



workplace
wellbeing
CHARTER



PHYSICAL HEALTH

Workplace Wellbeing Charter
SUPPORT PACK



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CONTENTS

Physical Health Commitment standards	4
Physical Health Checklist	5
Physical Health Signposting	6
Physical Health Policy Template	7
Appendix A	10
Appendix B - C	11
Appendix D	12
Appendix E	13
Appendix F - G	14
Appendix H	15
Appendix I	16



The resources in this pack will help your organisation move towards meeting the Commitment standards in the Physical Health area of the Charter. This pack alone does not guarantee your organisation will be accredited with the Charter, but gives you advice, guidance, templates and information.

We encourage you to use the information to assess your current practices against the Charter standards and update your existing policies and procedures or fill any gaps. Feel free to adopt the policy templates but ensure you share any new policies or updates with your human resources team. Please share the information, resources and links with your colleagues and make them accessible.

Charter Accreditation

There is no overall level of accreditation, and the award is always the Workplace Wellbeing Charter. The Commitment, Achievement and Excellence levels are for your own benchmarking to recognise good practices and areas for improvement. You do not have to be at the same level for each of the eight areas. Your organisation must provide evidence, supported by staff feedback, to meet at least the Commitment standards in all eight areas and, where applicable, evidence showing you meet Achievement and Excellence.

We do not provide generic resources to meet the Achievement or Excellence standards, but we do deliver bespoke support.

Additional Support

Health@Work can provide bespoke support to help your organisation reach the Commitment standard of the Charter. This could be how to address any gaps, action planning and consultancy and training. Please contact your consultant or Health@Work for more information:

Tel: 0151 236 6608

email: info@healthatworkcentre.org.uk

PHYSICAL HEALTH COMMITMENT STANDARDS

Standard		Evidence Requirements
COMMITMENT	PH1	The organisation is committed to promoting physical wellness in the workplace. Evidence can include, but is not limited to wellness programme documentation, internal policies reflecting commitment to physical wellness. Communication materials on physical wellness initiatives, employee engagement activities related to physical wellness, leadership statements or messages supporting physical wellness
	PH2	Information is provided on the positives of preserving or enhancing optimal physical well-being. Evidence can include, but is not limited to, Information detailing the benefits of physical activity, health promotion campaigns, newsletter articles or blog posts, employee training sessions, posters, leaflets, and mail shots.
	PH3	The terms of employment and work schedules include regularly scheduled breaks and lunch periods in accordance with applicable legislative guidelines. Evidence can include, but is not limited to, employee contracts or agreements, work schedules legislative compliance documentation, timekeeping records, copy of employee contracts or excerpt detailing the legislation requirements.

On average, we spend 50% of our waking hours at work so the workplace is an ideal setting to raise awareness of healthy habits. This section highlights how organisations can incorporate healthy choices into workplace policies and procedures, support employee wellbeing by providing nutrition and physical activity information and how to create an environment which encourages employees to eat healthier and incorporate simple physical activities into their day.

- 1 It is estimated that regular employee physical activity can reduce productivity losses and therefore increase employer profitability by an estimated £5.465 billion. This is due to improved employee mental health, reduced absenteeism and presenteeism, lower staff turnover and lower recruitment costs. ⁴
- 2 91% of 2,564 employers surveyed by Ipsos Mori, agreed there was a link between work, employee health and wellbeing. 90% of employers stated it was their responsibility to encourage employees to be healthy. ⁵
- 3 A recent systematic review of workplace weight management and physical activity interventions demonstrated a reduction in absenteeism and improved employee productivity, performance and workability. ³
- 4 A study conducted in workplaces demonstrated obese employees had a 27% increased absenteeism. Absenteeism in employees consuming a healthy diet and those participating in regular physical activity reduced by 50% and 36% respectively. Therefore, workplace policies should encourage employees to eat healthy and participate in exercise. ²

Sources:

1. Business in the Community (2018) Physical Activity, Healthy Eating and Healthier Weight: A Toolkit for Employers
2. Fitzgerald, S et al (2016) Obesity, Diet Quality and Absenteeism in a Working Population. National Library of Medicine.
3. Grimani, A et al (2019) The Effectiveness of Workplace Nutrition and Physical Activity Interventions in Improving Productivity, Work Performance and Workability. A Systematic Review.
4. PJM Economics (2019) The Economics of Exercise: Measuring the Business Benefit of Being Physically Fit. A Report for AXA Health Care
5. TU, T et al (2021) Sickness Absence and Health in the Workplace

