

Information leaflet for Walk to Work promoters

Walk to Work promoter information

Your employer has agreed to take part in a research study about travel to work. **We would like to invite you to be a Walk to Work promoter in your workplace**, but before you decide if you want to take on this role, it is important for you to understand what it will involve. Please read this leaflet and discuss it with other people if you wish. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact:

[insert relevant contact details]

What is the Walk to Work programme?

We are asking different workplaces in [list areas] to take part in a Walk to Work programme and your employer has agreed to take part. The aim of the programme is to help people think about the way they travel to work and, if possible, to increase the amount that people walk during the journey. In each workplace, Walk to Work promoters will be recruited. The aims of the training are to provide them with **information** and **resources**, and to increase their **skills** and **confidence**, to talk with their colleagues about travel to work.

When the Walk to Work promoters are trained, they will be given the names of employees in their workplace who are eligible to take part in the Walk to Work programme. Those who want to try to increase walking will be given booklets and pedometers, identify suitable routes, and set goals for walking (this may be part of the way or the whole journey, depending on people's circumstances.) The Walk to Work promoters will offer participating employees support and encouragement during the following 10 weeks. The Walk to Work promoters will also be given support and encouragement from the research team over the 10-week period.

What is the role of the Walk to Work promoter?

The role of the Walk to Work promoters is a responsible position but we believe it will also be enjoyable and interesting. The aims are:

- to be the Walk to Work programme 'point of contact' for employers, employees and the University researchers
- to promote increased walking during the journeys to work
- to be 'role models' for the Walk to Work programme

The main responsibilities of the Walk to Work promoter are:

- to take part in the training provided and learn about: the benefits of walking to work; facilitators and barriers to walking to work; how to motivate employees to walk to work; and the use of available resources e.g. Walkit.com, Walk4Life and Living Streets
- to undertake the role of the Walk to Work promoter including: communicating with their employer about the activities of the Walk to Work programme; contacting eligible employees who are interested in increasing the amount of walking during their journey to and from work; helping employees identify appropriate walking routes; offering work-based support to employees through four additional contacts over 10-weeks using the most effective method e.g. email, telephone or face-to-face, and; keeping a short diary of their experiences as Walk to Work promoters
- to provide participating employees with advice, support and information about the benefits of walking to work including: benefits to physical health, improved mental well-being, reduction in stress compared with other modes of transport, cost savings, potential time savings, and environmental benefits
- to help the University researchers monitor the progress of the Walk to Work programme by: completing an evaluation form after the training; completing a short diary of experiences as a Walk to Work promoter, and; if requested, taking part in interviews to tell us about their views and experiences of the Walk to Work programme.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

We hope you will find the training interesting and that you will gain new skills and confidence. Being a Walk to Work promoter may also help to develop positive relationships at work and give you an opportunity to demonstrate leadership skills. If you increase walking yourself, there are health benefits to taking moderate exercise as part of your daily routine.

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 to protect the rights and well-being of those who take part. The activities are considered to be 'low risk' but we do realise that, for some people, the role of Walk to Work promoter may seem like too much responsibility on top of your usual job. You may also feel disappointed if you are unable to encourage people to walk to work. If this would upset or worry you, it might be better to say that you do not want to take on the role.

What if something goes wrong?

We do not expect anything to go wrong. However, if you do have any problems or complaints about the study please contact a member of the research team. (Please see the contact details at the front of this leaflet).

Do I have to accept the role of Walk to Work promoter?

You are free to decide, and you do not have to accept the role. If you would like to be a Walk to Work promoter, you will be asked to sign a consent form. If you consent but need to withdraw later, you can stop being a Walk to Work promoter and you do not have to give a reason.

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 academic journals. We hope this will provide better understanding about the benefits and difficulties of walking to work. Any information about you or your colleagues will be treated as confidential. We will remove all names from any information that is published.

Who is organising 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.