



Implementing a Desk-to-5K Physical Activity Programme to Enhance Health and Wellbeing in a Primary Care Setting.

David Gavin, Senior Health Promotion and Improvement Officer 1, Aoife Reilly, Senior Health Promotion and Improvement Officer 1, Tara Reilly, Health Promotion and Improvement Officer 1.
1 HSE

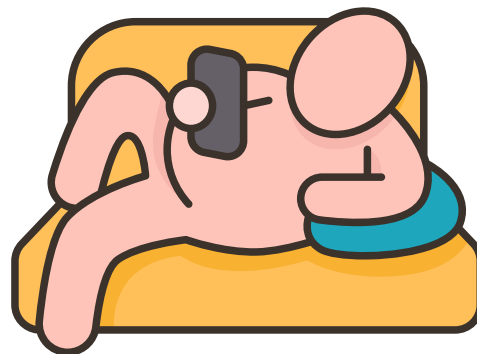


DESKTO
5K



HE Introduction

The Desk-to-5K programme was developed to address a lack of perceived physical activity among staff in Balbriggan Primary Care Centre and Lusk Community Unit. The programme provided structured, community-linked support through an accessible walking or running programme while aiming to foster long-term behaviour change through connection with free, social, community-based physical activity opportunities such as parkrun.



Why Desk -to -5K?

- Workplace wellbeing improves staff engagement and productivity.
- Physical inactivity contributes to chronic disease and poor wellbeing.
- Desk-based employees spend long periods sedentary.
- Walking and running are accessible forms of physical activity with proven health benefits.

Aim:

To determine the effectiveness of an 8-week progressive walking and running programme in enhancing self-reported physical activity levels, exercise motivation, and overall health and wellbeing.



The Desk-to-5K programme was delivered over eight weeks and evaluated using pre- and post-programme measures of physical activity and wellbeing.

Programme Summary	Details
Programme Length	8 weeks
Activities	Walking or running plans; physical activity education weekly emails; peer group support, end of programme ParkRun.
Participants	30 staff enrolled
Evaluation	Activity frequency, activity duration, types of exercise, symptoms

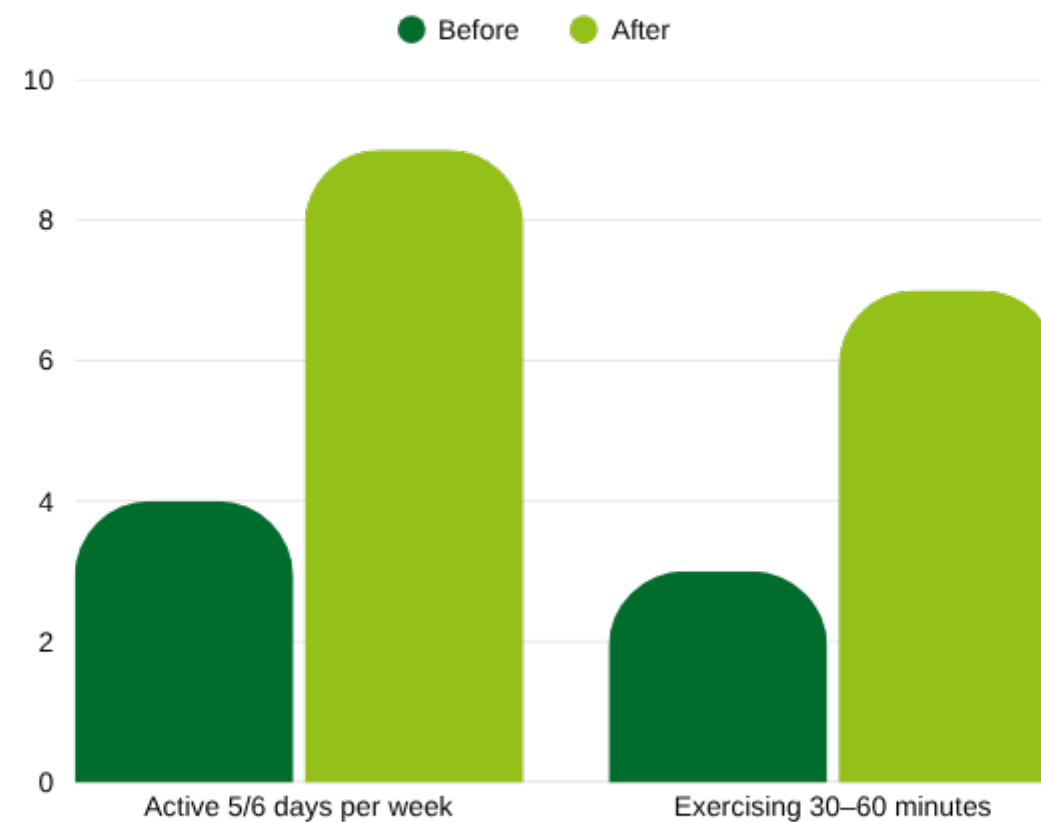
Ten participants completed both pre- and post-programme questionnaires and were included in the analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to compare changes in activity levels and symptom frequency. Participation was voluntary, all data were anonymised, and the project was conducted as a Staff Health and Wellbeing initiative.