PHYSICAL HEALTH CHECKLIST

Our organisational policies and procedures include a health and wellbeing strategy which promotes healthy eating and physical activity. They are inclusive of hybrid and remote working colleagues.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Our organisation values health and wellbeing by asking our employees what barriers they face to eating a well-balanced diet and being active and what information and support they need to help them make healthier choices at work.

Yes ☐ No ☐

New colleagues are made aware of information, support and programmes that promote increased physical activity, healthier weight and healthy eating at the point of induction.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Our organisation communicates the importance of healthy eating, exercise, and a healthy weight. Resources and digital links to a range of physical health information and local weight management services are available.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Our workplace environment encourages employees to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Printers and water coolers have been moved away from desks. Employees are encouraged to speak to a colleague in person rather than sending an email. Signage is visible for promoting seated yoga and taking stairs instead of the lift.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Our managers have the option to schedule walking meetings rather than seated meetings to limit sedentary behaviour.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Platforms exist within the organisation for employees to share personal physical health and weight related stories, healthy lifestyle messages and healthy recipes.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Our organisation holds workshops and awareness days to promote national physical activity, healthy eating and healthy weight campaigns. For example, National Fitness Day, On Your Feet Britain, National Bike Week, National Walking Month, British Nutrition Foundation's Healthy Eating Week and Heart UK's National Cholesterol Month.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Managers regularly schedule opportunities for team physical activities and challenges to help improve employee physical health and foster team spirit. This provides them with a sense of belonging to our organisation.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Managers lead by example, take their breaks and set boundaries to ensure they move away from their desk and utilise kitchen and break out areas. Managers encourage colleagues to adopt a similar practice for optimum wellbeing.

Yes ☐ No ☐

PHYSICAL HEALTH SIGNPOSTING

To learn more about creating a healthy workplace culture with strong attendance management practice and to meet the standards of the Charter.

NHS: Live Well provides a wide range of information and guidance on maintaining physical health. The healthy eating section provides information and advice on food guidelines, how to eat a well-balanced diet and the food labelling system. The exercise section provides information on the health benefits of exercise, exercise guidelines and provides a range of exercises to help you keep fit and maintain your mobility. The healthy weight section provides tips on how to lose weight, understanding calories and how to maintain weight loss.

[Live Well - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well)

[Lose weight - Better Health - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/lose-weight)

[Get active - Better Health - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active)

Mental Health Foundation provides information on how diet and mental health are interlinked and how this influences our mood. Information on eating a well-balanced diet, the types of foods which help and hinder good mental health and wellbeing which is really important for a good day at work. Links to research are also available.

[Diet and mental health | Mental Health Foundation](https://www.mentalhealthfoundation.org.uk/diet-and-mental-health)

Race at your Pace is an innovative programme where workplaces can sign up to monthly challenges and raise money for charities. There are a range of challenges available including walking, running and cycling which can be completed at your own pace. Behaviour change challenges are also available encouraging staff to use the stairs more often or drink more water and mindfulness challenges including yoga and meditation. These challenges can help employees set themselves goals to improve their own fitness levels. Race at your Pace provides an app to help staff keep track of progress and when completed they receive a decorative medal.

[Corporate Fitness Challenge Ideas - Race At Your Pace](https://www.raceatyourpace.org.uk/corporate-ideas)

Active Partnerships aim is to transform lives through exercise and make physical activity a social norm for all. The Workplace Movement Programme provides information, benchmarking, training, resources and tools to participate in activity challenges and tools to track progress.

[Workplace Movement](https://www.workplacemovement.org.uk)

PHYSICAL HEALTH:

SUGGESTED GUIDANCE TO INCLUDE IN YOUR POLICY, PROCEDURES OR PRACTICES

The physical health of all [company name] employees is of paramount importance and our organisation strives to create an environment in which staff members feel valued. We aim to support employees to maintain good health and wellbeing, as part of an effective work-life balance.

