

Health Promotion Newsletter



Newsletter of the Health Promotion Group

Spring/Summer 2009

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Health Promotion Development Co-ordinator



As part of the University's continued commitment to health promotion, Roz Pollock has just been appointed to the temporary role of Health Promotion Development Coordinator, based within the Health and Safety Department.

Roz also works at the Centre for Sports and Exercise as a Climbing Wall Supervisor and last year obtained an MSc in Public Health Research, at this University. The purpose of this 4 month project is to establish a blue print of current health promotion initiatives within the University, identify how to support these initiatives in a sustainable manner and to share good practice. Roz will also be assisting with the University's submission for the Healthy Working Lives award.

If you would like to contact Roz with details of any health promotion initiatives that you are, or would like to be involved in please contact her at roz.pollock@ed.ac.uk

Health Promotion Group News

Emma Crowther, Transport and Parking Manager has recently joined the Health Promotion Group. Emma also manages the University's involvement in the Active Travel initiative, a partnership with sustainable transport charity Sustrans, Paths to Health and Cycling Scotland to improve opportunities for walking and cycling to, from and between University sites.

Global Corporate Challenge

The Centre for Integrative Physiology is taking part in this years global corporate challenge. This event sees thousands of teams from all over the world walking across the globe. Each team is kitted out with a pedometer and they log their steps into the website to race across the world. The team started at the Taj Mahal and are now in China. The Centre will be celebrating the team's achievement each month with an event based on the country they have reached. The event runs until September and anyone can follow their progress at <http://www.gcc2009.com/>

Interested in cycling to work?



Then you might want to consider taking part in the Commuter Cycle Training Course. This free course enables you to choose a suitable route to University, advises on clothing and bike choice and essentially, includes a practical session on riding on the road and in traffic. The aim is to equip riders with a riding strategy that can be applied to any traffic situation that is encountered. Courses are running throughout the summer. For more information go to: <http://www.transport.ed.ac.uk/Cycling/Training.shtml> or call the Transport & Parking Office on 0131 650 9101

Emma Crowther, Transport and Parking Manager

Keep healthy while you travel!

Summer is here and thoughts turn to holidays either at home or abroad. Whether you choose to cruise, backpack, sun and surf, or even two weeks of sun in your back garden, it's always worth giving a thought to your "holiday health". Make the most of your precious annual leave!

So, here are ten tips to consider before you go.

1. Check your destination for any ongoing health risks as some destinations have very real health risks that are preventable with some prior planning.

The following websites are excellent:

www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk

www.nathnac.org/travel/index.htm

www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/staying-safe/health/

2. Contact a health professional – all GP surgeries will have a travel health clinic that can give advice on the prevention of travel ill health whether this is boosting/starting a course of protective immunisations or giving general advice on what you can do to avoid illnesses relevant to your destination. These clinics are busy so give plenty warning of appointment requirement. The Occupational Health Unit (0131 650 8190) can also give travel advice, tailor made to your destination and itinerary, but would not be able to give immunisations unless your travel is work related.
3. Pack a small first aid kit in your hold luggage. Include an antiseptic cream, some rehydrating sachets e.g. dioralyte (if you are travelling with children this is especially useful), an anti-histamine (non drowsy), an anti-diarrhoeal, some plasters, a small bottle of antiseptic hand gel and perhaps extra insect repellent (make sure this is strong enough for your planned destination). Make sure you have enough of any regular medications to take with you as you may not be able to get any when you are travelling.
4. Avoid close contact with any local animals. Some countries have a high risk of rabies so avoidance is the best advice.
5. Food and drink – ALWAYS watch how drinks are prepared and ensure that bottle seals are intact. Avoid salads that may have been prepared by rinsing in local water and always ensure that meat is thoroughly cooked through. Shellfish should be eaten with caution if you have any doubts as to its source or freshness.
6. Bite avoidance – although you may be provided with anti-malarial medication avoiding getting bitten is your first line of defence. A good insect repellent, a repellent impregnated mosquito net (if living in a budget hotel or rural accommodation or backpacking) and avoiding exposing skin at sundown when mosquitoes come out to feed are highly recommended. Check your body for bites, ticks etc regularly.
7. Avoid paddling or swimming in slow flowing water – depending on your destination these are primary sources of many illness carrying bugs/insects.
8. Take plenty sun screen with a high SPF. You may not be able to guarantee the quality of sun creams bought abroad so take it with you.
9. ENSURE YOU HAVE ADEQUATE TRAVEL HEALTH INSURANCE FOR YOUR COUNTRY OF DESTINATION. If you are going to a high risk destination or planning an activity holiday always check about the cover to medicare you home in the event of a mishap. More people are injured on holiday when driving so make sure your insurance cover is comprehensive.
10. Ensure you don't bring any unwanted illness back. If applicable prevent the spread of sexually transmissible disease by taking British Standard condoms with you.

