Physical activity, healthy eating and healthier weight:
a toolkit for employers

Contents

Around a third of adults in England are **damaging their health through a lack of physical activity**[1]

Employees who are in **good health** are less likely to need time off work and are likely to be **more productive**[4]

1 in 4 women and **1 in 5 men** in England are defined as inactive[2]*

In 2015, **57%** of women and **66%** of men in England were overweight or obese[5]

57% 66%

Latest data show that in the UK only **25%** of men and **28%** of women ate the recommended level of at least **five fruits and vegetables per day**[6]

Healthy eating can reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke and some cancers[7]
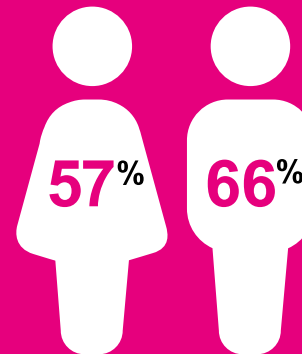
On average, obesity deprives an individual of an **extra 9 years of life**[7]

-9

The **cost of an unhealthy workforce** to the UK taxpayer has been estimated at

over

£60 billion **per year**[3]

* **Inactive** – doing less than 30 minutes of moderate physical activity each week

Social, cultural and economic trends have had a significant impact on our diet and weight, and have removed physical activity from much of daily life. Our surrounding environments and choices have changed which has brought corresponding challenges, including the way we eat and exercise.

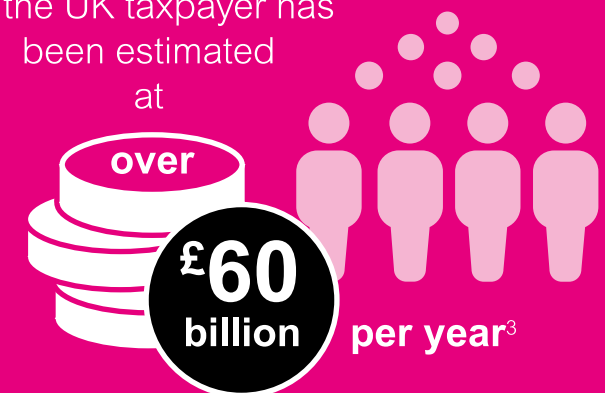**What someone eats, their weight and how much physical activity they do are very personal. While some employees will welcome support and advice on these issues, some will not. Managers need training appropriate to their business, teams and culture in order to know how best to discuss these issues.**

Physical activity, along with a healthy balanced diet and a healthier weight, are critical to your employees' health and wellbeing.

One in four women and one in five men in England are defined as inactive, doing less than 30 minutes of moderate physical activity each week. This not only impacts the health and wellbeing of employees but can also increase costs for your business.

Employers have a legal duty to provide safe workplaces that do not damage an employee's health. Many employees will already be aware of this; fewer will realise that many of the places where we work and spend a significant amount of time actually discourage physical activity and encourage us to make less healthy choices.

Typically, adults in full time work spend about one-third of their waking hours at work, so the workplace is the ideal environment in which to raise awareness of these issues. This simple, step-by-step toolkit lists free resources that will help you achieve a healthier working environment, whatever the size of your organisation.

"I would definitely recommend the toolkit and share it with my colleagues; I think businesses will find it very helpful. Many organisations aren't always sure where to look for evidence-based, up to date information, so the signposting to further resources is particularly useful."

Marie Conway
Health Improvement Manager, Calderdale Council

"I really like that this toolkit provides practical ideas – it doesn't only outline what you can do as an employer, but how to do so."

Gail Weeks
Health & Wellbeing Program Manager, Nokia

Employers can support their employees by:

Providing healthier food and drink options, and opportunities to be physically active

Helping staff access appropriate support

Providing a supportive environment for employees and reducing stigma

Encouraging senior staff and line managers to lead by example

Making employees aware of information, support and programmes like the Workplace Challenge that promote increased physical activity, healthier weight and healthy eating

Acting as a gateway to evidence-based information

Personal responsibility is important, but employers are able to make positive changes that can help employees make healthier choices. It can take time to change habits that have been formed over a lifetime, so plan and prepare for the long haul. Small, incremental changes in physical activity and in diet can make a big, positive difference over time.

Positive partnership

Your approach to physical activity, healthy eating and weight management in the workplace will be more effective if it has the support of your employees.

☑ Engage with employees from the outset. Ask them what will help them to make healthier choices. Encourage them to take the lead on implementing change

☑ Help to raise employees' awareness of support available to manage/improve their health and wellbeing e.g. weight management services and physical activity opportunities

☑ Appoint workplace champions who can help spread the word

☑ Report back regularly to employees. Test what is working and what requires further development

☑ Create channels of communication that reach as widely as possible

☑ Encourage employees to share learning across the organisation so everybody benefits

☑ Agree goals and the best way to measure your outcomes

☑ Share and celebrate individual and group success across the board

Checklist of actions

Understand the importance of physical activity, healthy eating and healthier weight by utilising the information and supporting tools later in this document:

☑ Showcase the ways that your organisation champions physical activity, healthy eating and evidence-based weight management. What are you doing well and are you open to new ideas?

☑ Have you measured the extent and nature of any issues – for instance, through a staff health and wellbeing survey?

☑ What are you currently doing to help employees be more active, make healthier choices for food and drink, achieve and maintain a healthier weight (recognising that prevention and early intervention is best?)

☑ Have you communicated the importance of physical activity, healthy eating and healthier weight to employees?

☑ Have you asked employees about barriers to physical activity and a healthy balanced diet in the workplace?

☑ Have you worked with staff to think about how the workplace can support them to achieve and maintain a healthy weight?

Create an environment and culture that supports physical activity, healthy eating and healthier weight in the workplace:

☑ Have you considered your responsibilities under health and safety legislation to promote physical activity and access to healthier food and drink options?

☑ Are the roles and responsibilities of individuals or groups in your business to promote physical activity, a healthy balanced diet and healthier weight clearly defined?

☑ Do you encourage and support open conversations about health and wellbeing with employees?

☑ Do you encourage and support self-management – i.e. signposting to existing tools and support services?

☑ Do you ensure employees know how to access occupational health services?

☑ Do you know which external resources you can use to promote physical activity, a healthy balanced diet and healthier weight?

☑ Do you review individual needs and make reasonable adjustments and adaptations to employees' work? For example, are night workers supported in a similar way to those working daytime office hours?

☑ Do you empower employees and managers to challenge the stigma of obesity in the workplace?

☑ Do you actively support employees' physical and mental health?

☑ Do you monitor engagement and uptake to ensure that your interventions are reaching those that need them?

Checklist of actions *cont.*

Signpost to knowledge and training:

☑ Does your health and wellbeing strategy or policy promote physical activity, a healthy diet and optimal weight management?

☑ Is there specific training for employees on workplace health and wellbeing?

☑ Does training include the complementary activity of tackling sedentary lifestyles, poor diet, unhealthy weight and other issues such as mental health?

☑ Does training include communication skills around conversations about physical activity, nutrition and weight issues?

☑ Is there feedback to ensure training meets needs?

☑ Is training evidence-based?

☑ Do employees know where to find information on physical health, healthy eating and healthier weight?

☑ Do managers proactively promote and encourage employees to take control of their own health and support them to take action?

☑ Is there a network of workplace health champions to coordinate and motivate employees?

Toolkit development

This toolkit has been informed by an evidence review produced by the Public Health England Library Team and the evidence was considered by a steering group of practitioners, professionals and business experts. It also draws on the experience of employers who have taken steps to support physical activity, diet and healthier weight, and signposts external organisations that offer advice and support to employers and employees.

This toolkit is informed by models of behaviour change created to support the health and wellbeing of employees. These include Changing Behaviour: Techniques for Tier 2 Adult Weight Management Services and Sport England's Applying Behaviour Change Theories for physical activity.

The case studies in this toolkit have been sourced and written following consultation with experts working in relevant sectors, and through the contribution of employers who are taking these topics seriously. The case studies demonstrate employers sharing real-world examples of the initiatives they have trialled to support employees.

If you choose to initiate programmes on diet or weight management, you should ideally consult a dietitian on the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) register or nutritionist registered with the Association for Nutrition, who will offer evidence-based advice.

"I have found this toolkit very straightforward and helpful. As an SME, many of the suggested actions are ones we might consider, particularly those small nudges towards making healthier choices. In particular I have started thinking about how we can make our physical activity opportunities for employees more inclusive for those who need a bit more support in taking that first step towards being more active."

Simon Miles
Operations Manager, Fluid IT

Co-authored foreword by: Dr Catherine Swann, Deputy Director for Health Improvement, Public Health England; Louise Aston, Wellbeing Director, Business in the Community; Dr Shaun Davis, Global Director of Safety, Health, Wellbeing & Sustainability at Royal Mail Group and member of Business in the Community's Wellbeing Leadership Team

Physical activity, healthy eating and healthier weight are key contributors to good health and wellbeing, and although they interact, each independently plays an important role in supporting and improving health.

This toolkit provides practical, evidence-based guidance on how employers can support their employees to improve the health of their workforce and improve the health of their business through reduced sickness absence and increased productivity.

It is well established that a lack of physical activity and poor diet are among the top ten causes of ill health, as outlined by a report from the Chief Medical Officer. Together they determine our body weight, but individually, physical activity and a healthy balanced diet reduce the risk of a wide range of diseases, such as diabetes and some cancers, and physical activity also helps maintain good mental health.

