



YOUR GUIDE TO WORKPLACE RUNNING



- INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY
- GREATER STAFF RETENTION
- IMPROVED MORAL
- LOWER RATES OF ABSENCE
- FEWER WORKPLACE INJURIES



Run Wales is Welsh Athletics' social running programme that aims to get the nation running. The programme has been developed to 'inspire, encourage and support every adult in Wales to run' – and to run more often.



WHY

ESTABLISH A WORKPLACE
RUNNING GROUP?



AS AN EMPLOYER, YOU'LL SEE;

- A positive impact on stress, back pain and mental health
- Increased confidence, self-esteem and as a result, productivity
- Lower rates of absence and quicker return to work after illness
- Fewer workplace injuries
- Greater staff retention
- Improvements in communication, morale and workplace atmosphere
- Positive corporate image

***A HEALTHY WORKFORCE CAN
DEMONSTRATE CORPORATE
RESPONSIBILITY***

THE COST OF INACTIVITY



In Wales, approximately 42% of the population aren't doing enough physical activity to get all the benefits to their health that being active can provide.

(Welsh Health Survey, 2015¹).

The estimated cost of such physical inactivity to the NHS sits at around £650million per year, and the lack of physical activity is the fourth most significant risk factor worldwide for chronic, non-communicable disease, after tobacco use, raised blood pressure and diabetes.

Employees spend around 60% of their waking hours at work, making the workplace a key setting to promote physical activity to challenge the following:

 **131 million sick days** were taken in the UK in 2013

 **Approximately 31 million²** of those days were lost due to back, neck and muscle problems, costing the UK economy **£14bn a year**

 It's estimated that **10.4 million working days³** were lost in England, Scotland and Wales during 2011-12 due to stress, depression or anxiety

 The costs associated with poor mental health in the workplace amount to nearly **£1.2 billion a year**, equivalent to £860 for every employee in the Welsh workforce

 Long term illness (4 weeks or more) is a significant issue for businesses – accounting for **6% of the total absence rate**, but in terms of working days lost, long term absence accounts for approximately 43%

 Physically-active workers take **27% fewer sick days⁴**

WHAT EMPLOYEES SAY

A survey conducted in 2009⁵ explored reasons why people did not exercise regularly;

34% said they feel too tired or unwell to exercise (the highest percentage in the UK and well above the national average of 26 percent).

31% of respondents in Wales were too busy with work to exercise.

55% stated that they would exercise more regularly if they could fit it in with their daily routine.

1. <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/welsh-health-survey/?lang=en>

2. Office for National Statistics

3. Health and Safety Executive

4. The reference is for the NICE document, PH13 Promoting physical activity in the workplace: full guidance, NICE (to be found at link below): <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph13/chapter/Introduction>

5. Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (2009). Last accessed on 11th July, 2013 at: <http://www.csp.org.uk/press-releases/2009/07/01/60-adults-wales-risk-their-health-through-insufficient-exercise-new-survey>



WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY



PUBLIC HEALTH WALES

‘Taking action to prevent ill health and promote healthy lifestyles is everyone’s responsibilities, but as an employer it does makes good business sense to adopt a healthy workplace, and what better way to do so than through Run Wales.’

An hour’s “brisk exercise” each day offsets the risks of early death linked to a desk-bound working life, according to scientists in new research recently published in *The Lancet*⁶. Prof Ulf Ekelund, of the Norwegian School of Sports Sciences and the University of Cambridge, who led the study said:

“For many people who commute to work and have office-based jobs, there is no way to escape sitting for prolonged periods of time and for these people in particular, we cannot stress enough the importance of getting exercise, whether it’s getting out for a walk at lunchtime, going for a run in the morning or cycling to work”. Prof Ulf Ekelund, of the Norwegian School of Sports Sciences and the University of Cambridge, who led the study said:

Public Health Wales recommends that all adults should aim to be active for at least 150 minutes per week, every week. Rob Sage, Principal Public Health Practitioner, Health Improvement Division, Public Health Wales states that...

“It’s our [Public Health Wales’] aspiration that everyone increasingly sees being active as a normal part of their daily lives. Going out for a run on your own, or with a group of friends or colleagues is a simple, fun way of regularly being active. Run Wales can play a key role in supporting new runners across Wales to get started and keep running.”

HEALTHY WORKING WALES

As an employer, if you are keen to engage with your employees and promote their health and well-being, then you might also want to consider the support that can be given from the Healthy Working Wales team and, in particular, their workplace health awards.

The Corporate Health Standard is aimed at organisations with 50 or more employees and the **Small Workplace Health Award** for those with less than 50 employees. Both awards are based on good practice and improvement, it can also be used as a framework and developmental tool to support the creation of activities that promote the health and well-being of employees.

They have also been developed to target the key preventable ill-health issues in your workplace, which will also help to increase organisational performance

and productivity. One of the targets is to increase physical activity therefore by offering your employees the opportunity to improve their physical activity levels though engaging in easily accessible, free Run Wales workplace running groups you will contribute significantly towards key elements of achieving an award.

For further information on registering for the Corporate Health Standard or the Small Workplace Health Award visit Healthy Working Wales or contact the team directly workplacehealth@wales.nhs.uk

They can also be found on Twitter [@Healthywork_HWW](https://twitter.com/Healthywork_HWW)

6. [http://thelancet.com/journals/Lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(16\)30383-X/fulltext](http://thelancet.com/journals/Lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(16)30383-X/fulltext)

WHY CHOOSE RUNNING?