[Company name] understands the numerous benefits associated with healthy choices. As such we aim to break down barriers to a healthy lifestyle, provide support and encourage all employees to be healthy and active both during and outside the working day.

We respect the right of all employees to make free choices on whether they wish to engage in health interventions and recognise that every individual has different capabilities. Any workplace initiatives and activities will be entirely optional. Those who do not wish to engage in health workshops or activities or are unable to do so, during or outside the working day, will not be criticised or disadvantaged in any way and no punitive action will ever be taken on these grounds.

Aims and objectives

[Company name] seeks to provide information, support and encouragement to allow all employees to make healthier lifestyle choices as part of the working day and beyond. In order to achieve these aims our organisation will focus on awareness, access, opportunities and support.

Awareness

Our company will:

- Provide all employees members with information on current healthy eating guidelines. (Please refer to Appendix A)
- Provide all employees members with information on the benefits of eating well. (Please refer to Appendix B)
- Provide all employees members with signposting and links to further sources of information on the health benefits of healthy eating. (Please refer to Appendix C)
- Provide top tips for sustaining energy and eating well for work. (Please refer to Appendix D)
- Provide all employees members with information on current physical activity guidelines. (Please refer to Appendix E)
- Provide all employees members with information on the benefits of regular physical activity. (Please refer to Appendix F)
- Provide all employees members with signposting and links to further sources of information on the health benefits of physical activity. (Please refer to Appendix G)
- Provide awareness of the health risks of sedentary behaviour. (Please refer to Appendix H)

Access

Our company will:

- Provide fresh drinking water for staff at all times and fresh fruit for staff to eat on a regular basis.
- Provide access to a clean, hygienic eating area away from workstations.
- Provide the use of a fridge, kettle, cooking and washing up facilities for staff to be able to store and prepare their own healthy lunch rather than having to rely on shop bought or convenience food.
- Ensure all staff are aware of their entitlement to at least the legal minimum required break periods during the working day (as set out in individual contracts of employment) and encourage staff to move away from their usual workspace during this time .
- Promote the use of alternative forms of transport to work which allow for physical activity to be incorporated before and after the working day. (Please refer to Appendix I)
- Encourage all staff to walk, cycle or use public transport to travel for business purposes. Staff will still be encouraged to do so even if this means slightly longer travel time than driving for example, so long as this does not affect normal business operation. In cases of longer travel time, staff should seek clarification with their line manager to ascertain whether their chosen mode of transport to a business appointment is appropriate.
- Allow staff to store clothing, shoes etc. in the workplace to enable staff to engage in physical activity before or after work.
- Evolve job design and equipment to remove physical risks in the workplace wherever possible. This may include standing/adjustable desks and chairs, portable computers or mobile devices to work away from the desk.

Opportunities

Our company will:

- Provide top tips for sustaining energy and eating well for work. (Please refer to Appendix D)
- Take part in healthy promotion campaigns and publicise this through posters, leaflets, emails, social media and team meetings.
- Offer 'Try and Taste' nutrition sessions and trial physical activity sessions throughout the year in order to encourage new and maintain established lifestyle choices.
- Where vending machines are available, we will always seek to remove unhealthy options or at least have an equal amount of healthier options.
- Always opt for healthier choices when bringing in outside catering for events and/or staff meals, training etc.
- Encourage staff to take opportunities to be active during the working day. For example, standing up and speaking to colleagues instead of emailing (where appropriate), using stairs instead of lifts if able and standing up for at least five minutes every hour.
- Provide an opportunity for the workforce to engage in physical activity as a group at least once per year as part of a team event/challenge. The yearly event will be fully funded by [Company name] and the emphasis will be on team-building and fun. Participation in the event will be optional.

- Encourage and support employees to engage in activities and challenges throughout the year. Funding, partial funding, sponsorship and flexible working arrangements to accommodate this will be considered on an individual basis but cannot be guaranteed. Participation is optional.
- Encourage business activities which allow employees to be physically active as part of their role such as 'walking lunches' and setting up a running group for clients etc.
- Break down barriers to participation for all employees who wish to lead a healthier lifestyle. This includes employees covered by the Equality Act 2010, through the provision of supportive measures where appropriate.
- Allow appointments for physiotherapy to alleviate musculoskeletal injuries to be taken during work time, without using sick or annual leave. These should not impinge on work commitments or normal business operation and are to be agreed at line-manager's discretion.
- Provide employees members with [company name] branded sports kit to wear when taking part in physical activity challenges or when delivering physical activity as part of their role.