Environment shapes behaviour, including how active we are and what we eat. Working adults spend on average one-third of their waking hours at work, so naturally the workplace is key to determining and promoting healthy behaviours, such as what we eat and being active. There are steps employers can take to facilitate a healthy work environment, regardless of the size of the organisation and its level of experience in this area.

Employers have a legal responsibility to support the health and wellbeing of their staff as part of their health and safety duties. But instead of approaching this as an obligation, it should be recognised as an opportunity for a business to improve the health and wellbeing of their staff and improve the performance of their organisation. Healthy employees drive a healthy business.

Employers should take a whole person, whole system approach to health and wellbeing in the workplace. Physical

health is inextricably linked to mental health. Employees are more likely to make healthier choices about physical activity and diet if they feel supported by their employer. An open and inclusive workplace culture helps to tackle the stigma of physical and mental health. As employers begin their journey, the first step should be to engage with employees, involving them from the very beginning to create an approach that will work best for them. Employers can leverage national campaigns and initiatives such as Change 4 Life and One You to inform the conversation at work about healthier choices.

We hope that employers can use this toolkit, in conjunction with the suite of PHE-BITC toolkits, to protect their employees and ensure that they are getting the right support they need to remain in good health and fulfil their potential.

Thank you to Royal Mail Group for helping contribute to the development of this toolkit.

The business case and need for action

The business case for supporting employees to be physically active and maintain a healthy balanced diet and a healthier weight is compelling. The estimated cost of an unhealthy workforce to the UK taxpayer has been estimated at over £60 billion per annum.

Employees who are in good health are less likely to need time off work and are likely to be more productive. They are also likely to engage more positively both with their work and with their colleagues.

Promoting healthier working conditions not only makes business sense, it is also the right thing to do, for employees and for their families – as an employer you can have a positive or negative impact on the health and wellbeing of the people who work for you.

Leadership by senior managers is important, but health and wellbeing initiatives will be more effective if they are designed in partnership with employees. They can identify the barriers to physical activity, healthy eating and achieving and maintaining a healthier weight, and come up with ways of overcoming them.

While personal responsibility for health and wellbeing is important, it can be difficult for employees to make healthier choices without access to the right environment.

Employers must consult with their workforce on all health and safety matters, either individually or, through a trade union, or safety representatives.

Your legal responsibility as an employer

In England obesity is not classed as a disability, but its related symptoms (such as joint disorders) may be if they are causing a long-term impairment. This could place a legal responsibility on employers under the terms of the Equality Act 2010

The Health and Safety Executive states that employers may need to take special account of workers with excess weight in job design and risk assessments

Remember that any data you collect (including data used for evaluation purposes) may be subject to data protection legislation

Creating a healthy workplace policy

The positive impact of health and wellbeing initiatives to promote physical activity, healthy eating and support weight management will be more significant with a healthy workplace policy created and implemented in partnership with employees at all levels of the organisation.

Initiatives to encourage physical activity, healthier eating and healthier weight should be connected and integrated into a whole person, whole system approach to health and wellbeing at work, encompassing both physical and mental health.

Take a three-pronged approach:

1. Culture

Encourage a work culture which engages employees and promotes positive lifestyle choices

2. Environment

Create a space which encourages physical activity and healthier food choices

3. Support

Signpost employees to more information and opportunities, encourage feedback and actively support healthier choices and address weight issues in a non-stigmatising way

Actions for creating a healthy workplace policy:

☑ **Identify the opportunities based on the profile of your organisation**
- Understand the needs of your workforce
- Assess the organisation's health profile, if available, and how it compares to similar organisations and national statistics
- Use staff surveys/intranet to identify problems and potential solutions

☑ **Assess workplace capacity and readiness for change**
- Consider what could be done to improve workplace environment
- Agree priorities. Don't try to do everything at once. Seek external evidence-based support e.g. NHS health checks and leisure services. There may also be an opportunity to talk to local services about partnerships or discounted rates

☑ **Agree goals and objectives**
- Set out clearly what is it that you want to achieve
- Decide how progress will be measured
- Agree benchmarks
- Agree timeframes

☑ **Identify decision makers and influencers. Ensure buy-in from senior leadership**
- Engage and consult employees, and union/staff association representatives
- Involve HR and Occupational Health
- Consult the organisation's Employee Assistance Programme (if one is available)

☑ **Write the policy**
- Use language that is clear and simple
- Explain the rationale
- Highlight recommendations that have come from the employees themselves
- Make clear that the policy is designed to evolve as employee needs change and you learn more about what works best

☑ **Support line managers**
- Line managers are critical to successful implementation
- Provide the training they need to adopt initiatives on the ground

☑ **Encourage feedback and ensure consistent messages**

☑ **Identify and train wellbeing champions**

☑ **Evaluate and monitor (work with local partners to achieve this, such as universities or local authorities)**
- Identify what works and what does not
- Foster continued dialogue with employees and respond positively to suggestions
- Give regular updates and explain why changes are made
- Invite other organisations to share ideas

☑ **Engage your suppliers**
- Consider how physical activity, healthy eating and weight management support can be extended to other parts of your supply chain
- Invite representatives to observe how initiatives work in practice
- Share promotional materials, and external sources of support
- Consider joint bids for external funding for workplace initiatives

National campaigns

Take advantage of the many national campaigns that encourage physical activity, healthy eating and healthier weight. Popular events and challenges include National Fitness Day, the Workplace Challenge, National Bike Week and the British Nutrition Foundation (BNF) Healthy Eating Week – usually held in June.

You can seize these opportunities to engage the workforce. Free resources include posters, leaflets and online advice.

One You

One You is a social marketing campaign by Public Health England to encourage adults, particularly those in middle age, to take control of their health, supporting them to make simple changes to improve their health.

It includes advice around physical activity, healthy eating and weight management, and tips on discouraging sedentary behaviour.

One You provides tools (including free apps), support and encouragement every step of the way, to help improve health and wellbeing.

1/ Physical activity

Increasing levels of physical activity

Around a third of adults in England are damaging their health through a lack of physical activity. 62 per cent of trips are made by car, with only 25 per cent on foot and 2 per cent by bicycle. Journeys on foot or by bicycle are not only good for our health, they are also more environmentally friendly and may even be quicker than travelling by car.

Supporting employees to increase their levels of physical activity is a positive step towards helping them maintain good physical and mental health and a healthier weight. Physical activity is also conducive to good mental health, while lack of physical activity significantly raises the risk of developing musculoskeletal disorders, which are the single biggest cause of absence from work. There are many ways you can help employees to be more active, from encouraging screen breaks or cordless phones to allow employees to walk around the workplace, to providing secure bike racks and changing facilities for people who can cycle to work. Evidence shows that a workplace's culture is the most important factor in the success of a physical activity promotion programme.

The UK Chief Medical Officer recommends either 150 minutes a week of activity of moderate intensity (increased breathing, still able to talk), 75 minutes a week of vigorous activity (breathing fast, difficulty talking), or a combination of both. Adults should also undertake strength exercises on two or more days a week that work all the major muscles (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms).

"At Legal & General our key objective is to support our employees to be fit, happy and well at work – emotionally, physically and mentally – building resilience to future change and performing at their best.

"We know that being physically well has a huge influence on making sure we stay mentally well. I believe we should think about a 'mental health 5 a day' and focus on making positive changes through wellbeing at work to achieve this – for example, at Legal & General we have introduced free healthy breakfasts and installed StepJockey in our offices to encourage employees to take the stairs rather than the lift. As employers we should all be striving to build a holistic culture of mental and physical wellbeing and a circle of continuous improvement."

Nigel Wilson
Chief Executive, Legal and General

Addressing extended sedentary behaviour

Employees in office-based jobs often sit for hours in front of computers or workstations. Many adults spend in excess of seven hours per day sedentary and this typically increases with age.

Sedentary behaviour is a risk factor for poor physical and mental health, independent of people's level of physical activity. Even those who are physically active outside work can be adversely affected by sitting still for several hours during their working day. There is a case for employers to target sedentary behaviour in the workplace, as a separate but interlinked issue to physical activity.

Technological advancements in the workplace have made prolonged sitting (e.g. in front of an electronic screen) the norm for many adults' working lives. Prolonged sitting has been linked to premature death, heart disease, certain cancers and Type 2 diabetes.

In particular, sedentary behaviour in the workplace can cause musculoskeletal (MSK) problems, such as back, shoulder and knee pain. These are the leading cause of working days lost in the UK. It is estimated that 31 million days a year are lost due to these problems.

Business in the Community and Public Health England have created an online toolkit to help employers to reduce the risk of poor musculoskeletal health at work.

Employers should focus not only on increasing physical activity levels among their employees, as per the Chief Medical Officer recommendations (either 150 minutes moderate intensity activity a week, 75 minutes vigorous activity a week or both) but also on reducing sitting time, especially at work.

Encouraging behaviour change

In some organisations, computer software has been installed to prompt employees to get up and stretch after sitting at their computers for an extended period of time. However, research on the effectiveness of these interventions is still in its infancy.

Work breaks are an opportunity to promote physical activity and help to reduce sedentary behaviour in the workplace. Employers can take steps to ensure that healthier eating options are available, including fresh fruit and vegetables, and water. Employees can also be encouraged to take walks outside the workplace.

Many employees, especially at the professional and management levels, spend a significant part of their work days in meetings. However, meetings promote sedentary behaviour, as employees often sit around a table to discuss issues. Encourage two-minute stretch breaks every 30 minutes during meetings. Even just standing up in the middle of a long meeting can help to reduce sedentary behaviour.

