

# **Evaluation of a national workplace physical activity and sport initiative in England: the CSP Network Workplace Challenge**

Emma Adams<sup>1</sup>, Hayley Musson<sup>1</sup> and Andrew Watson<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences, Loughborough University, Loughborough, UK

<sup>2</sup>County Sports Partnership Network, Loughborough, UK

## **Introduction**

This study evaluated participation in, and the impact of, the Workplace Challenge, a multi-component intervention promoting sport and physical activity in employed adults. Intervention components include: logging activities online; activity challenges; and sports events/competitions.

## **Methods**

A mixed methods evaluation was undertaken using: 1) online surveys (baseline; 3, 6 and 9 month follow-up); 2) activities logged on the programme website; and 3) focus groups/interviews with participants. Descriptive analysis of quantitative data was undertaken, along with using paired t-tests (continuous data) and McNemar's test (categorical data) to assess changes in sport and physical activity. Qualitative data were analysed thematically.

## **Results**

Overall, 63,653 employees registered for the programme (October 2013 - April 2017); of these 14,848 (23%) were inactive at baseline. Barriers to activity participation included 'no time', 'not being motivated', 'young children/family', 'not the sporty type' and 'workplace culture/environment'. For inactive participants, the top five activities logged were walking (44.1%), road cycling (11.9%), running (9.7%), gym (4.4%) and swimming (2.9%). Increases were observed in the proportion of individuals participating in sport (baseline: 29.8%; 3 months: 51.6%;  $p < 0.001$ ) and total minutes per week physical activity (baseline: 270.4  $\pm$  476.8 minutes; 3 months: 452.1  $\pm$  573.2 minutes;  $p < 0.001$ ).

## **Conclusions**

Workplace Challenge engaged large numbers of employees and increased sport and physical activity participation. To support future physical activity promotion in the workplace, barriers to activity and changes to workplace culture need to be addressed, along with providing activities suitable for inactive individuals.