

Appendix 1

A More Active Scotland

Workplace delivery theme – exemplar physical activity employer

NHS Health Scotland, Final 14 December 2015

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This paper outlines the criteria that organisations are required to meet if they are to be considered as exemplar employers in promoting physical activity and reducing sedentary behaviour within the workplace.
- 1.2 The criteria draw upon current evidence, the outcome of two workshops with private, voluntary and public service stakeholders, two consultation opportunities with workshop participants and engagement with NHS Health Scotland staff.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The national physical activity implementation plan A More Active Scotland (2014) aims to achieve four outcomes relative to the workplace setting. Three of these outcomes focus on the development of an exemplar physical activity employer model and are as follows:
 - The Scottish Government will be an exemplary employer in encouraging staff to be more physically active.
 - An identified private sector organisation will be an exemplary employer in encouraging staff to be more physically active.
 - An identified voluntary sector organisation will be an exemplary employer in encouraging staff to be more physically active.
- 2.2 To process these actions a definition of the term 'exemplar employer' was required followed by a range of processes that would effectively:
 - market and successfully encourage employers to adopt the model
 - support employers to work towards exemplar status
 - measure performance
 - reward successful delivery
 - disseminate effective practice.

3.0 Process

3.1 In 2014, NHS Health Scotland hosted two workshops that involved public, private and voluntary sector organisations operating up to Healthy Working Lives (HWL) Gold Award level. Staff from NHS Health Scotland's Physical Activity, Human Resources, Public Health Science, Healthy Working Lives and Equality teams also attended these workshops. Appendix 2 includes a full list of participants and invitees. The aim of the workshops was to agree the processes outlined in Section 2.2.

Background information and current evidence was presented at the workshops. This evidence is summarised in Appendix 3.

3.2 The first workshop identified a series of standards and/or characteristics that would be considered exemplary employer practice. The second workshop further refined this information with agreement reached on a draft set of recommendations.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 Definitions

4.1.1 An exemplar physical activity employer (EPAE), depending on organisation status and size, will provide a series of essential provisions for employees combined with a set number of additional provisions that are known to encourage and/or contribute to increased levels of physical activity across the workforce.

4.1.2 There are two employer categories. A category 1 employer will have a workforce of fewer than 250 employees. A category 2 employer will be a statutory public service irrespective of workforce size or any organisation of 250 or more employees.

4.1.3 The term employee is used to refer to a range of individuals including full-time workers; part-time workers; casual or seasonal workers; and volunteers. Organisation's plans and provisions should therefore apply to each of these groups including volunteers. Each member of staff or volunteer should be counted as one individual, so whole time equivalent figures should be avoided when organisations calculate their total number of employees.

4.1.4 An active employee is someone who meets the [UK Physical Activity Guidelines](#). This is an individual who each week is active for 150 minutes in moderate exercise (increased breathing and able to talk) or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise (breathing fast with difficulty talking) or a combination of both, and who builds strength at least two days a week.

4.2 EPAE provisions and requirements

4.2.1 A category 1 employer (employing less than 250 employees) will need to deliver **all** of the following essential actions (B1–B9) and articulate them within a brief EPAE plan:

- B1) Produce an EPAE plan using the template provided.
- B2) Provide the opportunity for all staff to engage in the development and publication of a brief EPAE plan.
- B3) Undertake an equality impact assessment of the EPAE plan.
- B4) Provide all employees with information on how active they should be to meet the [UK Physical Activity Guidelines](#) and how to become and/or remain active (including safe active travel information) within and outwith working hours.
- B5) Measure baseline physical activity knowledge and levels across the workforce using a validated tool (provided), and outline these levels within the brief EPAE plan.
- B6) Appoint two physical activity champions – one from the management or executive team and one from the operational staff group.
- B7) Use signage to encourage physical activity during the working day, e.g. using stairs instead of lifts.
- B8) Outline a commitment to target less active employees, which explains how plans and provisions aim to not inadvertently increase the gap between the least and most active employees and which commits to at least one targeted weekly activity for inactive employees.
- B9) Engage in at least one active workplace challenge every six months.
- B10) Measure employees' physical activity levels on the anniversary of EPAE status and summarise them in an annual report.