It is important that staff are involved and in agreement with making changes. This also builds awareness of the damage caused by sedentary behaviour and how this can be changed.

"This toolkit has made me excited about how I can improve and add to our employee wellbeing campaigns around physical activity and nutrition. You have given me tools to run new campaigns for our people – the information presented here makes the issues real, puts them into context and provides me with the links and resources to do something about it."

Catherine Wilday
Wellbeing Officer, Department for Work and Pensions

Ways to actively reduce prolonged sitting in the workplace include:

- ☑ Move items like printers, bins and water coolers further from workspaces

- ☑ Encourage employees to get up from their desks every 30 minutes for 2 minutes, or at least every hour for 2 to 4 minutes

- ☑ Train line managers to accept that an employee can still be productive while taking breaks away from the workstation

- ☑ Promote standing or walking meetings and provide meeting spaces that enable this behaviour

- ☑ Provide extra-long telephone cords, cordless phones or headsets so that employees can stand or walk during phone calls

- ☑ Organise work tasks so that employees can stand or sit while doing their work

- ☑ Foster an organisational culture that looks favourably upon reducing sedentary behaviour or increasing physical activity

- ☑ Encourage employees to talk to colleagues in person instead of emailing or calling

- ☑ Senior leaders should lead by example and use stairs instead of lifts

On the move: simple steps that will make a difference

☑ Consider how workplace design can be improved to encourage physical activity. Create accessible walkways that will make it easier for employees to move around the office when they take breaks from their desks. Centralise bins and photocopiers to encourage people to get up from their workstations

☑ Discourage a workplace culture where line managers consider time spent away from desks, screens and phones as unproductive

☑ Encourage people to use the stairs instead of lifts where possible. Ensure stairs are signposted and easily accessible. Make stairwells inviting (e.g. well-maintained with good lighting). Stair climbing is a unique form of exercise that can have a powerful and positive impact on your health over time. StepJockey promotes stair climbing:

☑ Promote walk to work and cycle schemes, and leverage financial incentives. For example, Cyclescheme enables your employees to get bikes and accessories tax-free, saving on average about half the cost. It's free to join, and easy to administer online:

☑ Look at how you can provide changing facilities, with showers and lockers. Secure storage for bikes and an area to dry wet clothes can have a big impact. Consider pooling facilities with other local employers

☑ Lunchtime walking clubs have proved popular with many organisations. Paths for All has created a useful resource to promote workplace walking clubs:

☑ Make sure that initiatives also provide for employees with physical disabilities

☑ Screen breaks encourage employees to walk away from their workstations. Frequent short breaks are better than infrequent long ones. The Health and Safety Executive recommends 5 to 10 minute breaks every hour, rather than 20 minutes every 2 hours. Ideally, employees should have some choice about when to take breaks

☑ Consider opportunities for regular strength and stretching exercises, yoga or pilates

☑ Take full advantage of any outdoor areas. Sometimes these are out of bounds for security reasons. Consider what adjustments can be made to improve access

☑ Use internal communications channels, such as your intranet or staff magazines, to promote schemes and celebrate success

The Workplace Challenge

The Workplace Challenge is a national programme from the CSP Network, which aims to engage workplaces and their employees, particularly targeting inactive people. The programme includes a combination of online technology and offline activities and support, all designed to develop an active workplace. The 60,000-plus registrants to the Workplace Challenge website since 2014 include 14,900 inactive employees, 5,000 workplaces and 1,000 trained Workplace Challenge Champions; together they have logged 2.2 million activities.

Technology

Technology is transforming the way we engage with physical activity and diet. More people are using wearable devices to track their daily behaviour and to make adjustments in the quest for a healthier lifestyle. New devices are launched almost every day, making wearables one of the fastest growing consumer sectors.

Public Health England has created the Active 10 app as part of their physical activity campaign which encourages people, particularly those on the lower end of the activity spectrum, to undertake 10 minutes of brisk walking a day.

Daily brisk 10-minute walks can lead to considerable health benefits and contribute to the weekly recommended guidelines of 150 minutes per week.

The approach of '10 brisk minutes' combines significant consumer research (which looked at attitude and barriers to activity as well as use of technology) with the evidence base which recommends that exercise is taken in bouts of 10 consecutive minutes. Active 10 is the first free app in the market that shows when people are walking quickly enough and for long enough to glean health benefits. The app, which has been developed with

experts from the National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine (including academics from Sheffield University and Sheffield Hallam University) and undergone testing with consumers and healthcare professionals, has been endorsed by the Royal College of General Practitioners and is undergoing long-term evaluation by academics at the University of Bristol and University of Oxford.

You can download the Active 10 app free of charge.
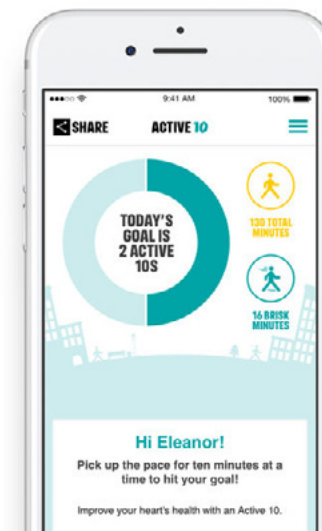
2/ Healthy eating

A healthy balanced diet is important in maintaining good health. Diets based on fruit and vegetables and wholegrain starchy carbohydrates have been demonstrated to reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke and some cancers. Creating a healthier food environment for employees is one way to enable healthier eating.

Employers can take steps to ensure that employees have easier access to healthier food and drink options. Whether you have a staff restaurant or provide vending machines, giving employees healthier options is critical to supporting them to achieve and maintain a healthy balanced diet and to help them manage their weight.

Public Health England has produced a range of healthier and more sustainable catering guidance and supporting tools. These tools aim to help those who must meet, or who voluntarily adopt, Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services (GBSF). They include examples of healthier, more sustainable catering practice to help food service commissioners, procurers of food and drink and caterers choose, cook and serve healthier, more sustainable food and drink successfully.

"I think this is an incredibly useful resource for employers. As a food manufacturer and retailer, we take issues around nutrition and wellbeing very seriously – for our employees as well as our customers. This toolkit backs up a lot of the work we already do for our team at Cook, and I would encourage other employers to be inspired to take action."

Tina Wallace
People Manager, Cook

The Eatwell Guide

Your approach to food and drink provision at work can also be underpinned by the national eat well model, the Eatwell Guide. It shows the proportions in which different types of foods are needed to achieve a healthy, balanced diet. The proportions are representative of food consumption over the period of a day or even a week, not necessarily each meal time.

The Eatwell Guide defines government recommendations on achieving a healthy, balanced diet. We should aim to:

Eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables every day

Base meals on potatoes, bread, rice, pasta or other starchy carbohydrates; choose wholegrain versions where possible

Have some dairy or dairy alternatives (such as soya drinks); choosing lower fat and lower sugar options

Eat some beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins (including 2 portions of fish every week, one of which should be oily)

Choose unsaturated oils and spreads and eat in small amounts

Drink 6-8 cups/glasses of fluid a day

If consuming foods and drinks high in fat, salt or sugar have these less often and in small amounts.

Use these evidence-based recommendations to help guide the choice of food and drink that you provide in the workplace.

Choice is vital: gentle persuasion can work better than telling people what they must eat. Healthier choices can be encouraged by reconfiguring displays that prioritise healthy food and drink, making them easy to access, rather than banning certain types of products.

Key questions to ask about the food and drink environment in your workplace:

- ☑ Do people have access to a canteen at work, or local shops and cafés?

- ☑ What does the work canteen provide? Are unhealthy options currently dominating the offer? Which healthier options can be made available?

- ☑ Are the prices reasonable, or can the canteen be subsidised? Can healthier options be subsidised/promoted e.g. fruit and vegetables?

- ☑ If vending machines are available, what are they stocked with?

- ☑ Can people prepare and re-heat/cook their own food at work?

- ☑ Are there enough fridges to store fresh food and packed lunches?

- ☑ What facilities are available within walking distance? If you are a major customer – what influence can you have?

- ☑ Where do people eat? Do they eat together?

- ☑ How many people take a break from work to eat lunch, and how many eat as they continue working?

- ☑ What provision is made for employees who are not based in a single location, such as sales reps, drivers and maintenance workers?

A key message for any workplace healthy eating initiative is that healthier food and drink does not necessarily cost more than less healthy options. A recent study concluded that achieving the UK dietary recommendations, as illustrated through the Eatwell Guide, would not lead to significant changes in the cost. This will reassure managers with responsibility for catering activities. The transition to healthier food and drinks can be managed through gradual implementation, supported by extensive staff engagement and positive communication.

Promoting healthier choices

Employees may prefer to bring their own food to work, even when a staff restaurant/canteen or vending machines are available.

Employers can create a positive environment for food with appropriate storage space, including refrigerators, and simple food preparation facilities such as a microwave oven. Employees will have greater control over what they eat and drink if they can bring and prepare their own meals.

The Sainsbury's Living Well Index

The Sainsbury's Living Well Index (in partnership with Oxford Economics and the National Centre for Social Research) highlights the social value of eating meals with family, friends or colleagues.

Positive practices:

Work with employees to identify what they need to help them to make healthier food choices

Work with purchasing and/or catering managers to improve the offer of food and drink, and look at the wording and requirements in your contracts (particularly when re-tendering). Develop a pricing policy to support healthier choices

Provide healthier options at meetings and events

Begin a conversation about how special events (birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, promotions) are marked at work. Can 'cake days' be shared, or healthier alternatives be provided?

