

# Promoting physical activity in the workplace

**Being physically active has huge benefits – both for your business and your employees.**



**Talk to our  
Healthy Working  
Lives experts FREE  
on 0800 019 2211**

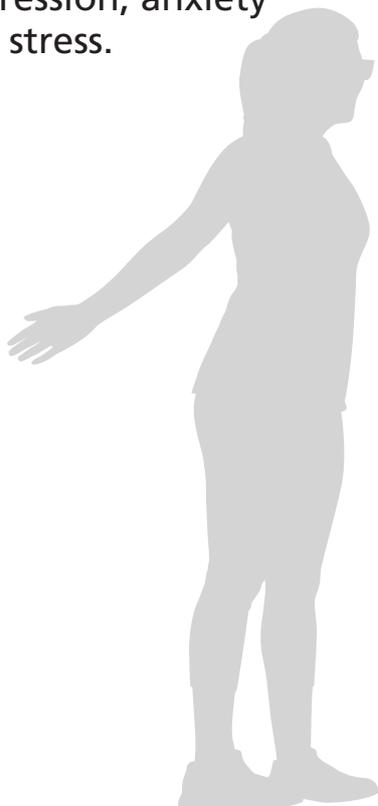


# Physical activity can help to prevent disease, maintain a healthy weight and promote mental wellbeing.

However, many adults in Scotland do not currently meet existing guidelines for physical activity. In the UK, physical inactivity can cause health problems such as coronary heart disease, some cancers and type 2 diabetes.

## Why employers need physically active employees

It also has implications for businesses such as loss of productivity, increased absenteeism, and increased cost for employers. By introducing and increasing physical activity in the workplace, these can be reduced. The most common causes of sickness absence in Scotland are back pain, musculoskeletal disorders and mental health problems including depression, anxiety and stress.



**Support and publicise local and national events such as charity walks and fun runs.**

**Provide changing facilities and lockers for staff.**

**Encourage walking and jogging groups, fitness classes in lunch breaks.**

**6 simple ideas**

**to promote physical activity**

# the benefits



**Provide bicycle racks to encourage employees to cycle to work.**

**Support sports and activity clubs such as work football teams.**

**Provide standing desks, introduce walking meetings, promote stair climbing.**

- ✓ improve employee morale
- ✓ reduce employee absence from work
- ✓ increase employee productivity
- ✓ maintain and/or increase employee retention and lower turnover rate
- ✓ enhance your reputation as an employer who is seen to value employee health and wellbeing
- ✓ make a contribution to the health of the wider community
- ✓ improve mental health and wellbeing
- ✓ improve concentration and mental alertness
- ✓ help to lose weight or maintain a healthy weight
- ✓ prevent a number of chronic diseases and other health problems

**Visit [www.healthyworkinglives.scot](http://www.healthyworkinglives.scot) for more information on how you can promote physical activity in the workplace.**

This resource may also be made available on request in the following formats:



☎ 0131 314 5300

✉ [nhs.healthscotland-alternativeformats@nhs.net](mailto:nhs.healthscotland-alternativeformats@nhs.net)

## National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance on workplace health promotion

The NICE guidance on how to encourage employees to be physically active ([www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng13](http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng13)) recommends that employers should:

- develop an organisation-wide plan or policy to encourage and support employees to be more physically active
- develop an active travel plan
- take account of the nature of the work and any health and safety issues
- help employees to be physically active during the working day by:
  - encouraging employees to move around more at work
  - encouraging employees to use the stairs rather than the lift if they can
  - providing information about walking and cycling routes
  - encouraging employees to take short walks during work breaks
  - encouraging employees to set goals on how far they walk and cycle.

### Additional support

**Paths for All** can provide information on local walking projects, workplace grant funding, walk leader training, resources and fact sheets.

[www.pathsforall.org.uk](http://www.pathsforall.org.uk)

**Cycling Scotland** provides information on the benefits of cycling, the cycle-friendly employer and workplace grant awards.

[www.cyclingscotland.org](http://www.cyclingscotland.org)

**Jogscotland** is a Scottish network that provides support, advice and training to help people be more active through walking and jogging.

[www.jogscotland.org.uk](http://www.jogscotland.org.uk)

**Sustrans** promotes active travel (such as walking or cycling to work) and has useful resources including local route maps and guides.

[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

📄 [www.healthyworkinglives.scot](http://www.healthyworkinglives.scot)

☎ **Adviceline:** Speak to one of our experts on **0800 019 2211**

📶 **Social media:** Follow us on  @NHSHWL and  @NHS\_HWL