

Dunedin City Council **Pedometer Challenge**

This is the plan for the Pedometer Challenge which will run in two phases from October 9 to 27 and from 20 November to 8 December 2006.

Objectives

To promote the value of physical activity and diet as beneficial to people's health
To support Council staff in their desire for a more healthy lifestyle
To ensure that key messages regarding physical activity and diet are understood
To show that walking is an enjoyable and rewarding physical activity which is 'low impact' and accessible to everyone

Other objectives

To involve all staff and Councillors in the Challenge
To firmly establish the challenge as a self improvement project not a competition
To make it easy for DCC staff to take part
To use the pedometers in such a way that people become to know instinctively how much physical activity they are getting

Printed material Plan

Leaflet with return forms

This will be the main promotional and informative leaflet, which the staff receive. The leaflet will explain the main points of the Pedometer Challenge and how to complete and return the weekly numbers slips. The weekly return slips will be perforated so that they may be removed and sent in.

Invitation from CEO

This will be a letter sent to all staff briefly describing the Pedometer Challenge and inviting them to register and receive a pedometer at the first two lunchtime meetings on 5 October.

The letter will also give some of the reasons why regular physical activity is good for people. It will be accompanied by a registration slip which staff will be invited to complete and bring to the first lunchtime meetings and exchange for a pedometer pack.

Pedometer Guide

This is a leaflet that will help people to use the pedometer. How to wear it, how to check its accuracy etc.

Lifestyle change suggestions

This will be a list of small changes that people can easily make to their daily routines in order to obtain a health benefit. Ideas will include taking the bus part of the way to work, finding a walking buddy, walking to the shops, parking at the far end of the car park.

Diet Change suggestions

This will be a list of simple things people can do to have a better diet. Ideas will include cutting down on the amount of sugar, substituting whole-wheat cereal for white bread and refined flour, following the food pyramid suggestions, reducing saturated fat intake.

Weekly newsletter

This newsletter will hopefully be sent via the 'every daily' at various times during the first 3-week period and for the final 3-week period. It will answer commonly asked questions and encourage people to get into habits.

Other printed matter

From time to time other material will be displayed on noticeboards and given to participants.

Council Logo

The Council should be identified as the provider of this valuable service to staff.

Motivation and Promotional Plan**Launch day 5 October**

Staff will be invited to either of two lunchtime meetings to be held at 12 noon and 1pm on Thursday 5 October. (The week before the beginning). At these meetings we will give out the pedometers and information packs and have short addresses from experts about diet and physical activity. Bruce Stokell will facilitate these meetings and senior DCC staff will be invited to contribute.

Spot prizes and incentives plan

This plan will list the kinds of spot prizes to be awarded at random for people engaging in physical activity (ie taking a lunchtime walk). The prizes will reflect the values of the programme and will therefore include things like plain nuts, fruit etc.

Staff lunchtime meetings

Two main lunchtime meetings with staff are envisaged. Sportwork will design the programme and lead them. They will be mainly physical activity and health related. Their purpose is to motivate staff to continue with the programme and to impart real knowledge about good health. It may be a good idea to have one or two local health workers give short informative talks. In order to enable all staff to attend we will have two lunchtime meetings on each day – one at 12 noon and the other at 1pm.

Media releases

The subject matter of media releases will be agreed between Sportwork and DCC staff. They will be drafted by Sportwork and released by DCC.

They will cover:

- * the initial launch of the programme – DCC a good employer, staff keen to keep healthy, how easy a healthy lifestyle is, that the challenge is not a competition between people (this would be counter-productive for many)
- * pics of staff doing their lunchtime walk, some facts about physical activity
- * the possibility of the challenge being taken to a wider group of the public
- * other items could feature a staff member who has made the biggest percentage improvement in the number of daily steps they take.

It would be useful for discussions to be held with Rodney Bryant regarding the possible criticism that the Council is spending money on its staff. Council's position should be that it is being a good employer and cares about the health of its staff and also wants staff to be in the best possible position to serve the public. There is good research available from SPARC, which reveals that workplaces benefit from having staff engaged in regular physical activity. Media comment about this would also prepare the public for any extension of the programme outside the Council.

Lapel stickers

Sportwork will supply the copy for sheets of lapel stickers with simple slogans for staff to be given from time to time. Staff will be invited via the newsletters to think up slogans for inclusion on the stickers.

Best walk competition

During the middle three weeks of the programme we will hold a best lunchtime walk competition where staff are challenged to find (or create) the best lunchtime walk.

People will be invited via the 'everydaily' and the staffzone newsletter. The purpose is to open people's eyes to the many opportunities there are for healthy walking during their day. The walks will be branded (eg Robbie Burns breather), and staff will be encouraged to have quick meetings with each other 'on-the-run'. Sportwork will supply copy for the newsletters.

Posters

Simple posters will be designed in order to remind people to record their steps and to keep the programme's importance high in people's minds. They will be delivered to noticeboards and lifts where staff will see them. Sportwork will provide the copy for these.

Divisional 'motivators' and contact people

Lauren and HR will identify 'motivators' who will be the link people in various divisions of Council. We will meet with these people at 12.30pm on 5 October between the two lunchtime meetings.

Other motivational and promotional activities

Staff of the Council will be made to feel welcome to give their ideas for enhancing and extending the programme. This will also create greater buy-in to the programme. This will be mentioned at the lunchtime meetings and in the newsletters.

