

Driving Occupant Health and Wellness in the Built Environment

Aaron Wouters, Sustainability Advisor, Integral Group

ABSTRACT

There is a growing body of evidence linking the design of our built environment with occupant wellness. In an effort to incentivize business to integrate occupant health centric practices within their core policies, the General Services Administration (GSA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) led to the development & corresponding launch in 2016 of Fitwel® - an independent third party certification system focused on healthy buildings. Now operated by the Center for Active Design (CfAD), Fitwel is currently in its beta implementation phase with a number of private sector firms currently applying it's practices within the built environment. This session will provide an overview of the Fitwel certification system and highlight how real estate owners, managers, and developers can positively impact building occupant health and productivity. The session will also feature the perspectives from Integral Group, an international 'deep green engineering' consultancy firm, who in February 2017 became Fitwel Champions and have already certified two of their fourteen offices in the UK and Canada to the new Fitwel Standard. Aaron will also highlight how he is leveraging Fitwel as a tool to focus occupant health and productivity through targeted improvements to workplace design and operational policies.

BIOGRAPHY

Fitwel is a third-party certification system designed to help organizations enhance health, wellbeing and productivity in the workplace. Aaron Wouters is the first Fitwel Ambassador from Canada, and was intrigued with how Fitwel highlights key features and attributes of buildings to enhance human health and ensure chronic disease prevention. Thanks to the knowledge he has gained as a Fitwel Ambassador, Aaron now finds that he has a heightened awareness of how different building attributes can affect the health of its occupants.