers

This event is not intended for students or dancers under the age of 18 years old.
What Resources Do You Need?

- **Budget**
  - Funding and community partnerships

- **People**
  - Staff
  - Member of Dance/USA Task Force on Dancer Health
    - Physical Therapists and other trained and licensed medical, health and wellness professionals (to volunteer and to populate a resource list)
  - Health insurance agents or professionals
  - Participants (dance profession)

- **Space**

- **Schedule**

- **Supplies**

- **Event Insurance**

- **Wellness Bags (optional)**
Funding & Planning Ahead:

- Meet yourself where you are
  - Who do you already know?
  - What relationships can you build upon?
  - How much staff time can you afford to put towards the project?
  - Are there unexplored opportunities in and beyond the arts sector?

- Reach out to Dance/USA programming staff to put you in contact with a Task Force on Dancer Health member who will be your partner in administering the assessment screening process and serve as a liaison.

- Diversify Sources – every bit of help counts! Ways an organization or individual can support Day of Dancer's Health:
  - Monetary Contributions
  - Sponsorship and in-kind donations
  - Volunteering
  - Press/Event Coverage
**Budget**

Total expenses range between $10,000-15,000

**Project Staff Expenses Include:**

- Service Organization Staff (allocation % of annual salary)
- Dance/USA Task Force representative (including travel expenses)
- Collaborators (i.e., those who table at the event; e.g., The Actors Fund)
- Physical Therapists (10-20 at $50/hr. x 8hrs)
- Workshop Leaders ($100 honorarium)
- PT Student Recorders (10 at $15/hr. x 8hrs)
- Intern (stipend)

- Many expenses can be met with in-kind donations of goods and services.
Project Expenses Include:
- Space Rental
- Marketing
- Printed Materials
- Informational packets
  - Flyers
  - Sponsorship posters
  - Sign-in sheets
- Catering Beverage
- Catering Food
  - Breakfast/Snacks
  - Lunch
  - De-brief Dinner
- Supplies
  - Legal pads, name tags, pens, hand sanitizer, etc.
- Travel
- Wellness Bags
- Project Overhead (5%-10% of cash income)
People:

- **Hosting (Service) Organization Staff**
  - Serves as primary point of contact
  - Seeks funding opportunities and formalize partnerships
  - Markets and promotes the event
  - Oversees event planning and implementation
  - Administers preparation and day-of logistics

- **Medical Professionals and Community Partners**
  - Dance/USA Task Force on Dancer Health representative
  - 10-20 PTs and Specialists to administer in-take and the screening assessment—they need to be licensed
  - 2 Nutritionists
  - 2 Psychologists
  - 10-20 student volunteers
  - Workshop Leaders
  - Health Insurance representative

- **Participants**
  - 50-60 Health Screening participants (i.e. 10 per 1hr. 15min.)
  - Workshop attendees
Venue Requirements:

- Check-in area
- One main room for up to 10 health screening stations
- Private areas for one-on-one consultations
- Open area for informational tabling: insurance; other resources not attending the event (e.g., dental, clinics, etc.)
- Separate classrooms/studio spaces for workshops
What is the screening exactly?

The Dance/USA Task Force on Dancer Health Post-Hire Health Screen for Professional Dancers is a standardized tool comprised of two components: (i) A health history questionnaire and (ii) A one-on-one physical assessment with objective measurements that should be performed by a licensed professional. The screen, originally designed for dancers on staff of large dance companies, is one of the Task Force’s Initiatives to improve health care for the professional dancer. Learn more at: https://www.danceusa.org/tfodh-screening-project

The average duration for an assessment and feedback is 75 minutes.
Screening Stations Include:

- Review PMH/Letter of Consent
- Height, weight, BP
- 3-minute step test
- Beighton criteria & forward bend test
- PROM
- Strength
- Shoulder
- Balance
- Step down test
- One-on-one consults for mental health and nutrition
Sample Workshops:

- **Healthy Practices and Anatomy**
  - An opportunity to journey through the body from the feet to the head in relation to health dancing practices. By exploring how the joints and muscles truly work, we can maximize our potential for strength and flexibility whilst minimizing our risk of injury.