Support

Our company will:

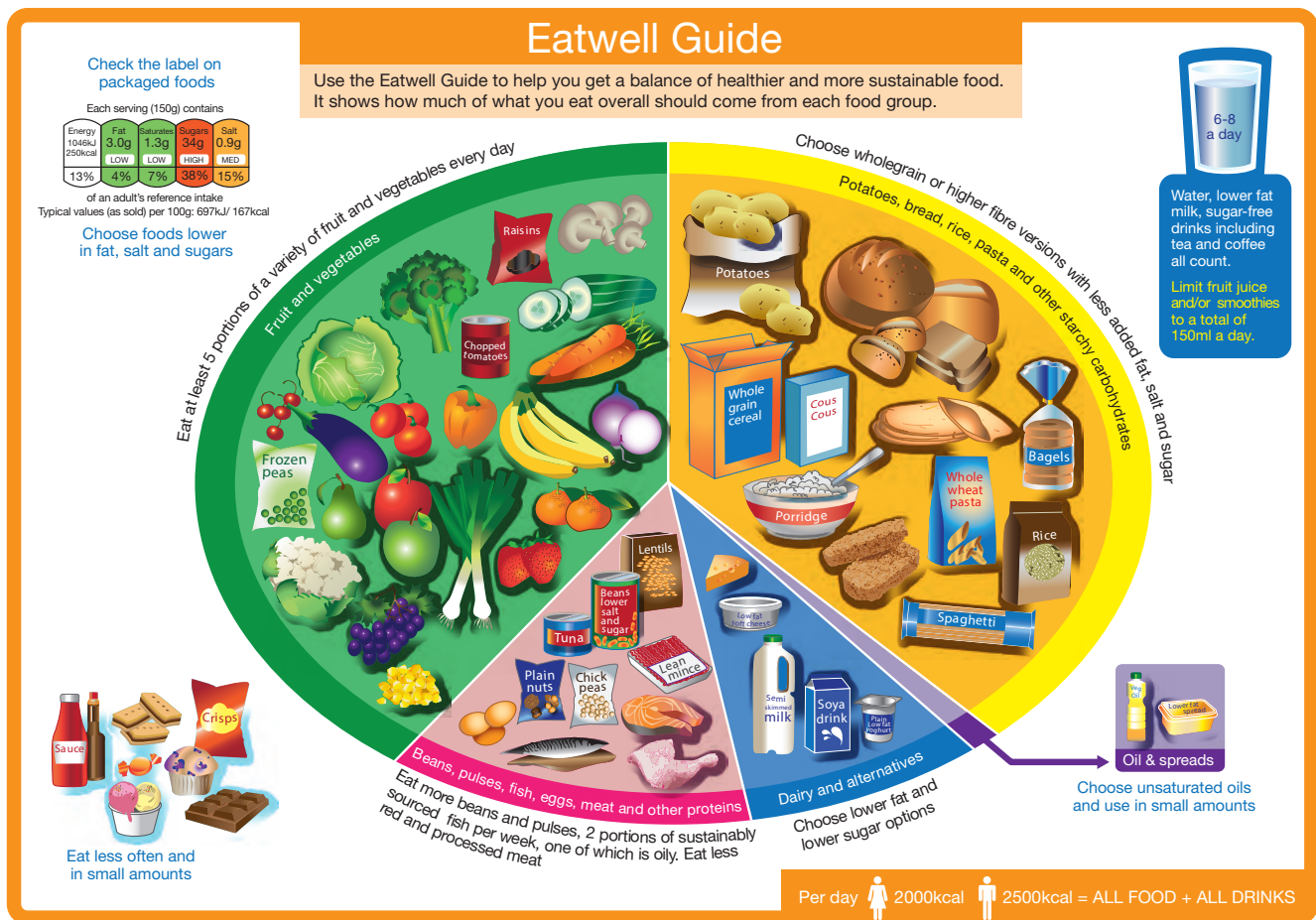
- Break down barriers to participation for all employees who wish to lead a healthier lifestyle, including time allowance to prepare/ heat a meal, providing healthy lunches tips/recipes
- Always opt for healthy catering/venues when considering employees away days, team building or business lunches
- Appoint a workplace health and wellbeing champion who will be a further source of information, advice and support to all employees. This person should be a volunteer. In the case of more than one volunteer a decision will be voted on by the staff group

[Company name] health and wellbeing champion is.....and they can be called upon for all aspects of health and wellbeing information including signposting and general nutrition advice.