HE Results

DESKTO
5K



Physical Activity Frequency

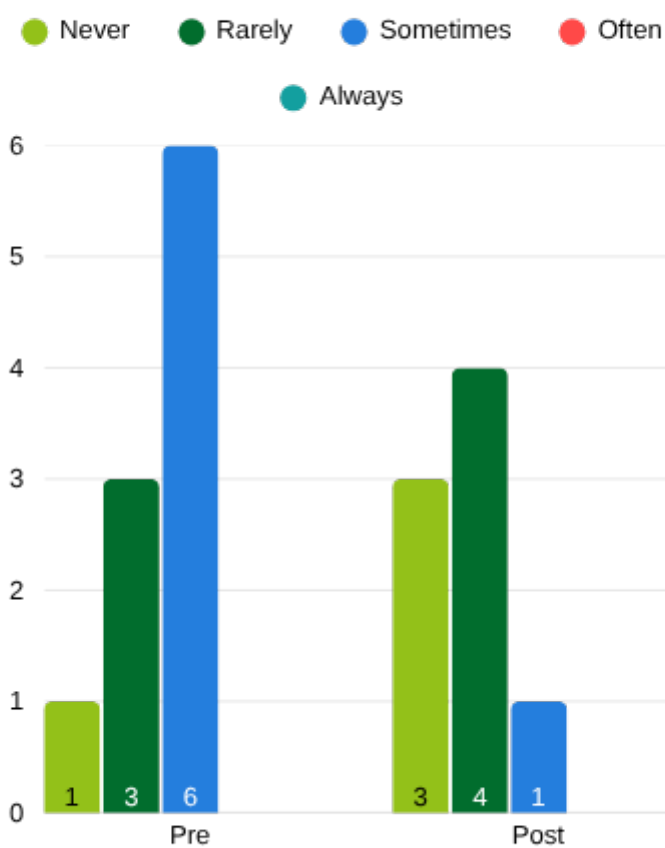


Number of participants reporting exercise on 5 –6 days per week and for 30–60 minutes per day pre - and post -programme delivery.