Where practical, offer free fresh fruit and vegetables at strategic points in the workplace as well as any existing snack options or vending machines. Consider using a local vendor to bring daily fresh fruit supplies. Encourage staff to take home any fruit and vegetables left at the end of the day

Use family days to introduce partners and children to the organisation's healthy eating initiative. Support at home can really make a difference

Run cooking and healthy eating courses. Coaching on what to buy and understanding food labels can also help staff to choose healthier options

Hydration and drinks

Keeping hydrated is part of a healthy balanced diet, but remember that drinks can also contribute to our calorie intake. This guidance from the Eatwell Guide can be useful when you are considering what drink options you provide for your employees.

The key points are:

> Aim to drink 6-8 glasses of fluid every day

> Water, lower fat milk and sugar-free drinks including tea and coffee all count towards fluid consumption

> Fruit and vegetable juices and smoothies also count, although they are a source of free sugars (see NHS Choices for more information) and so you should limit consumption to no more than a combined total of 150ml per day and should consume at mealtimes to reduce the impact of the sugar on your teeth

> Sugary drinks are one of the main contributors to excess sugar consumption. Swap sugary soft drinks for diet, sugar-free or no added sugar varieties to reduce sugar and calorie intake in a simple step

> Access to drinking water is essential. Tap water should be visible and freely available, and such provision should be promoted

> You could go a step further and integrate guidance from the Government Buying Standard for Food and Catering Services by limiting the sale of sugar sweetened beverages to no more than 330ml pack size; ensuring no more than 20 per cent of beverages (procured by volume) are sugar sweetened; and no less than 80 per cent of beverages (procured by volume) are low calorie/no added sugar beverages (including fruit juice and water)

> From July 1 2018, NHS hospitals in England will no longer sell sugar-sweetened beverages in NHS canteens, shops and vending machines

Catering suppliers

Catering suppliers have a key role to play in supporting healthy workplaces through access to food and drink that helps employees to meet daily nutritional requirements.

The Government Buying Standard for Food And Catering Services (GBSF) includes nutrition, and is a useful guide for employers when they review catering procurement. Work with caterers to provide calorie information, and when retendering food contracts, use this as an opportunity to improve the nutritional quality of your offer.

GBSF is mandatory across central government departments and their agencies. It ensures that food and drink served in every part of the government estate encourages and enables healthier eating habits. GBSF is also recommended across the wider public sector and beyond. **GBSF helps to ensure food and drink provided is produced to higher sustainability and nutritional standards, and supports the provision of a more sustainable catering service overall.**

Food labelling

Nutrition labels can help individuals choose between products and keep a check on the amount of foods eaten that are high in fat, salt and sugars. This can also be very useful in canteen choices. However, food labelling doesn't show if the sugar content is from free sugar (sugar added to food and drink) or from sugar naturally occurring in milk, fruit and vegetables. With this in mind, it is useful to opt for food and drink with green/amber front of pack, which means they contain low to medium sugar levels.

Alcohol

Alcohol can contain lots of calories (kcal). To keep health risks from alcohol to a low level it is safest not to drink more than 14 units a week on a regular basis. The calorific content of an alcoholic beverage depends on the drink, the volume served and the addition of mixers. As an example, 1 pint of standard strength lager contains approximately 136kcal, a 175ml medium glass of wine contains approximately 135kcal and a 25ml shot of spirit (40% vol) contains approximately 56kcal. For more information, read Public Health England and Business in the Community's alcohol, drugs and tobacco toolkit for employers (launching April 2018), and alcohol advice from NHS Choices.

A switch to healthier food and drink products from high fat, sugar and salt foods and sugary drinks can be achieved without a fall in catering revenues. When the Alfred Hospital in Melbourne put sugar-sweetened drinks out of sight in cafés and convenience stores, sales fell markedly while demand for drinks with little or no sugar rose. There was no significant difference in overall drink sales.

3/ Healthier weight and weight management

Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight is important to support good ongoing health and wellbeing.

Excess weight can bring physical, social, emotional and psychosocial problems, which can lead to the onset of preventable long-term illness, stigma, discrimination and reduced life expectancy.

On average, obesity deprives an individual of an extra nine years of life. People with excess weight are at an increased risk of conditions including type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, certain cancers and stroke. Diabetes is five times more prevalent in adults with obesity than those of a healthy weight, while hypertension is twice as common. In 2015, 57 per cent of women and 66 per cent of men were overweight or obese; there is a strong likelihood that a section of your workforce will have excess weight.

There are ingrained societal attitudes towards obesity which present additional obstacles. People tend not to recognise obesity, especially so in men. Not all of the health risks associated with obesity are understood (e.g. Cancer Research UK estimates that 1 in 20 UK cancers is linked to weight), and people with obesity often face stigma about their weight. An empathetic approach towards weight management in the workplace is a practical and important step that employers should take towards addressing some of these attitudes. A supportive workplace scheme can help people fit weight management approaches around their busy lives.

For individuals with excess weight, losing even a small amount of weight and keeping it off can have health benefits – physically and psychologically.

The drivers of overweight and obesity are complex, and while there is not one single approach that can tackle obesity on its own, employers can play an important role in supporting individuals to take action to manage their weight. Subsidised weight management programmes should be considered in the same way that some employers offer support with smoking cessation.

What is a healthy weight?

NHS Choices has an easy-to-use height/weight chart to help individuals work out what is a healthy weight range for them.

"From our experience of researching the experiences of a specific section of the population (obese nurses), we believe that employer interventions that are more likely to be successful are ones developed in consultation with employees and which look at employees' specific circumstances.

"Obesity is complex and there is no single solution, however in the case of obese nurses, our research showed that these interventions should include looking at the working environment and the nutrition options open to nurses (e.g. vending machine food) and considering the difficulty of access to healthier food and drink options during shift patterns. Every employer can take a similar approach to developing contextually appropriate actions for their own workforce."

Michaela Nutall
C3

Your weight in kilograms

Your height in feet and inches

Your height in centimetres

Under weight

Healthy weight

Over weight

Obese

Very obese

Your weight in stones

This chart is only suitable for people over the age of 18.
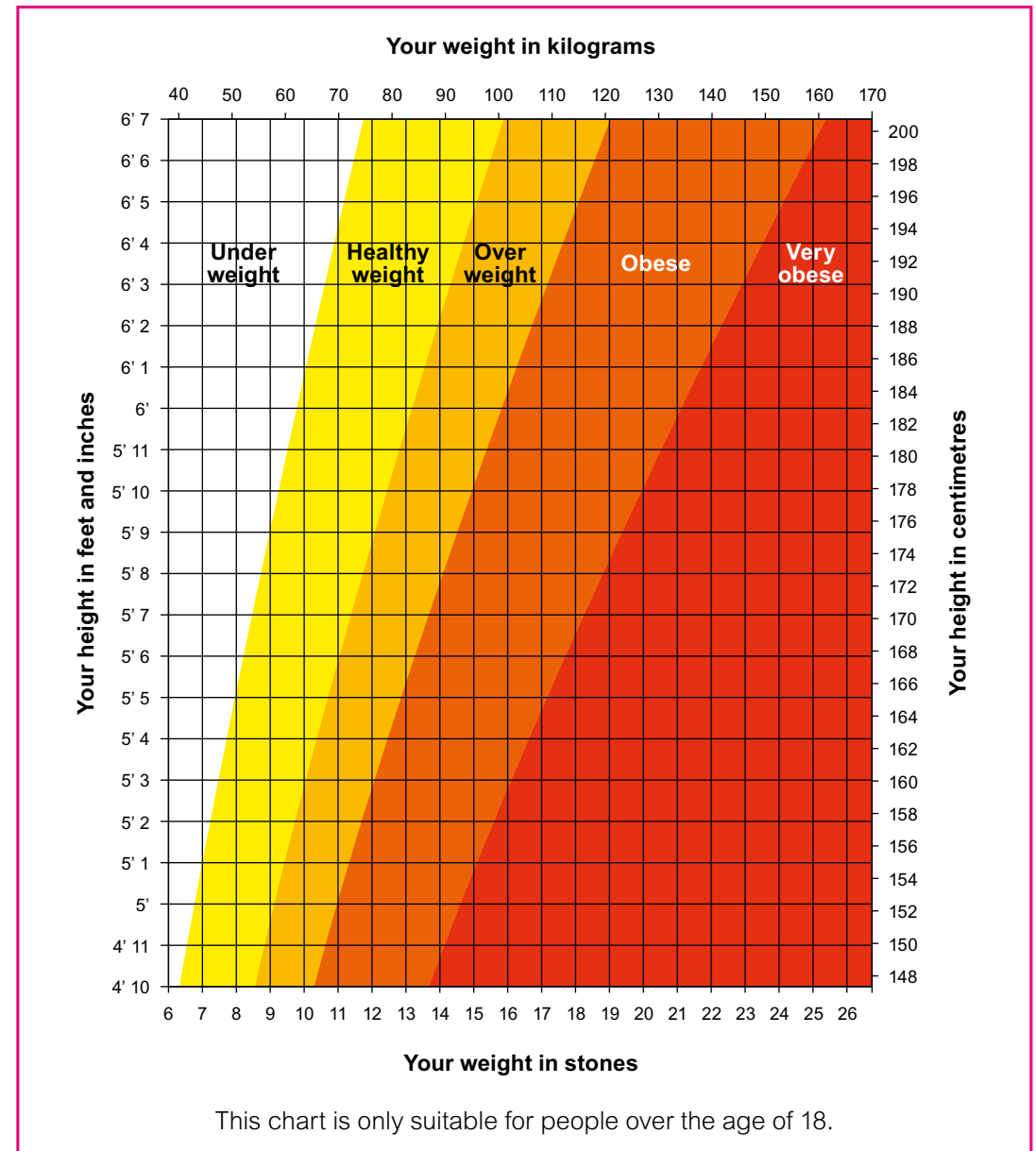
Accessing weight management support

Employers will want to implement universal approaches, throughout the workplace, to encourage healthier eating and opportunities to get active. While doing this will benefit all, some employees may benefit from more specific approaches to support them to manage their weight.