APPENDIX A

EAT WELL GUIDE



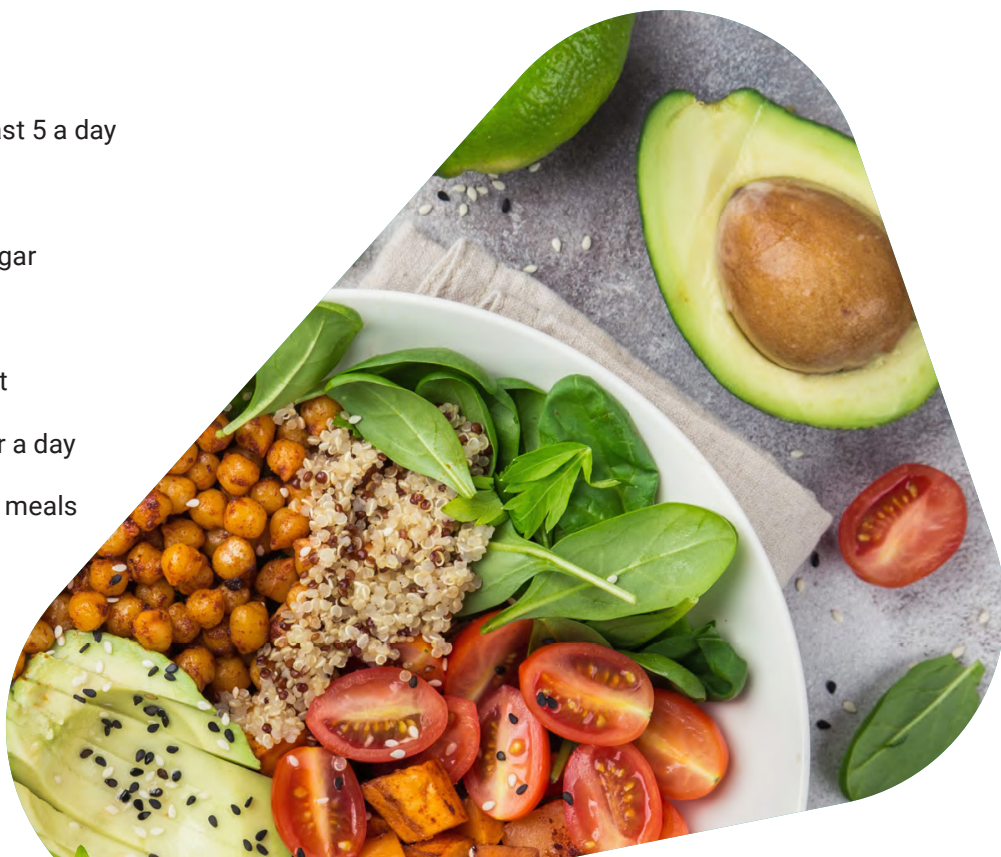
Source: Public Health England in association with the Welsh Government, Food Standards Scotland and the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland

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In addition to the Eatwell Plate the government have also produced 8 Tips for Healthy Eating.