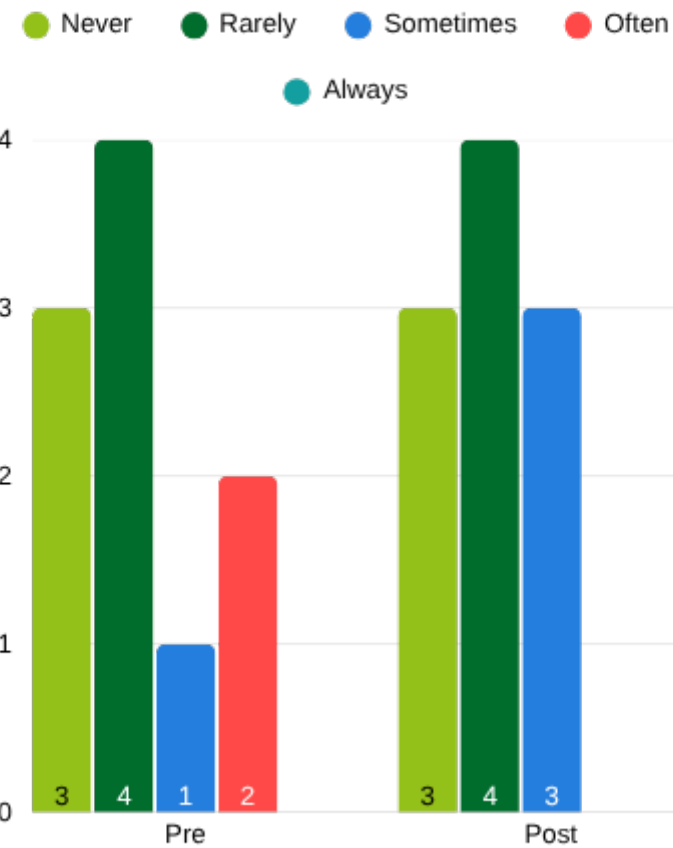


Approximately 85% of participants reported that the programme increased their physical activity levels, while no participants reported a decrease .