Employers should consider signposting employees with excess weight (i.e. with a BMI of 25kg/m^2 or above) to available weight management support. This should be done sensitively and as part of a broader occupational health led approach to encouraging a healthier weight.

Weight management approaches should be embedded within an overall workplace wellness initiative. Employers should use National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidance as a first port of call when considering weight management approaches.

Men's weight management

Men typically tend not to engage with, or seek referral to, orthodox approaches to weight management. Public Health England has supported the Men's Health Forum to provide a how-to guide on adapting and running weight-loss programmes which take account of what works for men.

Weight management for people with learning disabilities

People with learning disabilities are at increased risk of being overweight or developing obesity compared to the general population. It is important for employers to consider making reasonable adjustments to weight management approaches to ensure they are suitable for people with learning disabilities.

Weight management for BAME groups

Some specific BAME groups (people of Black-African, African-Caribbean and Asian family origin) are at increased risk of conditions such as type 2 diabetes at a lower BMI than the UK average. Employers should signpost employees of Black-African, African-Caribbean and Asian family origin with a BMI of 23kg/m^2 or above to available weight management support.

Steps for employers:

☑ Consult with employees: find out what they need to support them to achieve and maintain a healthier weight and/or help prevent excess weight gain

☑ Consider the type of support and weight management programmes that you offer according to your staff profile, and be aware that different groups may require different approaches. Some groups are typically more difficult to engage with weight management (e.g. men, some BAME groups, people with learning disabilities)

☑ Consider occupational health approaches, including health checks, which can become the starting point for a conversation about a healthier weight, guided by the health professional undertaking the health check

☑ Consider the introduction of evidence-based, multi-component (including diet, physical activity and behaviour change components) workplace weight management services. This might include the provision of services in the workplace or subsidised access to external weight management services. Public Health

England have published a Guide to Commissioning and Delivering Tier 2 Adult Weight Management Services. The guide provides recommendations on how key components and the design of services can benefit people and help them to achieve healthier and sustainable behaviours. Employers should ensure workplace weight management services are in line with this guide:

☑ Signpost to evidence-based weight management services available in the local community. These may be commercial or funded by the local authority, and should be in line with guidance by Public Health England (link above) and NICE Guidance:

☑ Signpost to other sources of support and evidence-based information related to weight, such as One You and NHS online resources including NHS Choices:

☑ Signpost to health professionals: suggest that employees concerned about their weight can seek advice from their GPs or practice nurse, who will help assess the cause of any weight gain and, if appropriate, agree a plan to help lose weight

☑ Ensure that line managers are aware of the support that is available, both through work and externally, and are equipped and supported to share this information with employees if requested

☑ Develop an agreed occupational health strategy related to weight management in the workplace which could encompass many of the above points and streamline the organisation's approach (this could, for example, include a central collation of resources and information available which is then cascaded to line managers for them to signpost to, or is accessible for employees via a shared platform)

4/ A holistic approach

A holistic approach

Effective support for health and wellbeing is best achieved through a whole person approach that reaches every person making a contribution to the organisation, from the CEO to contractors and frequent suppliers.

It should understand the physical and mental health needs of part-time workers as well as full-time workers, and be equally available to those who are outside 'normal' office hours and those who work from home or remotely, such as drivers, off-site maintenance workers and sales representatives.

Working remotely

Growing numbers of people are working from home, for at least part of their week, as more employers embrace flexible working. This presents opportunities as well as challenges for workplace initiatives to encourage and support physical activity and weight management.

> Understand the working patterns of ALL your staff, including regular contractors and freelance workers

> Ensure that they are included in all communications related to workplace health and wellbeing, and can take part in activities and training

> Emphasise the importance of disconnecting from the workplace when they are not working. Remote working can be particularly stressful when you feel 'out of the loop'

> Leverage opportunities for contact. Encourage line managers to check in at regular intervals

> Consider how you encourage active travel for home workers

Shift work

Shift work is associated with increased body mass index, prevalence of obesity and other health problems. People who work shifts sometimes skip meals, eat irregularly, eat unhealthy food, and may find it hard to keep up a regular exercise schedule.

Shift work generally limits opportunities for physical activity and participation in sports, and the benefits can be reduced if exercise is taken at unusual times of day and/or if the shift worker is sleep-deprived. It is commonly found that gastrointestinal complaints are more prevalent among rotating and night shift workers compared to day workers.

It can be more challenging to make healthier choices and achieve a healthy, balanced diet each day, particularly for those who work at night. Employers have some level of control over this and should address the causes. Consult employees working shifts on what support can be provided to help them make healthier choices, particularly regarding shift patterns and access to healthy food and drink options.

Mental health

Good physical health is closely linked to good mental health. Initiatives designed to encourage physical activity and healthy eating should focus on mental health as well as physical health.

Poor mental health can be a barrier to physical activity, a healthy balanced diet and a healthier weight. At the same time, a lack of physical activity, poor diet and excess weight can contribute to long-term mental health problems as well as physical conditions. So, it makes sense to adopt an approach that considers both physical and mental health.

The mental health toolkit for employers and the sleep and recovery toolkit for employers, created by Business in the Community and Public Health England, are an ideal starting point.

Please note:

The scope of this toolkit does not include eating disorders, such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia. Further information about these disorders is available from NHS Choices. Concerns should be addressed through HR or your Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provider, with treatment and support from clinical professionals, starting with an employee's GP.

"Our wellbeing programme takes both physical and mental health into consideration as we understand the overlaps. We try to make it as easy as possible for our people to access easy ways of doing physical exercise, such as discounts with a local trampoline park, half-marathon training and paying for people's entrance fees for competitions. We also offer healthy eating workshops, and places for people to store and prepare their own meals. Being a food company, everybody here is very passionate about food and health, and we want to encourage people to make healthier choices wherever we can."

Tina Wallace
People Manager, Cook

Appendices

Glossary of terms

Body mass index

A simple index of weight for height that is commonly used to classify underweight, healthy weight, overweight and obesity in adults. It is defined as the weight in kilograms divided by the square of the height in metres (kg/m^2).

Calorie value

The number of calories (kcal) in any given food or drink. Fat provides 9 calories per gram; alcohol provides 7 calories per gram; carbohydrates and proteins provide 4 calories per gram. 1 kcal = 4.2 kilojoules (kJ).

Diet

A person's habitual food intake or a plan of food and drink set down to support weight management.

Exercise

Planned physical activity usually pursued for personal health and fitness goals. Exercise is a subset of physical activity, which is planned, structured, repetitive and aimed at improvement or maintenance of any aspect of fitness or health.

Fast foods

No specific definition but commonly used slang term for foods which are generally sold in retail outlets or take-out restaurants, and which are high in calories, fat, saturated fat, sugar and/or salt.

Fatty foods

Foods high in total fat and/or saturated fat.

Healthy balanced diet

A diet in line with the Eatwell Guide, i.e. one that is largely based on fruit and vegetables and starchy foods (wholegrains where possible), and is low in fat (especially saturated fat), salt and sugar.

Healthy weight

A person who has a body mass index (BMI) 18.5–24.9 kg/m^2.

Low-calorie diet

A weight loss diet containing less energy than an individual's energy needs, typically 1,000–1,500 kilocalories per day.

Physical activity

The full range of human movement, from competitive sport and exercise to active hobbies, walking, cycling or activities of daily living.

Sugary foods and drinks

Food and drinks high in sugar (> 22.5g/100g).

BMI and obesity

BMI stands for body mass index. It is a measure that uses a person's height and weight to work out if their weight is healthy. BMI is calculated by dividing an adult's weight in kilograms by their height in metres squared. For example, a BMI of 25 means 25kg/m^2.

For most adults, a healthy BMI is in the 18.5 to 24.9 range.

BMI takes into account natural variations in body shape, giving a healthy weight range for a particular height.

As well as measuring your BMI, healthcare professionals may take other factors into account when assessing if you are a healthy weight.

Muscle is denser than fat, so muscular people may be a healthy weight even if their BMI is above the healthy weight range.

Ethnic group can affect an individual's risk of some health conditions. For example, adults of Asian origin may have a higher risk of health problems at BMI levels below 25.

BMI should not be used as a measure by pregnant women. Pregnant women should get advice from a midwife or GP if concerned about weight.

You can find out if you are a healthy weight with this easy-to-use NHS Choices calculator:

BMI isn't used to definitively diagnose obesity. But for most people, BMI is a useful indication of whether they are a healthy weight, overweight or obese. Another measure of excess fat is waist circumference, which can be used as an additional measure in people who have a BMI of or above 25.

Generally, men with a waist circumference of 94cm (37in) or more and women with a waist circumference of 80cm (about 31.5in) or more are more likely to develop obesity-related health problems.

Food labelling

Nutrition labels can help individuals choose between products and keep a check on the amount of foods they're eating that are high in fat, salt and sugars. You and your employees can use nutrition labels to help you opt for healthier choices.