Isabel Jack, Senior Occupational Health Adviser

Get Active Getting There

Did you know that cycling or walking to work instead of driving a car not only helps to cut congestion and reduce our environmental impact, it also has significant health benefits?

The recommended daily amount of physical activity for adults is 30 minutes on 5 or more days a week. Incorporating this into your everyday life is the easiest way to achieve your recommended levels and one way of doing so is to walk or cycle to work.

Regular moderate physical activity, including walking and cycling, can help prevent and reduce the risk of:

- Cardiovascular disease (CVD)
- Cancer
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Stroke
- Mental Health Problems

High Blood Pressure

Musculoskeletal health – osteoporosis and osteoarthritis

The University's Get Active Getting There! initiative in partnership with Sustrans, Cycling Scotland and Paths to Health aims to support and encourage students, staff and visitors to the University to travel in ways which will benefit their health, well-being and the environment.

Emma Crowther, Transport and Parking Manager

Get on your bike!



Bicycles+, the University's Cycle to Work Scheme, is open for staff to join until 5th July 2009. This is a Government promoted tax incentive scheme to encourage employees to cycle to and from work and around their workplace.

How it works

Choose a bicycle at the Edinburgh Bicycle Cooperative.

The University then formally purchases the bicycle, plus any related safety equipment you might need such as lights and a helmet.

The University then leases the bike and equipment to you over a 12-month period in exchange for you entering into a hire agreement.

Potential savings

You lease the bike and equipment via 12 monthly salary sacrifice deductions from your gross pay, before the usual tax deductions.

At the end of the 12 month period the University will offer to sell the bike to you in exchange for the fair market value (for members who joined in 2008 this was set at 5% of the original cost of the equipment)

By the end of the 12-month period you will have made a significant saving compared to buying the equipment outright.

Supporting Mental Health

In response to requests from a number of individuals Occupational Health, the Staff Counselling Service and Human Resources joined together in a collaborative venture to develop a course called "Supporting well being in the workplace: A guide to managing and supporting mental ill health at work".

This was run as a pilot course on 16th April 2009 and was well received. Based on the course evaluation feedback it has now been agreed to develop this into a day long course and it is expected that this will be offered again in October 2009. Further details will be provided on this shortly.

Audrey Neill, Head of Staff Counselling

Centre for Sport & Exercise News

What's cool over the summer at the Centre for Sport and Exercise (CSE)? Want a more active lifestyle?

Our recent focus on "Beach Fit" – sporting your beachwear with pride - is well underway. However, don't just think of us as just a gym, or narrow your thinking to a sport or competition, CSE has a variety of options to increase activity levels and boost your health and fitness.

Check out what's going on at the CSE

- climbing - want to reach new heights? - The CSE's climbing wall is open to members and now (since 01/06/09) their guests. Climb in the Tower and boulder in the Rock. Inductions are available to learn the ropes.
- swimming - cool off during or after work? -try out lane swimming or the instructional courses available at our fabulous pool
- exercise classes – from high energy to relaxation there's something for all tastes in our 50+ weekly classes
- outdoors – fancy a bit of fresh air? – try tennis and golf practice at Peffermill Playing Fields or an active holiday at our outdoor centre at Firbush Point
- indoors – prefer not to risk the weather? from recreational to more serious competition – try basketball, badminton, football or squash – all indoors and all bookable to suit



- workshops – a variety of progressive 4 week workshops, with places still available in Hatha Yoga, Pilates, Running or Kettlebell
- gym support – whatever your goals or if you need a hand, or feel you're in the same old routine – spruce it up with help from the gym support team or advice from a personal trainer

To find out more speak with a member of CSE Reception staff at 0131-650-2585 or check out our website at www.sport.ed.ac.uk for more information.