They are:

1. Base meals on starchy foods
2. Eat plenty of fruit and veg – at least 5 a day
3. Eat more fish
4. Cut down on saturated fat and sugar
5. Eat less salt
6. Get active and be a healthy weight
7. Don't get thirsty – 2 litres of water a day
8. Don't skip breakfast – eat regular meals



APPENDIX B

BENEFITS OF EATING A HEALTHY BALANCED DIET

Day to Day Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increases energy levels and alertness - Helps you sleep better at night - Helps boost your immune system - Improves mood - Improves appearance of skin
Healthy Weight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helps with weight loss and to maintain a healthy weight - Increases metabolism so you burn more calories everyday - Decreases risk of obesity related conditions such as diabetes type II, osteoarthritis, heart disease, stroke
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improves mood - Reduces depression and lethargy - Helps support good mental health and wellbeing - Decreases risk of dementia and cognitive decline
Physical Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintains healthy weight therefore reduces risk of all cause morbidity - Keeps your heart healthy - Helps regulate blood sugar levels to reduce risk of type II diabetes - Helps lower cholesterol and maintain healthy levels - Reduces risk of cancer - Helps lower blood pressure and maintain healthy levels - Decreases risk for osteoporosis - Maintains good bowel health

APPENDIX C

NATIONAL WEBSITES

British Dietetic Association

<https://www.bda.uk.com/foodfacts/home>

British Heart Foundation

<https://www.bhf.org.uk/heart-health/prevention/healthy-eating.aspx>

Diabetes

<https://www.diabetes.co.uk/>

Mental Health Foundation

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/help-information/mental-health-a-z/D/diet/>

NHS Choices

<https://www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/healthy-eating/Pages/Healthyeating.aspx>

World Cancer Research Fund

<https://www.wcrf-uk.org/>

APPENDIX D

TOP TIPS FOR SUSTAINING ENERGY AND EATING WELL FOR WORK

There'll be no more mid-afternoon slump if you can work these into the day:

- Set a sleep schedule! Studies show appetite is directly linked to sleep and feeling tired often leads to making poor eating choices!
- Always start the day with a nutrient rich breakfast; something like eggs will keep you going, possibly right through 'til lunchtime, but certainly much longer than a bowl of cereal which is often refined carbohydrates with added sugar.
- If snacks are needed between meals choose healthy carbohydrates, such as apples and oatcakes (not rice cakes which are usually high glucose index).
- Avoid sugary drinks and so-called energy drinks whenever possible; while they may give a perceived boost initially, the evidence indicating adverse health effects of energy drinks such as obesity, diabetes type 2, palpitations and high blood pressure is growing.
- To sustain energy, include foods containing B vitamins & iron, such as boiled egg, spinach, mackerel, chickpeas (bake them with a sprinkle of barbecue or curry seasoning for a crunchy alternative savoury snack!).
- Get organised! Eating well doesn't happen by accident – planning and preparation are your best friends when it comes to good nutrition. Get ahead of yourself at the weekend if possible by batch cooking and try to set aside 10 mins each evening when you pack your lunch ready for the next day. Set a reminder alarm on your phone if needed. Once it becomes part of your routine its second nature and you'll always be glad you did it come morning!
- When you really can't stave off a sweet tooth try dark chocolate (70% cocoa solids minimum), its much less sugar than milk or white chocolate & contains heart healthy antioxidants.
- Drink cold water to increase energy levels – particularly infused with cucumber and/or lemon which will enrich it with vitamins and minerals.
- Why not ask colleagues whether they'd like to chip into a fruit/veg share? By everyone contributing and sharing or taking it in turns to buy chances are you'll all be on your way to 5 a day in no time!
- Is there a potential Healthy Eating Champion in your team? Often there'll be someone who would love to impart knowledge and motivation and would be more than happy to share recipes and tips on eating well – make the most of that! If they have time, asking them to print out some leaflets, posters etc can help brighten up a canteen or eating area, help educate staff and boost morale!

APPENDIX E

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

Adults aged 18-64

1. Adults should aim to be active daily. Over a week, activity should add up to at least 150 minutes (2½ hours) of moderate intensity activity in bouts of 10 minutes or more – one way to approach this is to do 30 minutes on at least 5 days a week.
2. Alternatively, comparable benefits can be achieved through 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity spread across the week or combinations of moderate and vigorous intensity activity.
3. Adults should also undertake physical activity to improve muscle strength on at least two days a week.
4. All adults should minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary (sitting) for extended periods.