Nutritional labels

Pre-packed foods have a nutrition label on the back or side of the packaging. This type of label includes information on energy (kJ/kcal), fat, saturates (saturated fat), carbohydrate, sugars, protein and salt. It may also provide additional information on certain nutrients, such as fibre.

All nutrition information is provided per 100 grams and sometimes per portion of the food. Nutrition labels are often displayed as a panel or grid on the back or side of packaging. For example, the image below shows the nutrition label on a loaf of white bread.

Nutrition				
Typical values	100g contains	Each slice (typically 44g) contains	% RI*	RI* for an average adult
Energy	985kJ	435kJ		8400kJ
	235kcal	105kcal	5%	2000kcal
Fat	1.5g	0.7g	1%	70g
of which saturates	0.3g	0.1g	1%	20g
Carbohydrate	45.5g	20.0g		
of which sugars	3.8g	1.7g	2%	90g
Fibre	2.8g	1.2g		
Protein	7.7g	3.4g		
Salt	1.0g	0.4g	7%	6g

This pack contains 16 servings

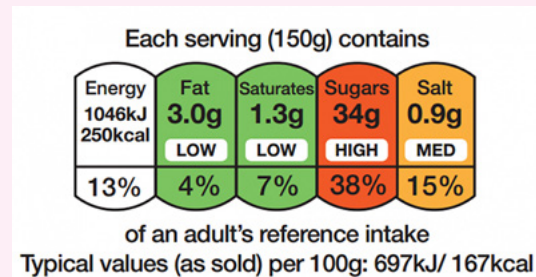*Reference intake of an average adult (8400kJ / 2000kcal)

Front-of-pack labels

Most of the big supermarkets and many food manufacturers also display nutritional information on the front of pre-packed food. This is very useful when you want to compare different food products at a glance. If feasible, the same information could be displayed by caterers when food is provided in-house for employees.

These labels provide information on the number of grams of fat, saturated fat, sugars and salt, and the amount of energy (in kJ and kcal) in a serving or portion of the food. But be aware that there are not official recommendations for portion sizes for all foods. Manufacturers may choose to offer a suggested portion size but this may be different from yours.

Front-of-pack labels usually give a quick guide to:

- Energy
- Fat content
- Saturated fat content
- Sugars content
- Salt content

Each serving (150g) contains

Energy 1046kJ 250kcal	Fat 3.0g LOW	Saturates 1.3g LOW	Sugars 34g HIGH	Salt 0.9g MED
13%	4%	7%	38%	15%

of an adult's reference intake
Typical values (as sold) per 100g: 697kJ/ 167kcal

Tips to help shift workers stay healthy even with an irregular or shift work schedule

It is important to plan the timing and quality of your meals, for example:

☑ Eat small, frequent meals rather than one big meal. Lighter options also reduce the risk of you feeling sluggish or sleepy during the night

☑ Choose foods that are easy to digest (such as pasta, bread, salad, fruit and vegetables). Avoid heavy or fatty meals, which are more difficult to digest and can make you feel drowsy

☑ Avoid sugary foods like chocolate, and instead snack on fruit and vegetables

☑ Drink plenty of fluid, as dehydration can reduce both mental and physical performance but avoid drinking too much fluid before sleeping as this may overload the bladder

Resources
for employers

Resources for employers

Information about employees' health and wellbeing:

Applying Behaviour Change Theories for physical activity – Sport England
www.sportengland.org/media/11546/applying-behaviour-change-theories-real-world-examples-from-ghga.pdf

Changing Behaviour: Techniques for Tier 2 Adult Weight Management Services
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/620404/adult_weight_management_changing_behaviour_techniques.pdf

Consultations with registered nutritionists – Association for Nutrition
www.associationfornutrition.org

Consulting a qualified dietician – The British Dietetic Association
www.bda.uk.com

Employer's legal responsibilities – Health and Safety Executive
www.hse.gov.uk/workers/employers.htm

Link between mental and physical health – The UK Faculty for Public Health
www.fph.org.uk/relationship_with_physical_health_and_healthy_lifestyles

Information about the business case for supporting employees' health needs:

Health and Work Costs – Public Health England
www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-work-infographics

Mental health toolkit for employers – Business in the Community and Public Health England
https://wellbeing.bitc.org.uk/sites/default/files/mental_health_toolkit_for_employers_-_small.pdf

Musculoskeletal health in the workplace – Business in the Community and Public Health England
https://wellbeing.bitc.org.uk/sites/default/files/business_in_the_community_musculoskeletal_toolkit.pdf

Sleep and recovery toolkit for employers – Business in the Community and Public Health England
https://wellbeing.bitc.org.uk/sites/default/files/bitc_phe_sleep_recovery_toolkit-final-18.01.18.pdf

Information about creating a healthy workplace policy:

Evidence based approach to physical activity – Public Health England
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374914/Framework_13.pdf

Health and Safety England obesity report
www.hse.gov.uk/horizons/assets/documents/obesityreport.pdf

Resources for employers *continued*

National campaigns to encourage physical activity, healthier eating and healthier weight:

British Nutrition Foundation Healthy Eating Week
www.nutrition.org.uk

Change for Life
www.nhs.uk/change4life

National Bike Week
http://bikeweek.org.uk

National Fitness Day
www.nationalfitnessday.com

One You
www.nhs.uk/oneyou

The Workplace Challenge
www.cspnetwork.org/services/programmes/workplace-challenge

Information about physical activity:

Identifying what works for local physical inactivity interventions
http://researchinstitute.ukactive.com/downloads/managed/Whatworks.pdf

Lack of activity and its effect on health
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374914/Framework_13.pdf

Musculoskeletal disorders and absence from work
https://fitforwork.org/employer/preventing-absence/common-causes-of-work-absence/

Physical activity benefits for adults
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/541233/Physical_activity_infographic.PDF

Workplace culture and success of physical activity promotion programmes
http://researchinstitute.ukactive.com/downloads/managed/Whatworks.pdf

Simple steps that can make a difference to people's health:

Benefits of taking the stairs
www.stepjockey.com/health-benefits-of-stair-climbing

Cyclescheme UK
www.cyclescheme.co.uk

Effects of display screen equipment on one's health
www.hse.gov.uk/msd/faq-dse.htm

Setting up a workplace walking club
www.pathsforall.org.uk/pfa/walk-at-work/walk-at-work.html

Technology – 10 free apps to help keep you healthy
www.nhs.uk/oneyou/active10/home#MDMdhdm2LjkWZmyG.97

Tips for shift workers – National Sleep Foundation
https://sleepfoundation.org/shift-work/content/tips-healthy-eating-and-exercising-when-working-shifts

Resources for employers *continued*

Further information on maintaining a healthy diet:

Advice on food labelling
www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Goodfood/Pages/food-labelling.aspx

Alcohol and the workplace
www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/alcohol-units.aspx

Carbohydrates and Health – Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445503/SACN_Carbohydrates_and_Health.pdf

Creating your own front-of-pack food labelling
www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/multimedia/pdfs/pdf-ni/fop-guidance.pdf

Fruit and vegetable intake and the risk of cardiovascular disease – Aune D et al (2017)
https://academic.oup.com/ije/article/46/3/1029/3039477

Healthier and more sustainable catering – Public Health England
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/648743/healthier_and_more_sustainable_catering_adult_toolkit.pdf

Health and Safety Executive – tips and hints for shift workers
www.hse.gov.uk/humanfactors/topics/shift-workers.htm

Sainsbury's Living Well Index
www.about.sainsburys.co.uk/~/media/Files/S/Sainsburys/living-well-index/sainsburys-living-well-index.PDF

Sugar and health – Alfred Health
www.alfredhealth.org.au/contents/resources/Community-and-health-promo/No-more-sugar-coating-infographic.pdf

The Eatwell Guide – Public Health England
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551502/Eatwell_Guide_booklet.pdf

The Government Buying Standard For Food And Catering Services
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418072/gbs-food-catering-march2015.pdf

World Health Organisation (1990) – Diet, nutrition and the prevention of chronic diseases
www.who.int/nutrition/publications/obesity/WHO_TRS_797/en/index.html

World Health Organisation (2003) – Diet, nutrition and the prevention of chronic diseases
http://whqlibdoc.who.int/trs/WHO_TRS_916.pdf

Resources for employers *continued*

Information on healthier weight and weight management:

Attitudes towards obesity
www.bsa.natcen.ac.uk/latest-report/british-social-attitudes-33/obesity.aspx

Accessing weight management support
www.nice.org.uk/guidance/PH53

BMI and obesity
www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK63699/

Cancer Research UK – Diet and cancer
www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/causes-of-cancer/bodyweight-and-cancer/how-being-overweight-causes-cancer

Evidence-based guidance to support practitioners, commissioners and providers of Tier 2 weight management services, Public Health England
www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-weight-management-services-commission-and-provide

Evidence-based weight management services
www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-weight-management-services-commission-and-provide

Evidence-based weight management services – National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
ww.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph53

How your GP can help you lose weight
www.nhs.uk/Livewell/loseweight/Pages/WhataGPcando.aspx

National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS)
www.gov.uk/government/statistics/ndns-results-from-years-5-and-6-combined

NHS Health Survey for England
https://digital.nhs.uk/catalogue/PUB22610

NHS Healthy Weight Calculator
www.nhs.uk/tools/pages/healthyweightcalculator.aspx

NHS Weight Chart
www.nhs.uk/livewell/loseweight/pages/height-weight-chart.aspx

One You Campaign
www.nhs.uk/oneyou/about-one-you#KmzJYKDTE5dpDHhv.97

Preventing excess weight gain – National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng7

Sleep and obesity – US National Library of Medicines
www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3632337