For further information on the fabulous city-wide Edinburgh Festival of Sport check it out at

<http://www.leaguelineup.com/welcome.asp?url=clubsportedinburgh>

Louise Campbell, CSE
Sarah Campbell, CSE

Pandemic 'Flu

As you'll probably already be aware the World Health Organisation (WHO) has recently elevated the alert level for the influenza strain A(H1N1), commonly referred to as swine flu, to level 6 (Pandemic). This decision has been taken because of the geographical spread of the virus rather than the severity of outcome amongst those that have contracted the virus.

History indicates that pandemics tend to occur in two or three waves and that often the intensity of effect increases with the second wave. It is therefore to be expected that a second wave of the present pandemic may occur in the autumn around the time when normal seasonal flu is more prevalent.

The University has carried out much work in connection with Pandemic Flu preparedness planning at corporate, College and School levels, and continues to monitor, and respond to, events as they occur. The University's dedicated channel in MyEd will continue to act as a readily accessible focus for pandemic flu information, for both staff and students of the University, as events develop.

Comprehensive further information is available at: <http://www.safety.ed.ac.uk/resources/General/pandemic.shtml>

Rubbish.....What Rubbish???



2009 sees a new partnership initiative working between Accommodation Services staff and students from People and Planet. The students have secured a grant from Waste Aware Edinburgh to help reduce the amount of waste going to landfill at the end of student's leases.

In past years on flatted sites we have asked students to leave unwanted goods in flats which have then been directly taken to charity shops at the end of the lease or collected by charities, however the sorting of the items left is time consuming and lengthy, sometime charities end up putting it to landfill as they don't have the resources to deal with the quantities generated by students.

So with the money the students have secured the sorting process will be carried out by them, into 3 different categories:

- Items gathered that can be re-used by students next year; these will be stored over the summer and free shops will be set up in freshers week.
- Items which can be used for re-sale by charity shops, this will be delivered to charity shops by the students.
- Items that can't be used for re-sale or students would want next year this will be given to Freshstart a charity that sets up homes for homeless people, if they can't use broken china etc. it is given to artists schools where they use it for making models etc.

Accommodation Services will be monitoring what affect this new initiative will have on our landfill waste closely and will be publishing the results on the web soon after our lease end dates.

Sandra Kinnear, Accommodation Services

Health for Life – new courses available!

The University has for a number of years offered staff the opportunity to take part in the nationally recognised “Health for Life” scheme, marketed through various Further Education Colleges.

Did you know that there are now 3 courses available to University staff:-

- Certificate in Exercise Studies Level 1
- Certificate in Improving Personal Exercise and Nutrition Level 2
- NCFE Certificate in Nutrition and Health (Healthy Eating) Level 2

These are all flexible home study / distance learning courses which are studied at times, and at a pace convenient to you. These courses are a great way to improve your knowledge and stimulate your interest in these subjects whilst also providing you with a formal qualification. For more information on these courses please see:

<http://www.safety.ed.ac.uk/resources/Health/healthforlife.shtml>

Organ Donation

National Transplant Week, 5 – 11th July 2009

Do something today that could change someone's life.

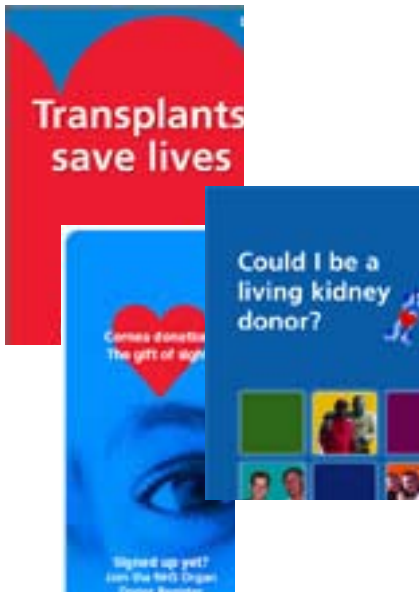
The Transplant Trust are celebrating National Transplant Week on 5 – 11th July 2009, an awareness raising week focusing on promoting organ and tissue donation and encouraging people to sign up to the NHS Organ Donor Register.

The experience of meeting someone who has received a new organ, and to see the way it has transformed their life is amazing, and while statistics show 90% of us are in favour of organ donation, only a quarter of the population are actually currently signed onto the register.

But 1,000 people die every year – three a day – in need of a transplant, so it is more important than ever for people to discuss their donation wishes and join the NHS Organ Donor Register.