4.2.2 A category 2 employer (a statutory public service irrespective of workforce size or any organisation employing 250 or more employees) needs to deliver **all** essential requirements (B1–B10 and C1–C5). That means they need to deliver both the actions set out in section 4.2.1 as well as the following:

- C1) Create and publish an active travel plan and show evidence of delivery.
- C2) Offer at least one weekly lunchtime employer-led activity, e.g. a walking group.
- C3) Provide appropriate employee shower and changing facilities.
- C4) Where practicable operate a flexible working policy for staff (this will support development and delivery of an active travel plan).
- C5) Provide access to bike parking facilities either within the workplace or very nearby.

While category 1 employers are required to produce a brief EPAE plan, category 2 employers need to develop a more detailed EPAE plan. Both category 1 and category 2 employers should use the EPAE plan template and are required to undertake an equality impact assessment of their EPAE plans.

4.2.3 As well as the essential requirements outlined in Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 there are some additional requirements. Category 1 employers need to deliver any two actions from the following list while category 2 employers must select and deliver **four**.

- D1) Once a month provide, in addition to the weekly lunchtime activity, a 30-minute physical activity break for every employee during paid work time.
- D2) Achieve Cycle Friendly Employer Award status.
- D3) Offer corporate gym membership and/or bike loan scheme.
- D4) Have in situ standing desks as workstations and/or in meeting rooms
- D5) Collaborate with neighbouring employers to encourage increased levels of physical activity.
- D6) Operate walking or standing meetings.
- D7) Achieve HWL Silver status.
- D8) Engage employees through work in active volunteering schemes.
- D9) Another intervention shown to increase employee physical activity levels.

4.2.4 Employers are encouraged to exceed EPAE status requirements by delivering all of the additional requirements (D1–D9) set out in Section 4.2.3. Employers that achieve this are eligible to be awarded EPAE-plus status, which is the highest possible attainable standard, or in other words is the ‘gold standard’.

4.2.5 Appendix 3 summarises all of the requirements outlined above in table format.

4.2.6 It should be noted that a workplace or service that is part of a larger organisation may apply for EPAE status for their particular area or service. For example a single office site of an organisation that has offices throughout Scotland could apply for EPAE status. Similarly in organisations where multiple services are located at the same site, individual services could apply for EPAE status. Irrespective of the status or size of the whole organisation, single sites or services applying for EPAE status may consider themselves category 1 employers and are therefore expected to meet Category One requirements. However, individual sites

or services can if they wish exceed minimal criteria by meeting the requirements for category 2 employers or EPAE Plus.

- 4.2.7 All activities must be monitored and/or evaluated and summarised in an annual report.
- 4.2.8 Appendix 5 outlines the relationship between EPAE and Healthy Working Lives criteria at Bronze, Silver and Gold award levels. It should be noted that while achieving EPAE status can support employers obtain a HWL award, employers can be awarded HWL status without being EPAE employers. Likewise employers do not need to be HWL award holders in order to achieve EPAE status.

5.0 Encouraging employer engagement

- 5.1 A marketing campaign targeting Chairs, Leaders and CEOs will be promoted twice a year by NHS Health Scotland and the Scottish Centre for Healthier Working Lives.
- 5.2 A range of support will be provided at a national level. This will include a single web-based point providing all relevant information on the EPAE scheme and how to access:
 - guidance and toolkits
 - physical activity resources for staff (electronic and hardcopy materials)
 - local physical activity opportunities via [Active Scotland](#)
 - EPAE Ideas and up-to-date news, for example via [HWL](#) and the [Physical Activity Health Alliance](#)
 - national physical activity challenges
 - information on existing EPAE employers together with information about which employers offer EPAE collaboration supports.
- 5.3 In order to apply for EPAE status employers must have internet access as the application process is only available online.
- 5.4 After signing up employers will have three months to submit their EPAE plan and 12 months to achieve EPAE status.
- 5.5 Following successful assessment, an award will be provided to each EPAE employer with achievement celebrated at either a national standalone event or one in partnership with an existing business award.

6.0 Next steps

- 6.1 Agree final recommendations and outline options for a draft assessment process at a meeting held by the end of May 2015.
- 6.2 Identify a small number of Scottish Government locations, directorates or divisions and private, public and/or voluntary sector employers that are potentially meeting the agreed EPAE requirements by mid-June 2015.
- 6.3 Design and pilot an integrated assessment process with Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives by December 2015.
- 6.4 Establish a sustainable assessment and award process for EPAE by end March 2016.
- 6.5 Publish and market the EPAE process by the end of June 2015.

