

Gate Gourmet (GG) is the world's largest independent provider of airline catering and provisioning services. In September 2008 Activate Your Workplace (AYW) recruited the GG branch in Heathrow airport; the programme has been piloted with over 1000 staff who are mainly manual workers. GG joined AYW because it tied in with their Human Resources initiatives, one of which was 'Fit for Success'.

In the seven months AYW has been running staff have already had opportunities to become more active through a 'Pedometer Challenge' and corporate gym rates, which have been negotiated nationally. Plans for the future include a family sports day once a year, a Healthy day every Wednesday and a team has been put together to participate in a fun run in Hyde park.

One of the key successes has been the involvement of managers and general managers who have helped develop and promote the programme. Also, general awareness of the programme and of health among staff has been particularly encouraging.

Hema has found allocating time to manage the programme effectively in addition to her existing role challenging and advises that Workplace Health Champion's need good communication skills and should be well placed in the organisation to develop links internally and externally.

GG are committed to becoming an employer of choice and believe that dedicating time and resources to care for staff is essential to creating a healthy, happy and motivated workforce. There are plans to roll out Fit for Success to other units throughout the UK and make it part of a corporate policy, which will allow GG to build upon the success of the programme and enhance sustainability.

Hema has enjoyed her position as a Workplace Health Champion for Gate Gourmet (GG) and believes from informal feedback that Fit for Success has already had a positive effect on employee's health and wellbeing. She would like to continue acting as a Champion and spend more time researching what activities people want and introduce taster sessions of different interventions that well attract everyone.

Hema has been able to trial innovative ideas in the pilot, which will help design a programme that fits the needs of employees at GG. She feels that being a Champion has definitely helped develop her skills in project management and leadership. A main benefit of taking part in AYW has been that it has expanded her knowledge of health promotion.

Interventions

Negotiated gym rates
Notice board
'Health Day'
Fun Run in Hyde Park
Pedometer Challenge (4 weeks)

Organisations and individuals Gate Gourmet have worked with for the Activate programme

NHS
Urban Chill
Diabetes UK
Living Wells