Communication Plan

Overview of Programme

The Pedometer Challenge is a workplace-based programme in which staff use a pedometer to measure their daily walking with a view to increase the number of steps they take as part of their daily routine. The Dunedin City Council has decided to run the challenge among staff for two 3-week periods from 9 – 27 October and 20 November to 8 December. Staff will be invited to two lunchtime meetings at which the programme will be explained and where they will be given literature about keeping active and eating well. All those who enrol in the project will receive a pedometer and will be encouraged to keep a record of the daily steps and return their weekly numbers to the organisers. It will not be a competition between staff as numbers will remain confidential – but it will be an opportunity for people to challenge themselves to increase the amount of physical activity in their lives, and the pedometer will help measure it. Information about the benefits of keeping physically active and eating healthy food will be available to staff. Staff will be invited to enter a competition to create suitable walks of varying durations around the city and give the walks suitable names. Eg The Robbie Burns Breather – a quick step out of the office to clear the head. Staff will be invited to contribute ideas and suggestions for the project.

Form-return process

This will describe the way that the weekly return forms (slips) are collected and returned to DCC. The process will be developed in consultation with staff of Dunedin City Council. The slips will be returned for the first three weeks and the last three weeks. Other activities will take place in between to keep up the momentum while taking off the daily pressure of completing the slips. Lauren will finalise this process.

Key messages list

This will be a list of key messages to be communicated to staff, Councillors and the public about the Pedometer Challenge.

They will include:

- * that it is not a competition between people
- * that physical activity (not necessarily exercises) is good for long-term health
- * that diet has a large part to play in people's energy levels, work output and satisfaction
- * while a healthy population will save the country (and businesses and the Council) money, the main reason for doing programmes like this is to enhance people's lives.
- * more to be listed following discussions with DCC.

Newsletter topics list

This list will be added to as people make comments or ask questions on their return slips. Key messages will feature too.

It will be used as a basis for writing the weekly newsletter

- * why saturated fat is not good
- * why sugar is not good
- * why wholegrain products are better
- * the physiological effects of walking

Some of these items could be written by local experts (Otago University) etc

Staff questions and comments

Staff will be encouraged to put comments or questions on the return slip. Some queries may be dealt with as general items in the 'every daily'. We will need to have an accurate list of participants so that their email reaches them. The registration process may capture these.

Evaluation parameters

This will be a list of the parameters against which we will evaluate the programme. It will include such items as the take up rate by staff, the numbers who furnish weekly returns, the numbers who stay the first 3 weeks and the numbers of people still involved during the second three-week period.

Parameters are:

- response of staff
- sustained effort
- perception of staff of the value of the programme
- actual improvements in walking over the period
- the short evaluation each participant will write
- barriers to participation
- factors encouraging participation
- factors enhancing participation
- numbers diagnosed with pre-diabetes or diabetes
- dietary changes (name at least one)
- any impact on other family members
- any peer influences
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Evaluation of Pedometer Challenge

What we are evaluating	How we will evaluate it
1. Objectives were met	- round table discussion of key staff at end of challenge
2. A positive initial response	300-500 staff take up the challenge
3. A sustained effort	- 300 – 400 staff complete weekly returns
4. A perception among staff that it is a good idea	- ask section managers - ask participants and non-participants
5. People's daily steps increase each week	- selected weekly returns scanned - staff evaluation form asks
6. Evaluations completed by all staff	- count forms
7. Barriers & discouraging factors IDed	- ask for response in newsletter - discuss in focus groups at end? - ask in questionnaire
8. Encouraging factors IDed	- ask in questionnaire - discuss in focus groups - ask for response in weekly newsletter
9. Peer influences IDed	- observation - discuss in focus groups

What we are evaluating	How we will evaluate it
10. Staff understand diet and health	- ask in questionnaire - check in focus groups
11. Numbers of people who decide to get cholesterol tests	- self reported in questionnaire
12. Participants make dietary changes	- ask in questionnaire - focus groups - staff evaluation
13. % of staff participating and completing	- pedometer challenge kits distributed - evaluations returned
14. Changes to scheme recommended by staff	- gleaned from weekly returns - questionnaire - staff evaluation
15. What worked well – good points of scheme	- questionnaire - focus groups - round table discussion among staff
16. Benefits and costs to DCC	-DCC coordinator report - round table discussion among staff
17. Permanent changes made to daily routine and to diet	- what people say in the evaluation - focus groups

Evaluation Report

This will be the final report written by DCC staff. It will be based on the evaluation parameters.

Other items

Pedometers

Pedometers may be obtained from Diabetes NZ depot in Oamaru (0800 diabetes) at a cost of \$15.00 which includes GST and freight. The Council may decide to find funds to supply one to each staff participant or may prefer to subsidise them by \$5.00. The advantage of a subsidy is that people are more likely to be committed to the programme if they have made a financial commitment.

Reluctant staff

There may need to be some special (and considerable) effort made to attract those members of staff who are sensitive about being overweight or who have health problems that they feel exclude them from the programme.

Expansion of programme

One of the evaluation parameters should be the extent to which people feel that the programme may be extended into businesses and the community.

Families of staff members

It is likely that families of participating staff will be interested in the programme and DCC may wish to consider allowing them to buy pedometers through the Council. This would also have the effect of providing people with some family support.

Lipids tests

It may be considered worthwhile to encourage participants to have a fasting blood test to enable them to find out and manage their cholesterol and glucose levels.

This would not be part of the programme but would support any staff members who want to get into a more healthy condition. The suggestion could be made at one of the lunchtime meetings. Lauren will investigate this with HR.

Fast and snack foods

For the period of the challenge any snack machines could be stocked with more healthy choices, and people could be given facts about the content of most fast food.

Success of the Programme

It is important that the programme is a success and is seen by staff and others as a worthwhile programme.