Statistics on obesity, physical activity and diet
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/613532/obes-phys-acti-diet-eng-2017-rep.pdf

Systematic reviews and integrated report on the quantitative and qualitative evidence base for the management of obesity in men, University of Aberdeen
www.journalslibrary.nihr.ac.uk/programmes/hta/0912701#/

Resources for employers *continued*

Information on healthier weight and weight management *continued:*

Techniques for weight management
www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/
uploads/attachment_data/file/620404/adult_
weight_management_changing_behaviour_
techniques.pdf

The scale of the obesity problem
www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-
matters-obesity-and-the-food-environment/
health-matters-obesity-and-the-food-
environment--2

Weight management for BAME groups
www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph46

Weight management for people with learning disabilities
www.gov.uk/government/publications/
reasonable-adjustments-for-people-with-
learning-disabilities/obesity-and-weight-
management

Addressing extended sedentary behaviour:

Exercise, energy balance and shift work
www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/
PMC2784228

Reducing the risk of poor musculoskeletal health at work – Business in the Community and Public Health England
https://wellbeing.bitc.org.uk/sites/default/files/
business_in_the_community_musculoskeletal_
toolkit.pdf

Tips for shift workers
ww.iosh.co.uk/shiftworkhealth

Case studies

Carlisle Brass
Angus Grant, Director of Product Management

The Workplace Challenge is a national programme from County Sports Partnership Network, funded by Sport England, which aims to engage workplaces in sport and physical activity. Independent research into Workplace Challenge has been conducted by Loughborough University, including case studies with six employers.

Carlisle Brass is a UK designer, manufacturer and distributor of architectural ironmongery with a strong health and safety ethos across its whole organisation, and including its supply chain. The focus has traditionally been on the 'safety' aspect, but recently this has shifted to include the health and wellbeing of the workforce.

Carlisle Brass recognised the potential of the Workplace Challenge to fit in its emerging activity culture. Initially the Challenge was introduced with the support of the local County Sports Partnership, Active Cumbria, as a small pilot, with a small and enthusiastic group from the company taking part in a national eight-week activity logging challenge.

Following this the project's champion at Carlisle Brass created a plan to engage the whole organisation and, with support from the Managing Director, identified a budget for incentive spot prizes and created an internal communication strategy. Promotion tactics included emails, printed banners and leaderboards and a focused recruitment campaign using peers and word-of-mouth to persuade colleagues, as well as giving people in departments a specific responsibility to talk to team members and sign them up. Take up has proved very positive.

The company has also taken part in occasional promotional days or events. The energy and enthusiasm behind the Challenge was harnessed for a 'Sport Relief' event, with the aim of having someone be active for every minute between 8am and 7pm in an activity relay. Employees were asked to use 30 minutes of their own time and the company gave them 30 minutes of work time to get changed before and after. People then carried out whichever activity they wanted and passed the 'baton' to the next person.

The Challenge has been a big success for Carlisle Brass. It has appealed to managers as it allows flexibility for people to be active on their own or as part of a group, while still bringing them together under a common cause. Above all, they like it because it is easy to use.

Carlisle Brass has recognised various benefits of the programme, notably on rates of absenteeism, and the plan now is to roll the programme out through the rest of the group. The Challenge also looks like to have a lasting legacy, with a range of sustainable activities now established including running and cycling clubs.

"Now we're including the Workplace Challenge in our health and safety committee so that goes into our communication structure and is discussed by the group. We've got leaderboards in canteens and it changes every week about who's doing what, so people get regular feedback. We're investing in this and we want employees to engage and give us ideas about what we can do to improve."

Challenge participant

Crossrail
Christina Butterworth, Health and Safety Specialist – Occupational Health

At Crossrail, employees take their physical health seriously; most employees use the public transport system, cycle or walk to work. This increases the amount of physical activity our employees receive on a daily basis. In addition, Crossrail promotes healthy eating and physical activity through targeted health campaigns across the project programme.

We have found that including information on physical activities in health campaigns is a very productive and successful way to communicate with employees. Crossrail's Stepping Up Programme is a good example of how such initiatives are incorporated and rolled out across the organisation. The Stepping Up Programme is an opportunity for all of Crossrail's employees and our contractors to focus specifically on Health and Safety. In the past there has been a focus on physical activity within this programme, including fitness sessions at local gyms, guided walks and yoga sessions.

We have Wellbeing Champions across all of our sites, who have successfully engaged with Public Health England's One You campaign. Using the information from One You, our

Champions have rolled out various campaigns including those focused on physical activity and nutrition. Our activity around nutrition and diet involved things like workshops, guest speakers, quizzes, and presentations on hydration, healthier eating and food hygiene. The Wellbeing Champions have also identified what a good day at work represents, and how choices around diet and exercise can enhance people's working day.

In addition, Crossrail has continued to focus on food choices. At all Crossrail locations, employees have access to fridges and microwaves so they can prepare food brought in from home, creating an environment where people have greater control over what they choose to eat.

Crossrail's efforts with the healthy eating campaign, especially the work concerning sugar consumption, has been well received – there was a sugar board installation at Crossrail's head office displaying foods people regularly consume as well as the sugar that is contained within them. The initiative was carried out by displaying sugar cubes amounting to the quantity of sugar within each of the foods

displayed on the board. The shock factor of this was very successful, and has encouraged people to read labels before purchasing, to check the sugar content and understand more about what they're eating.

All of these elements form part of our wellbeing programme, which has a monthly campaign focus. These campaigns have covered information on various cancers (including bowel, breast, prostate and testicular), skin care and dermatitis, managing cholesterol, hydration, and rest and recuperation.

All of our wellbeing initiatives and priorities are supported by Crossrail's Executive Leaders, which is crucial for providing long term impact.

Environment Agency
Steve Marks, Partnership and Strategic Overview Team Leader

The Environment Agency's wellbeing ambition is for our employees to be healthier as a result of working here. One of our seven values is to 'Stay safe and grow' and we explicitly promise that we will invest in the wellbeing and development of our staff. This drive comes right from the top of our organisation – our CEO spearheads our culture – while our managers at all levels are also encouraged to carry out local initiatives to help achieve our ambition.

In Cornwall we joined the Healthy Workplace Award scheme in 2016. This provided us with a fantastic amount of external support which really helped us kickstart a local health and wellbeing programme. Support covered stress, mental health first aid and physical activity opportunities, along with a big focus on healthy weight.

For our healthy weight initiatives we had specific support from a specialist at Cornwall Workplace Health. In the first phase in early 2017 they carried out eat-well workshops related to the Government's Eatwell guide (targeted to both office workers and field workers and tailored as appropriate) across all four of our Cornwall sites, and individually weighed staff. In the follow-up sessions later in the year, the workshops focused on sugar and food labelling and we re-weighed staff. The quantifiable results have been amazing, including a doubled percentage of staff classed as 'healthy weight', a 30 per cent reduction in staff with obesity, and one member of staff successfully losing 22lbs in the three months between weigh-ins.

The anecdotal responses have been extremely positive as well, with our field-work staff in particular getting on board and adopting healthier lifestyle choices in their work as well as demonstrating lots of camaraderie and supportive competitiveness.

Our healthy weight focus has been supported by physical activity interventions at work, with an area leadership commitment to deliver our stay safe and grow culture. This has included an awareness campaign about the risks of prolonged sitting to our office staff, encouraging active behaviours at work (such as standing meetings, providing adjustable standing/sitting desks and promoting lunchtime walking and running groups) and providing shower facilities to support staff with cycling to work.

We are definitely starting to see a business return on our investment in employee wellbeing. We have people reporting higher energy levels and improved productivity and we have seen a reduction in our sickness absence rates. Our culture has empowered me to progress these initiatives locally and the whole organisation is benefiting as a result.

Steve's top tips for employers:

- Help enable healthier food options (such as providing facilities for people to heat up a lunch that they've brought from home)

- Provide accessible support related to weight management, supported by a specialist

- Make sure your employees know that management supports active behaviours (particularly at lunchtimes, to break the culture of working through lunch)

- If possible, provide showers – it's all about making your work facilities conducive to being active

Fujitsu
Ian Howarth, HR Lead for Wellbeing, UK and Ireland

Employee wellbeing forms an integral part of Fujitsu's overall Responsible Business strategy. For Fujitsu, taking a rounded and inclusive approach to wellbeing is vital to creating a positive health culture.

We are committed to creating opportunities for employees to get more physically active, and we want to help change behaviours, with a lasting positive impact. But while we encourage people to get involved, we don't make activities and initiatives mandatory. This approach is key to helping ensure employees feel empowered and engaged with their wellbeing.

The Global Challenge is a step challenge available to companies around the world. It is a successful and longstanding initiative to encourage physical activity. Through the scheme, employees track their daily activity and work towards a daily target of 10,000 steps for 100 days.

We've taken part for the past seven years, with fantastic results. In 2017, more than 1,000 employees took part across the UK and Ireland. Last year we encouraged employees to participate by promoting an understanding of how physical health correlates to mental health, as part of our holistic approach.

The step challenge results in 2017 were once again brilliant, with a total weight loss of 609 kg across all Fujitsu participants. In addition, 58 per cent of employees reported an increase in productivity and concentration levels, and 14 per cent reported an increase in achieving the recommended 7.5 hours sleep per day. 80 per cent of participants also ended the challenge with a daily average in excess of 10,000 steps, compared to 18 per cent who were achieving that before starting the challenge.

The statistics in the report tell a collective story but often it is the personal journeys that best relay the lasting behavioural changes created.