NHS Health Scotland
25 June 2015

Appendix 2

Workshop participants

Name	Designation/Work Area/Workshop Role	Organisation/Business
Susan Monks	Scottish Centre for HWL Assessor	NHS Health Scotland
Chris Kelly	Physical Activity/Staff Health	NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde
Andy Kitts	Active Scotland/Data Information Officer	NHS Health Scotland
Debbie Nelson	Exemplar Business – Gold HWL	Glasgow City Council
Lucy Docherty	Exemplar Business – Gold HWL	River Clyde Homes
Ian Collins	Exemplar Organisation	Scottish Natural Heritage
Erin Giles	Human Resources/Staff Policy	NHS Health Scotland
Graeme Scobie	Public Health Science/Evidence	NHS Health Scotland
Arma Sayed	Equality	NHS Health Scotland
Gary Bell	Delivery/Operational Overview	Cycling Scotland
Ian McCall	National Workplace Challenge	Paths for All
Lynne Galloway	Scottish Centre for HWL Award Expertise	NHS Health Scotland
Richard Smith	NHS HWL Adviser	NHS Dumfries & Galloway
Carl Greenwood	National Workplace Challenge	Paths for All
Ashleigh Oates	Physical Activity Programme	NHS Health Scotland
John Howie	Physical Activity Programme (Chair)	NHS Health Scotland

Invitees

Name	Designation/Work Area	Organisation/Business
Catriona Henderson	NHS HWL Adviser	NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde
Morag Campbell	Physical Activity Policy	Scottish Government
Mary Colvin	Physical Activity Policy – Improvement	Scottish Government
Teri Devine	Exemplar Business – Gold HWL	Action on Hearing Loss

Appendix 3

NHS Health Scotland

Exemplar physical activity employer

Definition scoping workshop

Brief overview

1.0 Rationale for delivering workplace physical activity interventions

1.1. Physical activity can prevent and/or treat the main causes of workplace sickness absence; stress and musculoskeletal disorders:

- a) Improves employee's general health
- b) Reduces employee absence
- c) Reduces job stress
- d) Increases productivity
- e) Reduces staff turnover
- f) Facilitates good employer–employee relations
- g) Helps staff social interactions
- h) Reduces employer costs, e.g. absenteeism. Potential cost savings if effective at reducing number of employee absences over a year:
 - If 1% effective – potential savings between £2,870 and £6,244 each year
 - If 50% effective – potential savings up to £312,217 each year

Source – Economic Costs of Physical Inactivity, BHF National Centre for Physical Activity & Health (2013). Assumptions are:

- a workforce of 1,000 staff
- average reduced absenteeism rates are between 3.2 and 8.7 days per employee per year (based on other physical activity interventions in different workforces)
- effectiveness of workplace physical activity interventions are between 13% and 40%
- median wages given for different sectors to show savings.

2.0 Workplace systematic reviews

- 2.1. Many systematic reviews are available which look at the effectiveness of workplace physical activity interventions. These cover a wide range of outcomes including:
- a) physical activity levels/behaviour
 - b) general self-reported health/lifestyles
 - c) physiological outcomes, e.g. weight, blood pressure, mental health, etc.
 - d) workplace absenteeism
 - e) job stress
 - f) workplace productivity.
- 2.2. Results vary considerably depending on what the review set out to look at, what types of interventions were included and the different types of workplace and populations in the studies.
- 2.3. In general, the overall conclusion is that workplace physical activity interventions can be effective but this very much depends on:
- a) how the intervention was delivered
 - b) who was involved
 - c) the characteristics of the target population (young, white, white collar workers)
 - d) quality of the evaluation (less rigorous showed greater effects as did self-reporting).

3.0 Factors that determine effectiveness of physical activity interventions in the workplace – Q&A

3.1. Workplace – settings and populations

- a) Does the type of workplace influence effectiveness?

Limited evidence that the type of workplace influences the effectiveness of physical activity interventions.

- b) What are the most effective and appropriate interventions for different sectors of the workforce, such as men and women, younger and older workers, minority ethnic groups and temporary/casual workers?

Little evidence that physical activity interventions are more appropriate for different sectors of the workforce based on gender, ethnicity or for temporary/casual workers.

- c) Does effectiveness vary according to the type of job people do?

Some studies suggest that workplace physical activity interventions are more effective for sedentary workers.

3.2. Intervention design, delivery and duration

d) How does the way the intervention is delivered influence effectiveness?

Evidence from some walking interventions studies and active travel intervention suggests self-directed interventions are effective.

e) Does the length and/or intensity of the intervention influence its impact?