- **Functional Nutrition for Dancers**
  - An opportunity to learn about which foods are most supportive for dancers’ bodies, encouraging healthy habits while balancing an active schedule.

- **Energy Medicine: Transforming the Mind to Enhance the Body**
  - An opportunity to learn about alternative and holistic practices through the energetic and emotional bodies.

- **Insurance Options for the Professional Dancer**
Sample Wellness Bag “Swag”:

- Tote bags
- Water bottles
- Therabands
- Pinky balls
- Ointments
- Nutritional Bars/Snacks
- Bandages, Band-Aids, etc.
- Discount certificates

Every participant should receive a list of health and wellness resources and referrals in the area
Sample Timeline:

- **6-months to 1yr. in advance—set the date!**
  - Grant proposals
  - Letters of Intent (funders, sponsors)
  - Individual donor base
  - Set date and location
  - Seek in-house intern if additional help is needed

- **3-months in advance**
  - Facilitate team meetings
  - Begin volunteer outreach (PT’s, medical professionals, students)
  - Seek day-of organizational partners (tabling/informational booths)
  - Coordinate workshops
  - Finalize date and location
    - Administer contract agreement + process liability insurance
  - Strategize marketing and promotion

- **2-months in advance**
  - Marketing and promotion continues
  - Gathering supplies and materials (wellness bags, paperwork, etc.)
  - Finalize group medical professionals + update contact sheet as needed
Sample Timeline Continued:

1-month in advance
- Make an announcement for health screening sign-ups
  - Collect name, email, phone number, preferred time slot
  - Recommended online sign-up platform: WUFOO
- Schedule, organize, and confirm individual Health Screening appointments
- Process event insurance
- Enroll workshop attendees
- Finalize catered food and beverages
- Confirm day-of student volunteers
- Facilitate training session for medical professionals
- Gather any food/dietary restrictions for catered food

1-week in advance
- Process payments as needed (workshop leaders, etc.)
- Put together wellness bags
- Print materials
- Purchase supplies
- Follow-up with all Health Screening Participants by email and phone
- Organize equipment delivery/drop-off time for volunteers
What Health Screening Participants Need to Know Ahead of Time:

- To arrive at least 15min. early

- WHAT TO WEAR: loosely fitted clothing, cotton/lycra shorts and sneakers; women wear backless leotards or sports bras so there's access to your bare back

- WHAT exactly a screening assessment is:
  - A quick assessment to identify red flags
  - A means for the dancer to meet their healthcare team
  - A source for individual referrals, recommendations & exercises
  - A living document
  - Can be supplemented on an individual company basis

- That the screen is NOT a full, comprehensive health evaluation. Its main benefits: to introduce you to local health care providers in the area that are skilled in caring for artists/dancers. To get individualized exercises and referrals based on your needs.
Sample Day-of Schedule:

8:00am ARRIVAL
>> Set-up equipment, breakfast, coffee/tea

9:00am-12:45pm SCREENINGS BEGIN
>> upon completion, participants must fill out a survey of their experience

9:30am WORKSHOP #1

11:00am WORKSHOP #2

12:45pm LUNCH BREAK (Ideally food is delivered)

1:00pm WORKSHOP #3

1:45-4:15pm SCREENINGS CONTINUE

2:30pm WORKSHOP #4

4:15-5:00pm BREAKDOWN

5:00pm DEBRIEF
After a Successful Event:

- Follow-up and thank all who attended
- Follow-up with all who did *not* attend
- Send thank you notes and survey all volunteers and staff
- Update contact sheet and create a resource directory
- Disseminate health and wellness resource contact list to dancers
- Write up summary report
  - Share with all who supported: funders, Board Members, etc.

SET THE DATE AND BEGIN THE PROCESS FOR NEXT YEAR!
For More Background Information:

- Contact Dance Resource Center of Greater Los Angeles
  - Felicia Rosenfeld, Executive Director
    frosenfeld@danceresourcecenter.org

- Read more about Dance/USA’s Task Force on Dancer Health
  - https://www.danceusa.org/dancerhealth