Some may intend to sign up but simply don't get round to it. It's now easy and quick to sign up, simply visit www.organdonation.nhs.uk for more information.

Or call the NHS Donor Line on 0300 123 23 23 it only takes a few minutes.



Kicking the habit - How to quit smoking!

Do you or someone you know want to quit smoking? If so, there is help and support available.

Whether you prefer to gain the support of a friend (smoker or otherwise) or whether you prefer to do it on your own, there is lots of free advice, help and support to help you give up.

Smokefree is a NHS website aimed at those who want to find out more about giving up smoking. The website provides information to help you decide when, where and how you want to try to give up smoking. It has stories and videos from real life quitters, quit tools, information on gums, patches, etc, and provides information on various different types of support which is available such as group or individual sessions, support at home, and the NHS smoking helpline.

You can request free support packs including posters, leaflets and DVDs direct from the website, or by telephoning the helpline.

The NHS Free Smoking Helpline is open 7 Days a week, 7am to 11pm.

Call 0800 022 4 332

Dates for your Diary

July 2009

| | |
|------------|--|
| 5 – 11 | National Transplant Week http://www.thetransplanttrust.org.uk/ntw_main.html |
| 5 – 11 | Dementia Awareness Week http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/ |
| 25 – 2 Aug | Love Parks Week http://www.loveparksweek.org.uk/ |

August 2009

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| 1 – 7 | World Breastfeeding Week http://worldbreastfeedingweek.org/ |
| 24 – 30 | Gut Week http://www.theguttrust.org/ |

September 2009

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|---------|---|
| 1 – 30 | Pregnancy Health Month http://www.tommys.org/ |
| 6 – 12 | Migraine Awareness Week http://www.migraine.org.uk/ |
| 12 – 19 | National Eczema Week http://www.eczema.org/ |
| 14 – 20 | Lymphatic Cancer Awareness Week http://www.lymphomas.org.uk/ |

October 2009

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|--------|---|
| 1 – 31 | Lupus Awareness Month http://www.lupusuk.com/ |
| 1 – 31 | Breast Cancer Awareness Month http://www.breastcancercare.org.uk/ |
| 2 | Jeans For Genes Day http://www.jeansforgenes.com/ |
| 3 – 9 | Back Care Awareness Week http://www.backcare.org.uk/ |
| 10 | World Mental Health Day |

November 2009

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|---------|---|
| 1 – 30 | Mouth Cancer Action Month |
| 1 – 30 | Lung Cancer Awareness Month http://www.roycastle.org/ |
| 4 | National Stress Awareness Day http://www.isma.org.uk/ |
| 23 – 29 | Road Safety Week http://www.roadsafetyweek.org/ |

December 2009

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|------------|--|
| 1 – 31 | Children's Cancer Month http://www.clisargent.org.uk |
| 26 – 2 Jan | Festival of Winter Walks http://www.ramblers.org.uk/winterwalks |

For more information on these and other events please see the individual organisations websites or see:

<http://www.equip.nhs.uk/staffwm/healthevents.html>

Access to Resources

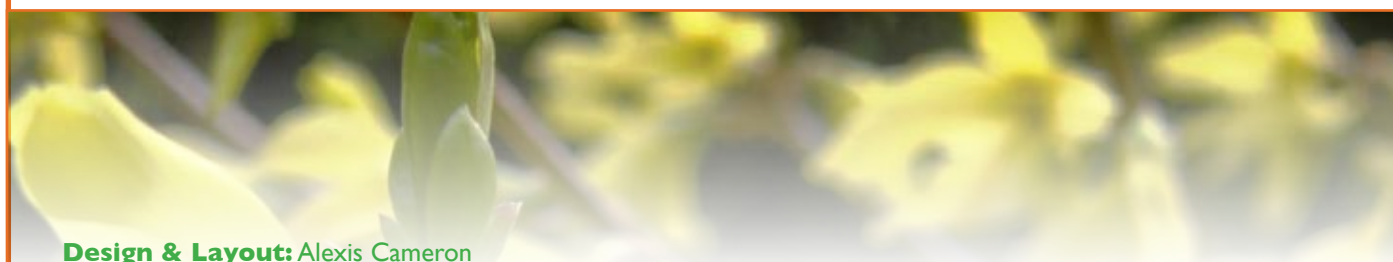
Anyone without access to the www can obtain details on any of the above information from the Health & Safety Department.

Acknowledgements

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