“...all adults should aim to be active for at least 150 minutes per week, every week.”

One of the great things about running is that almost everyone can do it, and in Wales over 300,000⁷ people, equivalent to about 15% of adult population, run regularly.

We are often told that we are far too sedentary and that exercising more can improve our health and wellbeing, so what is stopping us from lacing up our trainers, getting out there and being active?

TOO BUSY? TOO TIRED? RUNNING IS HARD? DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START?

Run Wales is here to support you and your employees. We'll provide the organisation with the support and resources needed to offer easy and accessible walk to run opportunities for everyone to get fit, healthier and happier.

HOW TO SET UP A WORKPLACE RUNNING GROUP



Run Wales is your first port of call for all things running in Wales, and what better way to start the process than to invite us in to speak to you and your team about social running and the opportunities available.

INVITE US IN TO SPEAK TO YOU AND YOUR TEAM AND WE WILL;

- Explore opportunities available to the workforce,
- Get people engaged and involved in the process to take ownership,
- Explain and share best practice on establishing own group and successes,
- Provide a running activity taster session,
- Explain processes and training requirement,
- Explore physical and mental benefits,
- Provide information on a range of supporting activities to help employees be more active in work, as well as out of work.

Get in touch with us on 029 2064 9845 – irun@runwales.org.uk or visit us at www.irun.wales to get your workforce running!

STILL NOT CONVINCED?



SEE HOW OTHER ORGANISATIONS HAVE DONE IT!

TrakCel

“We truly believe that a healthy body makes for a healthy mind”

At Trakcel we like to provide a range of social activities for our team to get involved in. I've been an avid runner for a number of years, and the local area gives us a safe environment for lunch time runs, so it just seemed like the best option for us to offer for the staff.

As an employer we've not faced any real challenges. Thought was given as to how to make the group runs available to everyone – regardless of abilities. The only other limiting factor for us was the workplace shower. We only had 1, and consequently we had to work out a plan that meant that the lack of showers would not be too much of a barrier.

To try and overcome the challenges we offer 2 km loops so people can decide how many loops they want to run and how sweaty they want to become! As an employer we are looking at longer term plans to improve our shower/changing facilities that will allow more to partake, and for longer.

The benefits we're seeing are great. In the employees we're seeing different groups of people spending social time together, and getting to know each other outside the work sphere – as a team mate or a co runner as oppose to a boss or supervisor. This allows the employees to be a bit more focused on the benefits of exercise.

Currently we're not measuring the benefits on the employee's productivity, but we truly believe that a healthy body makes for a healthy mind and our advice to other businesses / companies who are thinking about setting up a workplace running group is; don't over complicate it, keep it simple and accessible to as many as possible and do it!

James Rudolf,
Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer



“Running really is the best stress reliever and helps you deliver better results in the workplace!”

We decided to set up a Cadwaladers running team in 2016 for 2 reasons really. One was to continue our commitment to the health & wellbeing of our employees and the other was to raise money for our nominated charity of the year, 2 Wish Upon a Star.

The reason we chose running was that I (Operations Manager) had started running in 2015 and had seen how easy it was to get started and run a half marathon. I had already started seeing the health benefits, not only physical but in the mind – running really is the best stress reliever and helps you deliver better results in the workplace!

We ended up raising over £1000 by taking part in the Cardiff Half Marathon. Different members of our team worked together, both during training and the races, who would not normally work together. We ended up with employees from different areas of the country, who work at different levels within the organisation working together. This was fantastic for us as we have 8 stores, and they are not close in proximity, so this really brought the team together.

We set up a Cadwaladers running Facebook group so that we could all talk to each other regularly, which again was great for the stores not close to each other. We posted photos of our training progress and really encouraged each other when the going got tough.

The hardest part of our challenge was keeping everyone motivated for the main challenge the Cardiff Half, we did our best though, and we started with a Cardiff parkrun in August then progressed to a Cardiff 10k in September, followed by the main event in October.

We are planning on taking the Cadwaladers running group to the next level in 2017, we will raise money for our 2017 charity, the Salvation Army.

We will be taking on the advice from Run Wales literature and spending more time planning different races throughout England & Wales so that more of our team can get involved.

Paul Morton, Operations Manager

"I have found that I am **sleeping much better** at nights, and I'm **feeling so much better** in myself. Running has helped me with a routine, which to me is gold. I find after a run and a shower in work **I am more focused** throughout my day. Every time we go out for a run, there are new people joining us and it's a **great team effort**. It also sparks new and healthy conversation between colleagues."

"This opportunity provides me with support for **reaching my goals**. In the obvious running context, but I also think the attitude of goal setting and working towards them is also beneficial in a work context."

WHAT THE EMPLOYEES SAY!

"Wellbeing/Productivity – for me it means; a great **opportunity to connect with colleagues** outside of a work context and as organisation grows find I'm **getting to know people** outside of my immediate team. Following the run I tend to find **I'm more alert** and think it helps my work."

"I have **more energy, a more positive outlook** and a sense of achievement as a result of this opportunity."

"Health? Hard to say as I'd most probably run outside work if I didn't do it here. It's considerably **more convenient running during lunch time** though. I doubt I'd run as much if I didn't go out at lunchtimes, as it's hard to get the runs in outside of work time. So this opportunity provides me with consistency."

#IRUNWALES

This booklet was developed in partnership with Public Health Wales' Health Improvement Department and Welsh Athletics.

If you'd like to get in touch:

WWW.IRUN.WALES
IRUN@RUNWALES.ORG.UK
029 2064 9845

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