We aim to make the Global Challenge accessible and appealing to all employees, ensuring that those who may be less fit and active are still encouraged to take part, and aren't daunted by the aim of 10,000 steps.

To ensure the initiative is as inclusive as possible, we don't say that employees must reach 10,000 steps daily; all we ask is that every employee who gets involved is committed to increasing their step count. Someone who increases from 2,000 daily steps to 8,000 steps as a result of taking part has made a major improvement in caring for their wellbeing and it's important that we support the differing fitness levels and abilities of our employees.

We also use our employee network SEED, (Supporting and Engaging Employees with Disabilities) to help engage employees with disabilities to take part in the challenge. In 2016, Mel Devine was recognised internally as the Most Inspirational Stepper; she inspired her team with her positivity and determination and increased her step count throughout the challenge, even though she finds it hard to stand and walk due to her disability.

HEINEKEN
Philip Gorrell, Health and Wellbeing Manager

Our WellBEing programme takes a proactive approach to supporting our people. In the past, like most other organisations, our focus has been much more traditional and reactive, relying on occupational health and EAP providers to help in relation to health and wellbeing issues, but we recognised that we needed to support wellbeing in a much more holistic and preventative way. Having happy and healthy colleagues helps us with retention of staff, and our new comprehensive wellbeing programme supports recruitment as well.

Our WellBEing programme covers physical, mental and social health for our people. Rather than three individual silos, we see strong overlaps between all three areas, which was one of the main drivers behind our support for the Race to the Tower – we know that good mental health goes hand in hand with good physical health and so we've been encouraging our people to get active. In partnership with Mind, we have supported employees to take on a serious physical challenge (travelling 26 miles in one day, or 52 miles in two days) while raising awareness of the mental health difficulties that so many of us face. In our first year as headline sponsors, more than 10 per cent of our workforce took up the challenge.

For individual participants and for us as a business, Race to the Tower proved to be an unforgettable experience. More than 900 participants signed up for the race, of which 218 were colleagues. Of the colleagues taking part, 100 per cent would recommend the event, with 89 per cent keen to take part again and 87 per cent inspired to exercise more regularly. 97 per cent of HEINEKEN participants said the event had a positive impact on their mental and physical health and 88 per cent are now more aware of the charity Mind and their work.

At the same time, we recognise that this type of event did not meet the needs of all our colleagues, so we also encourage people to get involved through volunteering. Whether it be with the logistics, handing out some fluids, or cheering on their colleagues or other participants, the volunteers were as much part of the event as those completing the course.

We are continuing our sponsorship of the programme and are looking at ways of diversifying in future years to make it more inclusive, with shorter distances for those people who find a marathon distance intimidating. We want to encourage more people to enjoy the mental boost of achieving a physical challenge.

I would strongly encourage any employer to provide opportunities for employees to get involved in some kind of physical activity, particularly if there is a collective goal. We have really seen the benefits in wellbeing and enthusiasm in our workforce.

Public Health England
Ole Nascimento, Staff Health and Wellbeing Unit

Public Health England's rural research facilities at Porton Down in Wiltshire were chosen to test the impact of an initiative to encourage employees to be physically active during their working day. The outcomes suggest that it is possible to increase walking at work, in a relatively short period of time and without huge investment.

More than 800 people are based at the site, which is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. 90 per cent of staff lived within 15 miles of their workplace. The nearest railway station is about eight miles away.

Living Streets, the UK charity for everyday walking, was invited to put in place support. One aim was to investigate whether workplace behaviour change schemes that had previously been used in urban settings would have a positive impact in a rural environment.

The interventions included a walking campaign, co-produced with employees; consultations with Living Streets' 'Walk Doctors'; a dedicated Walk at Work Week; and a two-week team challenge.

A staff survey gave a sense of some of the obstacles to walking to work. 95 per cent of employees who took part said they drove their own vehicle to work. Just 5 per cent walked. Nobody cycled, or used the shared site shuttle from the station, and there was no car sharing. Many said the main road was too dangerous to cycle, and there were no safe footpaths.

Fewer than one-third of respondents said they met the Chief Medical Officers' recommended 150 minutes of weekly physical activity by walking for 30 minutes on five or more days of the week.

Staff were sceptical about whether they would be able to walk to work, but were interested in finding ways to walk more during the working day, such as walking meetings. Support for Walk to Work Week was good; Porton Down ranked in first place against the other PHE national offices in terms of the number of staff who signed up (34) and logged the number of miles walked. The collective total distance walked added up to 355.15 miles, equivalent to burning 10,599.27 calories and saving 22.72kg of CO_2.

The teams created and participated in activities that were suitable for all levels of fitness, and over the three-week period of organised activities (Walk at Work Week and the two-week challenge), staff were able to see the benefits of walking for mental and physical health. More than 50 people took part, which is a relatively high impact, particularly given the short duration of the project and limited resources available for promotion.

Face-to-face engagement was essential for gaining the confidence and interest of employees. Competitive activities such as team challenges appealed to some people, whereas the social aspect of organised of walks was the draw for others, demonstrating the importance of providing a package of measures because no 'one-size fits all'.

Teesside University
Dr Louisa J. Ells, Reader in Public Health and Obesity, School of Health and Social Care

Reducing sugar intake is a public health priority. In 2015 Public Health England set out a number of areas for action that could be implemented to reduce the nation's sugar intake, which included raising awareness of concerns related to sugar, and the implementation of a 10–20 per cent sugar tax (the soft drinks industry levy, which comes into effect March 2018) as well as a structured product reformulation programme.

In response to the PHE areas for action, and learning from the 2014 Teesside University health needs assessment, Teesside University Catering, in partnership with Extra Life (a public health and wellbeing initiative run by Middlesbrough Borough Council) and student services, developed a two-phase sugar reduction intervention.

Phase 1 was a directed sugar awareness marketing campaign. Marketing materials were pre-tested with focus groups and linked to the Change4Life sugar smart campaign. This intervention was launched in term 1 2016/17, during which staff and student views on high sugar consumption and regulation were explored through a cross sectional survey (n=1,666), and interviews (n=44).

Results from the survey demonstrated that staff and students support a sugar tax, providing healthy alternatives were subsidised.

These findings were used to inform the development of phase 2: a sugar tax, whereby the price of sugar sweetened cold beverages (SSBs) (excluding fruit juice and milk products) was raised by 20p, and lower or sugar free alternatives were reduced by 20p. Tap water was freely available and the price of bottled water remained unchanged.

A pre- and post-intervention fiscal analysis of sales data was undertaken to explore the impact on campus purchasing. This analysis revealed that the introduction of the tax/subsidisation and marketing intervention resulted in a 21 per cent increase in the proportion of average weekly sales attributed to the subsided lower or sugar free drinks and a 12 per cent reduction in the proportion of average weekly sales attributed to the taxed SSBs, when compared to the previous year where no sugar reduction intervention was implemented.

The University did not receive any staff or student objections to the either phase of the intervention and continues to develop and implement the sugar reduction programme.

Thames Water
Aimee Cain, Occupational Health and Wellbeing Manager

At Thames Water we offer a personal medical assessment (PMA) to all our staff. More than 10,000 PMAs have taken place over four years, and we have referred more than 1,900 people to their GP for reasons including high blood pressure and abnormal prostate results. We have also had 13 employees where cancer has been diagnosed early, with no signs or symptoms prior to their PMA.

Our statistics showed a high number of people with BMIs which placed them in the overweight or obese range (60 per cent of people had a BMI of 25 or above). We took up the business offer provided by Slimming World, and promoted to our workforce that anyone with a BMI of over 30 could take the 12-week group programme for free, along with anyone with a BMI of 25-30 who also had a weight-related health problem (such as diabetes, high blood pressure or high cholesterol). We ran a series of communications to our workforce, including using our internal online portal, social media, and our in-house magazine.

Our approach to the slimming programme was wider than weight loss. We wanted to improve general wellbeing by encouraging people to take educated responsibility for their own health, improve their mental health and confidence and reduce the risk of other illnesses and injuries through achieving and maintaining a healthier weight.

We had a good take-up of the offer to do the 12-week programme and it has proved very successful; people involved with the programme lost an average of a stone. We have seen fantastic engagement in online forums and real camaraderie among the team. We've reached a group of people who don't tend to get involved in our health and wellbeing programmes, particularly some of our retail staff. We have also seen a higher percentage uptake of personal medical assessments in our more sedentary workforce.

Slimming World has run the whole service, introducing individuals to clinics and providing a monthly report. It costs less than £50 per head and we have estimated that each day lost to sickness costs us £85, so the maths makes sense.

The programme is in its second year and we are able to identify some overall trends. In terms of mental health, we have generated a lot more engagement on our forums and people are clearly more comfortable talking about it, as shown by the fact that we now get more referrals into OH related to mental health. Across the business, 'healthy' body fat levels (which are different for each individual according to their personal fitness) have increased from 46.7 per cent of the workforce in Oct 2016 to 51.6 per cent in Oct 2017.

My advice to other employers would be to not over-complicate things. Choose something simple which can have benefits across the wellbeing spectrum. Weight loss due to better diet and more physical activity can have a big impact on people's mental health as well as their physical health, and your business will benefit overall. Don't just look at the costs of outlay – recognise the benefits of greater staff retention, fewer sick days, and higher productivity.

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Resources for employers

Business in the Community and Public Health England have developed
a range of toolkits to support employers with employee health and wellbeing:

✔ **Physical activity, healthy eating and healthier weight:
a toolkit for employers**

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BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY

THE PRINCE'S
RESPONSIBLE
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