Older Adults aged 65+

1. Older adults who participate in any amount of physical activity gain some health benefits, including maintenance of good physical and cognitive function. Some physical activity is better than none, and more physical activity provides greater health benefits.
2. Older adults should aim to be active daily. Over a week, activity should add up to at least 150 minutes (2½ hours) of moderate intensity activity in bouts of 10 minutes or more – one way to approach this is to do 30 minutes on at least 5 days a week.
3. For those who are already regularly active at moderate intensity, comparable benefits can be achieved through 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity spread across the week or a combination of moderate and vigorous activity.
4. Older adults should also undertake physical activity to improve muscle strength on at least two days a week.
5. Older adults at risk of falls should incorporate physical activity to improve balance and co ordination on at least two days a week.
6. All older adults should minimise the amount of time spent being sedentary (sitting) for extended periods
7. Individual physical and mental capabilities should be considered when interpreting the guidelines.

For further information:

Start Active, Stay Active: A report on physical activity for health from the four home countries' Chief Medical Officers (2011) [®].

APPENDIX F

BENEFITS OF REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

(for illustrative purposes, not exhaustive)

Day to Day Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increases energy levels - Helps you sleep better at night - Helps boost your immune system - Helps improve posture - Reduces aches and pains - Makes general everyday tasks easier, like climbing the stairs and doing the garden etc.
Healthy Weight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helps with weight loss and to maintain a healthy weight - Increases metabolism so you burn more calories everyday - Helps lose inches as well as weight - Tightens and tones your body
Mental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helps relieve stress and boredom - Releases endorphins which make you feel happy reducing risk of depression by 30% - Helps support good mental health and wellbeing and reduces risk of dementia by 30% - Helps increase confidence and motivation
Physical Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helps lower blood pressure and maintain healthy levels - Keeps your heart healthy - Improves lung function and ability to use oxygen (VO2 Max) - Helps lower cholesterol and maintain healthy levels - Helps regulate blood sugar levels to reduce risk of type II diabetes by 50% or manage existing condition
Health Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduces risk of all cause death by 30% - Helps increase bone density to reduce risk of osteoporosis by 83% and manage existing condition - Reduces risk of cancers (including breast cancer by 20%, colon cancer by 50%) - Reduces risk of heart disease and stroke by 35% - Active people have a lower risk of disease development throughout life

APPENDIX G

FURTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

(for illustrative purposes, not exhaustive)

Active Partnerships – The Work Benefits of being More Physically Active

[The work benefits of being more physically active | Active Partnerships](#)

British Heart Foundation

[Exercise - BHF](#)

Bupa – Benefits of Exercise

[Benefits of exercise | Health Information | Bupa UK](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[Benefits of Physical Activity | Physical Activity | CDC](#)

Diabetes

[Diabetes and exercise | Type 1 and type 2 | Diabetes UK](#)

NHS – Benefits of Exercise

[Benefits of exercise - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)



APPENDIX H

HEALTH RISKS OF SEDENTARY BEHAVIOUR

Research conducted in Royal Mail found those employed in a sedentary desk job had a higher waist circumference along with metabolic syndrome markers. After sitting for 5 continual hours, sedentary workers waist circumference increased, triglycerides and bad cholesterol increased, good cholesterol decreased, and heart disease risk increased with every additional hour in a seated position. Those employed in a standing role or postal delivery role walking more than 15,000 steps per day had no risks for heart disease. Those in a desk job had a higher risk of heart disease compared to postal delivery workers over ten years of 2.2% and 1.6% respectively.

This research supports that desk jobs can have a serious impact on long term health and current advice to keep moving throughout the day. Try and spend as much time as you can on your feet and move about the office as is practical, without hindering normal business operation.

Access to the article is available at:

Desk jobs are bad for your heart and your waist (warwick.ac.uk)

Further risks to sedentary behaviour can be found at Get Britain Standing's website:

Health Risks. Sedentary lifestyle. Heart disease, obesity, back-ache. (getbritainstanding.org)

Exercise on the way to work:

- Walk, cycle or jog to work (or part of the way) if you can.
- Walk to the train station or bus stop. Get on one or two stops later or get off one or two stops early to walk part of the way.
- Park the car at the far side of the car park or a few streets further away. Exercise at work- Move around and be as active as possible. Get up from your desk at least once per hour.
- Stand up and speak to people instead of emailing when appropriate.
- Use the toilets on the floor above or below (and take the stairs, not the lift).
- Don't save things up to print, copy, put in trays etc. Keep finding reasons to move around the office.
- Go for a walk every lunchtime. Volunteer to run any errands. Go with friends or colleagues.
- The responsibility to lead the walking lunch sessions will be spread around the team.
- Lunchtime is a great time to get the recommended 30 minutes of daily exercise in. A walk, run, bike ride or exercise class as part of the working day is a lot easier to fit in than having to do it before or after work.

