

Information leaflet for employers

Information for employers

Before you decide if you want to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read this leaflet which contains information about the study. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact:

[*Contact details of Principal Investigator*]

[*Contact details of co-applicant for relevant research site*]

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of the study is to find out if it is possible to make changes in the way people travel to work and increase the amount of walking during the daily commute.

Why has our workplace been approached?

We would like to recruit 84 workplaces in Bath, South Gloucestershire and Swansea and match them into pairs that are similar in terms of type of business, location and size (small, medium and large). In each of the 84 workplaces, we would like to collect information from employees and employers about the journey to work. In addition, we will randomly select 42 of the workplaces to take part in a programme to try to increase walking (see later). Unfortunately, you cannot choose whether to take part in the programme: this has to be done randomly. So we need workplaces that are willing to take part in the study and to accept this random allocation.

What will happen if our workplace takes part?

In all 84 workplaces we would like to do the following:

- 1] Ask employers to help us identify people who would like to take part in the study i.e. by sending all employees an email, or through other communication procedures that suit your workplace.
- 2] All employees who would like to take part will be asked to complete questionnaires: one at the beginning of the study, one about 3 months later, and another about 12 months later. We will make it clear to employees that they do NOT have to take part in this study, and that they can drop out of the study at any time without giving us a reason.
- 3] Participating employees will be asked to wear an accelerometer and a GPS monitor for 7 days. (These are small monitors worn around the waist to measure physical activity and tell us something about the route to work.) We will ask them to do this at the beginning of the study and again 12 months later. To acknowledge their help, we will give them a £10 gift voucher when they wear and return the monitors at the beginning of the study, and another £10 gift voucher if they wear and return the monitors 12 months later.
- 4] Some employees will be invited to take part in interviews about their journeys to work.
- 5] We would also like to interview some employers.
- 6] The people who take part in the interviews will also receive a £10 gift voucher to thank them for taking part.

Half of the workplaces will be randomly allocated to take part in a programme which aims to increase the amount of walking during the journey to and from work:

- 1] We will offer training to one or more of your employees to promote the programme: this will depend on the size of your workplace but will be approximately one promoter to 25 participating employees. The training will last about 3 hours, and will take place in the workplace or at one of the Universities, depending on the preference of the workplace.
- 2] We will provide booklets and other resources for the promoters to use in the workplace with the employees who express an interest in trying to change their travel behaviour.
- 3] The promoters will offer support and encouragement over the following 10 weeks through 4 workplace-based contacts (in person, by telephone or email, whichever is appropriate for your workplace).

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

We cannot say whether taking part will be of direct benefit to you, but you may find it interesting, worthwhile and beneficial for your public image to be involved in this important research study.

There are a number of potential benefits to employers if their employees increase walking during the journey to and from work, including: employees' increased concentration and mental alertness; a reduction in absenteeism; a reduction in people being late because of greater certainty over the

timing of the journey; improved public image as a result of lowering the workplace's carbon footprint, and; savings in car parking costs.

Are there any disadvantages or risks in taking part?

The study has been reviewed by the University of Bristol Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Research Ethics Committee in order to protect the rights and well-being of those who take part. The study activities are considered to be 'low risk' and we do not believe there are any disadvantages to employers or employees in taking part.

Some employers may feel there are disadvantages in terms of the disruption caused to the working routine if employees to take part in the study activities. We will do our best to keep this to a minimum.

Employees can take part in some or all of the activities and can change their mind and withdraw for the study at any time without giving a reason. All information collected during the study will be treated as confidential and stored securely. We will remove names from any information that is published so individuals and workplaces cannot be recognised.

What if something goes wrong?

We do not expect anything to go wrong. However, if you do have a complaint about the study, please contact Dr Suzanne Audrey, the principal investigator, or one of the study coordinators. Contact details are given at the front of this leaflet.

What will happen to the results of the study?

When the study is complete, we will organise an event to talk about the results. We will also present the information at conferences and publish it in journals. We hope this will provide better understanding about the benefits and difficulties of changing travel behaviour and increasing walking during the journey to work.

Who is undertaking the study?

This study is being undertaken by researchers at the Universities of Bristol, Bath and Swansea and is funded by the NIHR public health research programme. Other organisations are involved with the study including: BusinessWest, Swansea Chamber of Commerce, Sustrans, Loughborough University, University of the West of England, University of South Carolina, and MRC Epidemiology Unit Cambridge.

Workplace expression of interest form

1. Are you interested in participating in the Travel to Work study? Yes / No *(please delete as appropriate)*

If yes, please go to question 3. If no, please go to question 2.

2. If no, it would help our research if you are able to give a brief reason below. We would also be grateful if you would complete further details about your workplace:

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.....

3. Name of workplace:

4. Address of workplace:

.....POSTCODE:

5. Main business activities:

6. Number of employees in workplace (including part time): *(please tick one box as appropriate)*

1 - 9

10 - 49

50 – 249

250 and above

7. Total number of employees in the workplace *(if known)*

8. How do most employees travel to and from the workplace? *(please tick one box as appropriate)*

Car or motorised transport (as driver or passenger)

Public transport (e.g. bus or train)

Walk/cycle

I don't really know how our employees travel to work

9. In terms of walking or cycling: *(please tick one box as appropriate)*

None or hardly any employees walk/cycle all the way to work

Some (but less than half) of the employees walk/cycle all the way to work

Most employees walk/cycle all the way to work

All of the employees walk or cycle all the way to work

I don't really know how our employees travel to work

10. Please give the name and contact details of someone who the research team should contact in the future about the Travel to Work study:

Name: **Position:**

Email: **Telephone:**

How would you prefer to be contacted? Email / telephone *(please delete as appropriate)*

Please return this questionnaire by email or in the pre-paid envelope provided.