**Cardiff and Vale UHB**

**Physical Activity**

**Information for Employees**

**Purpose**

The aim of this document is to provide information, promote, support and encourage employees in participating in physical activities, to help employees understand the benefits of physical activity and to raise awareness of the benefits of physical activity as part of Cardiff and Vale’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Cardiff and Vale is committed to promoting the workplace as an important setting in which people can increase their awareness and understanding of the importance of physical activity to benefit their health and protect against illness. The workplace is also an important setting in which people can increase their levels of activity to benefit their health and protect against illness.

It is the responsibility of everyone including Line Managers, Employee Health and Wellbeing Services and the Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group to promote physical activity in the workplace. The Health and Wellbeing Advisory group will be responsible for driving forward any actions and updates. If you have any suggestions in the way the organisation can improve please send your suggestions to the Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group via Nicola Bevan Head of Employee Health and Wellbeing Services at Nicola.bevan3@wales.nhs.uk .

**Did you know?**

Employees engaged in physical activity initiatives have reported greater enjoyment of their work, improved concentration and mental alertness and improved cooperation and rapport with colleagues.

For general health benefit, adults should achieve a total of at least 30 minutes a day of at least moderate intensity physical activity on 5 or more days of the week. The 30 minutes of physical activity can be achieved either by doing all the daily activity in one session, or through several shorter bouts of activity of 10 minutes or more.

Moderate physical activity includes activities such as brisk walking, housework, cycling, gardening and dancing, as well as participation in sport and formal exercise. Any activity undertaken during leisure, working or travel counts.

Alternatively comparable benefits can be achieved through 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity spread across the week. Vigorous intensity physical activity includes running and sports such as swimming or football.

Adults should also undertake physical activity to improve muscle strength on at least two days a week.

**The benefits**

Physical activity is essential for good health and contributes to positive well-being. Regular physical activity is one of the most effective disease prevention behaviours.

Physical activity programs can reduce feelings of depression, improve stamina and strength, reduce obesity particularly when combined with diet and reduce risks of cardiovascular disease such as high blood pressure, cholesterol, stroke and type 2 diabetes. Physical inactivity has also been associated with stress, anxiety and low back pain.

**Physical activity**

* Reduces risk of a range of diseases such as heart disease and stroke
* Helps to prevent or reduce high blood pressure
* Reduces the risk of type 2 diabetes
* Helps to prevent or reduce osteoporosis
* Helps to prevent or treat osteoarthritis
* Reduces the risk of some cancers
* Helps maintain a healthy weight and helps reduces the risk of obesity
* Helps maintain ability to perform everyday tasks with ease
* Improves self-esteem
* Reduces symptoms of depression and anxiety

**Cardiff and Vale UHB will support you in a variety of ways:**

* Encourage you to make active choices through the use of promotional and motivational resources, for example encouraging you to walk or cycle all or part of the way to work, or to use the stairs instead of the lift
* Provide information on local sports and leisure facilities
* Support sports or activity clubs e.g. Netball, football or walking group
* Gaining feedback from you on improvements and continuous improvements
* Employees participating in any of the health at work activities will be regularly asked for feedback
* Cardiff and Vale UHB will, as appropriate, participate as an organisation in national and / or local awareness days to support physical activity
* The Health and Wellbeing Advisory Group will be responsible for reviewing this guidance on a yearly basis

**Further Information & Guidance**

Information and guidance on physical activity is available within the organisation via the Health & Wellbeing internet site: <http://www.cardiffandvaleuhb.wales.nhs.uk/physical-wellbeing>

Here you will find a variety of information including:

* Local gym facilities e.g. sports and social club
* Links to external organisations e.g. Ramblers Cymru and running clubs
* Walking maps for Cardiff and Newport
* Links to the Occupational Health Physiotherapy service, where you can find a number of exercises to help prevent or improve musculoskeletal injuries
* Links to NHS Live Well, where you can find more information on the benefits of exercising as well as exercising ideas.