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Bradford College - A Healthy College

Bradford College was awarded the Kirklees Healthy College Standard (KHCS) in August 2007. The standard provides a framework to implement a holistic approach to health for all staff and students.

Positive lifestyle changes can be daunting for the individual and social support can be extremely beneficial. 'At Least Five a Week' reports the benefits of regular physical activity, yet only one third of the adult population meets the recommended guidelines. 'Workplace health' is not just about providing health-enhancing interventions, planners already understand many of the issues people face when attempting lifestyle change. Importantly, when we are unhappy at work or at home, this can inhibit healthy - and even cause unhealthy - behaviour.

One of the foundations, for implementing the KHCS in Bradford, is the availability of social support that help facilitate a change to a healthier lifestyle. This support is provided for our new smoking cessation groups, walking clubs and a buddy system in the gym. For individuals preparing to make lifestyle changes, social support builds confidence and changes the way we look at work. Initiatives to date include:

Free gym membership to all staff

Not only is the gym free but, in response to the staff survey, it is open for longer hours. A buddy system is in place to create a more social environment and a personal training session has been offered to all members of staff.

Free breakfasts - porridge

This has highlighted the need to eat breakfast and once the positive effects are

felt such as improved concentration and less snacking, a new positive behavior can be formed.

Chlamydia screening

Screening students for Chlamydia is now timetabled throughout the year. Sexual health is also offered as part of the tutorial system.

Ride2Work

The Ride2Work programme aims to encourage the use of green transport and increase exercise. It is a way of purchasing a bicycle and accessories to enable staff to commute to work and, at the same time, take advantage of some unique tax and National Insurance incentives offering savings of up to 50% off the cost of a new bike.

Stop Smoking classes

The results of the Bradford College Staff Health Survey suggested that out of the 145 smokers who responded 68% stated that they would like to give up in the next year and 37% stated that they had tried to quit last year.

Staff suggested that one of the services that would help them to quit would be formal health care provision for smoking cessation. This is run as a 6 week course, repeated throughout the year.

Free Fruit days

In line with the Government's '5-a-day' campaign, this initiative was introduced to increase awareness of the importance of the regular eating of fruit and vegetables.

Further initiatives planned to create a healthy social network within the college are: a historical lunchtime walking club, a chess club and even a knitting club to help staff relax.