Evidence for the influence on effectiveness of duration and intensity of physical activity is conclusive in stair walking, walking and active travel interventions. However, evidence from other studies suggest a moderate effect of interventions of over 6 months duration.

f) Does the degree to which employees are involved in the planning, implementation and review of interventions influence their effectiveness?

There is limited evidence that involvement of employees in the implementation and review of the physical activity intervention influences the effectiveness of those interventions. However, there is some evidence that involving employees in the planning stage of intervention design can have a positive effect on physical activity.

4.0 **Reported Barriers and Facilitators (National Institute for Clinical Excellence 2007)**

4.1. The two key barriers (for both employers and employees) to successful interventions include:

- a) Negative perceptions (e.g. views about stair climbing messages, perceived time/fitness constraints)
- b) Physical barriers (e.g. location/absence of showers, location of lifts c.f. stairs, and lack of safe cycle routes)

4.2. No factors were cited by the employers as barriers to the implementation of physical activity interventions.

4.3. Employees cited facilitators to the implementation of interventions that focus on:

- a) physical environment (improvements in facilities and convenience of location); incentive schemes and flexible work practices
- b) stair walking studies, where employees found the poster interventions encouraged stair walking, that they were a good idea and were thought provoking.

4.4. No factors were cited by the employers as facilitators to the implementation of physical activity interventions.

5.0 Key interventions most often delivered and evaluated (and show some degree of effectiveness)

5.1. Often grouped into the following interventions:

- a) stair walking
- b) walking
- c) active travel
- d) others including:
 - counselling/motivational interviewing
 - health checks/screening
 - health promotion messages/information
 - led activity sessions
 - active travel or combinations of all of these (i.e. multi-component programmes).

A further break down of actions include:

- a) Encouraging employees to be active at work:
 - Promoting benefits of activity
 - Providing staff with information and support on the benefits of physical activity and asking them what types of activities they would participate in
 - Encouraging use of stairs instead of lifts
 - Pedometer/stair climb team building challenges
 - Walking or active meetings and one-to-ones
 - Allowing staff to work flexible hours that can accommodate physical activity, such as longer lunch breaks
 - Encouraging lunchtime walks
 - Joining a corporate membership scheme with local leisure services and promoting this with staff
 - Providing time off for going to the gym

- Supporting organisation sports teams
- Arranging a team gathering or corporate away day that involves some form of physical activity that most staff would be able to participate in
- Office Olympics or sports day
- Encouraging participation in local and national events such as sponsored walks and fun runs

b) Active travelling to work:

- Encouraging walking or cycling to work
- Providing cycle storage facilities
- Providing shower facilities
- Active travel planning – and providing information on, and actively promoting, local walking and cycle routes
- Salary sacrifice schemes
- No parking provided for those within cycling/walking distance
- Setting up walking/running/cycling clubs
- Use of pedometers

Note: there is little evidence of the effect of workplace physical activity interventions on inequalities; most of the evidence comes from larger workplaces with younger white collar workers rather than smaller workplaces with individuals who may be on low income or from deprived areas. Many of the options above require individuals to opt in and those currently inactive, overweight, low paid or have limited access to places to be physically inactive could be left out with the result that their health suffers more compared to other staff.

Appendix 4 – Exemplar physical activity employer (EPAE) requirements

Essential

Workplace category 1 (less than 250 employees) and category 2 (all statutory public sector organisations irrespective of size and all other workplaces with 250 or more employees)

- B1)** Produce an EPAE plan using the template provided.
- B2)** Provide the opportunity for all staff to engage in the development and publication of a brief EPAE plan.
- B3)** Undertake an equality impact assessment of the EPAE plan.
- B4)** Provide all employees with information on how active they should be to meet the [UK Physical Activity Guidelines](#) and how to become and/or remain active (including safe active travel information) within and outwith working hours.
- B5)** Measure baseline physical activity knowledge and levels across the workforce using a validated tool (options to be provided) and outline these levels within the brief EPAE plan.
- B6)** Appoint two physical activity champions – one from the management or executive team and one from the operational staff group.
- B7)** Use signage to encourage physical activity during the working day, e.g. using stairs instead of lifts.
- B8)** Outline a commitment to target less active employees, which explains how plans and provisions aim to not inadvertently increase the gap between the least and most active employees and which commits to at least one targeted weekly activity for inactive employees.
- B9)** Engage in at least one active workplace challenge every six months.
- B10)** Measure employees' physical activity levels on the anniversary of EPAE status and summarise them in an annual report.

Additional

Category 1 (two requirements), category 2 (four requirements), EPAE Plus organisations (all requirements).