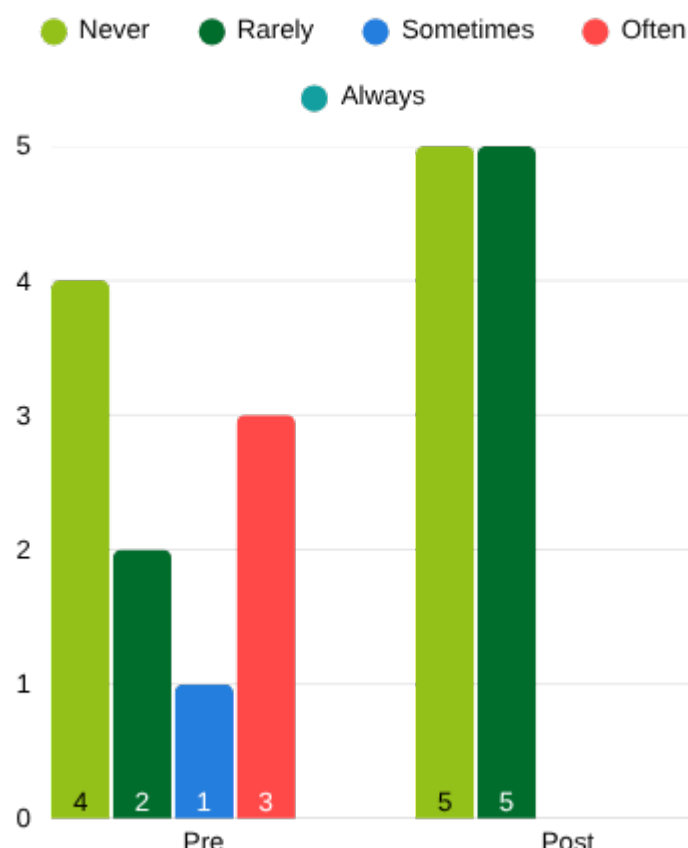
Fatigue



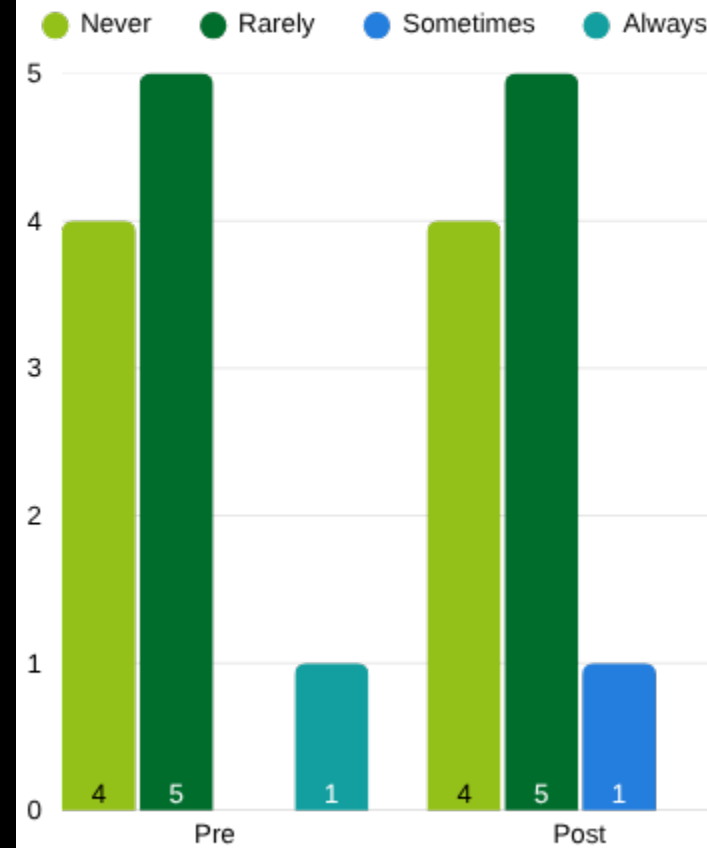
Muscle Soreness



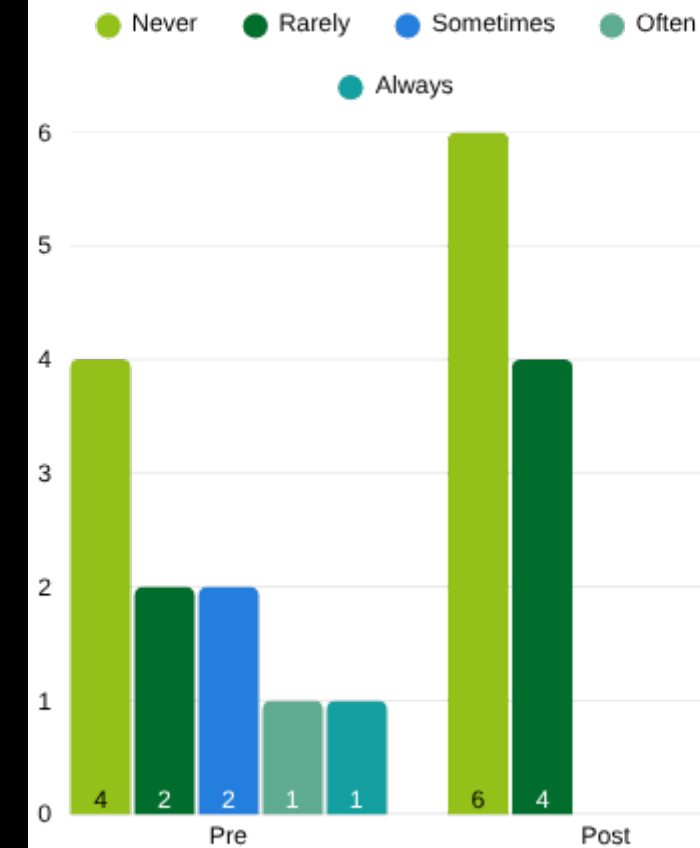
Stress



Difficulty Sleeping



Joint Pain





Conclusion

Participant Feedback	Conclusion	Recommendations
		
- Increased confidence in exercising. - Improved motivation to remain active. - Greater sense of achievement and pride in physical accomplishments. - Re-established regular exercise habits.	- Increased physical activity levels. - Reduced fatigue, stress, and other common symptoms. - Improved confidence, motivation, and enjoyment of exercise. - Demonstrated an effective and sustainable workplace approach to promoting staff health and wellbeing.	- Strengthen links with community initiatives (e.g., parkrun) to support long-term participation. - Use larger sample sizes and aim to improve follow-up rates in future evaluations, while using objective measures where possible. - Explore scaling the programme across additional healthcare sites.



"I just want to say thank you so much for this initiative. I had a hip replacement a year and a half ago and I had been very deconditioned since and it was hard to get walking. Signing up for the desk to 5km gave me the incentive to start back walking. I started walking at lunchtime and did this most of the days that I was at work. This has carried on and I have also started walking some evenings. I was nervous about the 5km park run but with the encouragement of everyone that attended I completed the course. It was a great moment for me and I am very grateful to have been part of it. If I am honest I don't think I would have had the incentive to start back walking had it not been for the desk to 5km. It really was invaluable to me."

