

# Ideas for Health Promotion Activities in the Workplace

## Organisational

Set up a Health at Work working group to take responsibility for implementing ideas  
Designate someone with responsibility for implementing action  
Allocate a budget for health promotion action and activities  
Develop good employment practice and policies, eg, communication systems; training and personal development; supervision, appraisal and mentoring; attendance / absence management; equal opportunities; return to work/rehabilitation for people with illnesses or disabilities; time off for carer responsibilities (children, other dependants); job sharing; flexitime and flexible hours / days; dealing with harassment and bullying; grievance procedure; disciplinary procedure  
Link with Investors In People and other quality standards  
Include health activities in managers' objectives  
Link green transport issues with opportunities for physical activity - walking and cycling to work  
Assess the needs for different kinds of activities

## General health activities

Health discussions / seminars – with guest speakers  
Health information – noticeboards, leaflet racks, information points  
Regular supply of specific information / leaflets to all staff individually via wage slips, email  
Participate in national campaigns / use national campaign days  
Articles in regular staff newsletter  
Health newsletter  
Awareness raising, workshops, training sessions on health topics  
Training in team building, assertiveness, time management, communication skills  
Health promotion videos playing in waiting areas  
Health awareness days or events  
Brief sections on health awareness in health and safety training and first aid training  
Health policies and procedures – alcohol and substance use, general health and well being, healthy eating, HIV/AIDS, physical activity, smoking, stress and mental health  
Risk assessments to take account of health and potential stress factors, not just safety  
Paid time off for staff to go for health screening (via GP or other facilities, rather than at work)  
Give employees some paid time off (a certain number of hours per month or year) to pursue activities they feel are good for their health  
Share health activities and resources with other local workplaces  
Allow staff with back or musculo-skeletal problems paid time off to attend appointments with physiotherapists or other health professionals

## Alcohol and substance misuse

Policy for all staff to raise awareness of issues  
Training for all involved in implementing the policy  
Support and referral for staff with an alcohol or substance use problem  
Information about agencies and organisations dealing with alcohol or substance misuse problems

## Healthy eating

Ensure healthy options are available in canteen / vending facilities  
Training for catering staff  
Negotiate with local take-aways or cafes to provide some healthy options  
Allow staff to take paid time off for appointments with dietitians about any eating problems  
Let staff eat or drink at regular intervals if they need to as part of medical treatment for various eating disorders or diabetes

## HIV/AIDS and sexual health

Condom machines in toilets or easily accessible points  
Health and safety implications included in first aid training  
Health and safety implications included in training for cleaners  
Training for all staff to raise awareness  
Information about agencies or organisations which provide confidential advice  
Policy on protection of rights of staff who are HIV positive

## Physical activity

Encourage people to use stairs rather than lift  
Marked routes, with distances, for walks during breaks  
Bicycle racks, showers and changing facilities: to encourage people to cycle to work or to do some physical activity during breaks  
Allow people to arrive 5 or 10 minutes late and leave 5 or 10 minutes early (without loss of pay) if they walk or cycle to work  
Games and sports teams  
Gym within the workplace  
Keep fit, yoga, tai chi or similar sessions before work / in lunch breaks / after work  
Corporate membership of or negotiated reduced fees for local health clubs and facilities

## Smoking

Policy on smoking and protecting staff from passive smoking  
Total ban in the workplace to provide a smoke-free environment  
Designated smoking areas  
Designated smoking times  
Help for staff who want to give up smoking: paid time off to attend stop smoking counselling or group sessions  
Training for volunteers who want to help others to give up smoking

## Stress and Mental Health

Stress audit to identify problem areas / jobs  
Develop a stress action plan to tackle problems  
Awareness raising sessions for all staff on recognising stress and mental ill health symptoms in themselves and others  
Training for managers, supervisors, trade union representatives on recognising stress and mental ill health symptoms in themselves and others  
Avoid stigmatisation of people who have taken time off or sick leave for mental health reasons  
Relaxation, aromatherapy, yoga or similar sessions before work / in lunch breaks / after work  
Counselling service in-house or referral to outside agency  
Rehabilitate back into the workforce anyone who has been off sick with mental health problems  
Encourage social activities amongst work colleagues

## How We Can Help

We can help you to devise simple surveys, 'before and after' questionnaires, assessment checklists, monitoring forms.