- D1)** Once a month provide, in addition to the weekly lunchtime activity, a 30-minute physical activity break for every employee during paid work time.
- D2)** Achieve Cycle Friendly Employer Award status
- D3)** Offer corporate gym membership and/or bike loan scheme.
- D4)** Have in situ standing desks as workstations and/or in meeting rooms.
- D5)** Collaborate with neighbouring employers to encourage increased levels of physical activity.
- D6)** Operate walking or standing meetings.
- D7)** Achieve HWL Silver status.
- D8)** Engage employees through work in active volunteering schemes.
- D9)** Another intervention shown to increase employee physical activity levels.

Essential workplace category 2 and EPAE Plus only

- C1)** Create and publish an active travel plan and show evidence of delivery.
- C2)** Offer at least one weekly lunchtime employer-led activity, e.g. a walking group.
- C3)** Provide appropriate employee shower and changing facilities.
- C4)** Where practicable operate a flexible working policy for staff (this will support development and delivery of an active travel plan).
- C5)** Provide access to bike parking facilities either within the workplace or very nearby.

Both category 1 and category 2 employers will outline activities in an EPAE plan. An agreed template to guide employers on content will be provided.

Appendix 5

Relationship between exemplar physical activity employer and Scottish Centre for Healthier Working Lives (HWL) criteria

1.0 HWL Bronze award criteria

- 1.1 Address Healthy Working Lives in the organisation and ensure employees are given key roles and responsibilities within the workforce for taking forward the Healthy Working Lives agenda.

EPAE relationship – essential category (B2) (B6)

- 1.2 Address health, safety and wellbeing needs in the organisation which includes employee consultation and training, supporting employee attendance and avoiding accidents in the organisation.

EPAE relationship – essential criteria (B2)(B5) (B10) and (C3)

- 1.3 Promote and raise awareness of occupational health, safety and wellbeing topics that have been identified by employees and managers/employers.

EPAE relationship – all criteria would apply except (B1) (B9)

2.0 HWL Silver Award criteria

- 2.1 Develop and implement documented policies/procedures on attendance management and integrate into existing policies.

EPAE relationship – essential category (C3)

- 2.2 Promote the benefits of physical activity and promote and/or provide two opportunities to encourage employees to be/become physically active within and outwith work.

EPAE relationship – all criteria would apply

3.0 HWL Gold Award criteria

- 3.1 Prepare a three-year health, safety and wellbeing strategy and three-year rolling action plan.

EPAE relationship – all criteria could apply as this Gold HWL plan will include physical activity.

- 3.2 Benchmarking – evaluate your organisation’s progress and performance. As part of your work in developing your Bronze and Silver portfolios, you will have already begun the benchmarking process.

EPAE relationship – essential category (B5) (B10) and additional (D9)

- 3.3 Health inequalities – be aware of and address health inequalities in your organisation

EPAE relationship – essential category (B3) (B8)

- 3.4 Choose one criterion from the bank of criteria below:

- Stress risk assessment – conduct a stress risk assessment/audit and develop an action plan.

EPAE relationship – the action plan could include going for EPAE status given the relationship between increased physical activity and mental well-being.

- Promote community health, safety and wellbeing – this criterion is designed to encourage workplaces to reinforce and strengthen community health, safety and wellbeing.

EPAE relationship – additional criteria (D8)

- Lifestyle checks – provide all employees with the opportunity to have a lifestyle check that includes a review of lifestyle behaviour and health advice.

EPAE relationship – essential category (B2) (B4) and (B10)

- Health and the environment – undertake a practical initiative that would be beneficial to the environment.

EPAE relationship – in part some of the criteria would apply especially essential (C4) and additional (D2) (i)

- Mentoring – support one organisation in our supply chain or partner network in their award activity or to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of their workforce.

EPAE relationship – additional criteria (D5) (D9)

Appendix 6

Interview detail

13 interviews were carried out. Each interview was semi-structured and covered a number of topic areas:

Assessors:

- Respondents role in relation to EPAE
- Overall experience of EPAE
- The EPAE assessment process
- EPAE criteria
- Resources required for EPAE assessment
- Barriers to assessment process
- Facilitators to assessment process EPAE
- The perceived impact of EPAE

Employers:

- Respondents role in relation to EPAE
- Overall experience of EPAE
- The process of implementing EPAE
- EPAE criteria
- Resources required to implement EPAE
- Barriers to implement EPAE
- Facilitators to implement EPAE
- The perceived impact of EPAE