After work

- Make a pact with a colleague to do some exercise together at least once per week.
- Do your exercise straight from work. Once you get home and get comfortable it's a lot harder to motivate yourself.
- You may feel too tired to exercise at the end of the day, but unless you have a physical job then this is mental fatigue, not physical tiredness. Doing some physical activity will actually wake you up and regular exercise will increase energy levels so you feel less tired.

APPENDIX I

BENEFITS OF USING PUBLIC TRANSPORT

It is well documented that any exercise is great for your physical and mental health. We also know one of the main reasons people give for not exercising as much as they should is not having enough time. A quick walk on the way to and from work, even just a short walk to the bus-stop, can help incorporate more physical activity in your working week. Those who walk all or part way to work have been found to be healthier, happier and more productive at work.

Research in Australia has shown that people who use public transport are more likely to meet the physical activity recommendations and are more likely to walk 33 minutes more per day than car drivers. The Health Foundation 2021 reported public transport reduces sedentary time, helping to maintain a healthy weight and reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease, Type 2 Diabetes and some cancers. Cycling and walking was also reported to reduce the risk of an early death. A systematic review by Wu, et al (2021) found those who travelled on foot or bicycle are more likely to reduce their risk of obesity, hypertension and diabetes.

2015 study in Osaka, Japan showed people who used the bus or train to get to work were 44% less likely to be overweight, 27% less likely to have high blood pressure and 34% less likely to have diabetes than those who drove.

Mental Wellbeing - A 2016 study published in Mental Health and Physical Activity found those suffering from depression benefitted more by exercising outdoors compared to indoors. It has been shown that regular outdoor exercise helps to reduce risk of contracting depression and can improve mood.

Stress - Exercise is also a great way to reduce stress. A walk to the bus-stop on the way home helps to burn off the stress hormones which may have built up through the day. And when you're late for work in the morning, a brisk walk or even a run for the bus will help release the feel-good endorphins helping to relax you as opposed to a stressful drive in to work.

Five Ways to Wellbeing - Using public transport also gives you time to build the five ways to wellbeing into your working day. Reading a book, listening to music, playing a game on your phone, reading the news or staring out of the window to take notice are all great for improved mental health and stress levels. You can even try some mindfulness to shut the world out for five or ten minutes to set yourself up for the day. These wellbeing strategies would be difficult to adopt behind the wheel of your car.

Cost benefits - Public transport is cheaper than driving to and parking at work, especially if you work in the city centre. This helps keep you happy. You could use the money you save to do something you enjoy.

Environment - Less harmful emissions, improved air quality and reduced energy usage; one single deck bus being used by commuters takes up to 60 cars off the road. This helps you to feel good and contributes to living in a healthier region. No need to look or pay for a parking space, saving you time, money and lowering your stress levels.

Safety - Using the bus is 7 times safer than driving a car.

Cycle to Work Scheme - Consider the following for your own policy/travel plan

- The use of bikes is entirely optional and at the discretion of any individual. Staff members using the bikes has full responsibility for their own health and safety. This includes checking the bikes are in good working order before any journey. [BUSINESSNAME] provides access to this equipment to enable staff to be more active but cannot be held responsible for any accident, loss or damage resulting from their use. For information on how to set up a cycle to work scheme to save money and spread the cost of buying a bike please refer to <https://www.cyclescheme.co.uk/>



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PHYSICAL HEALTH COURSES

RELATED COURSES DELIVERED FROM HEALTH AT WORK

- ⊞ Nutrition Simplified- Creating A Personalised Nutrition Plan
- ⊞ Exercise Simplified - Creating A Personalised Exercise Plan
- ⊞ Healthy Eating By Design
- ⊞ Navigating Work-Life Balance In A Remote Working Environment
- ⊞ Healthy Habits - A Step-By-Step Guide To Lasting Change
- ⊞ Men's Health

Visit healthatworkcentre.org.uk for more details



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