

## Project partners

Project leader



UNIVERSIDADE DE COIMBRA



With the collaboration of



## Good Practices to develop physical activity programs at work



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### Some recommendations for company managers

- Deploy your own HR experts, as program support staff. They should learn while implementing, thus consolidating “in-house” expertise for future programs.
- Common pitfalls for WHP programs: allow *physical activities' routines* to take place during the working time, include a high variety of exercises (employee's dropout depends on), employ the services of a fitness consultant several hours per week, look for examples of similar programs in your own country (to make relevant comparisons).
- Make available, whenever possible and feasible, infrastructure so as physical activity becomes not only possible but also enjoyable in your company (showers, lockers, etc.).
- Allow access to your company sources of data. This will ensure: a clear & accurate understanding of the initial health status of the workforce, the performance of an effective monitoring, and finally enables the production of sound, reliable and comparable final data allowing the assessment of both, financial outcomes and health status outcomes.

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" our thoughts for future project managers & company executives aiming to embed physical activities' routines into wider Workplace Health Promotion programs "

## DESIGN

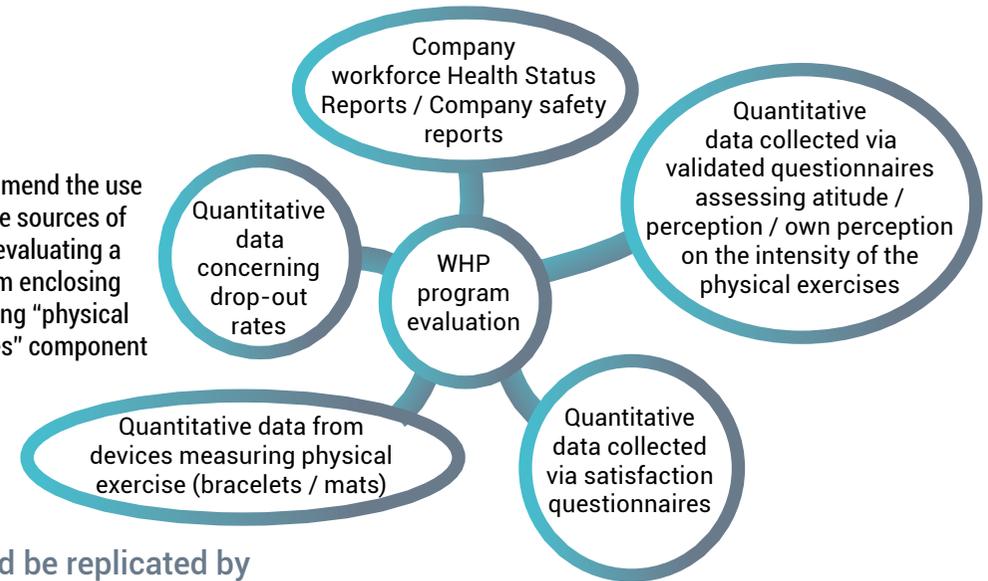
Approaches which should be replicated by other projects:

- A thorough evaluation, using project's research-related results as benchmarks for similar projects.
- A real transfer of the conclusions drawn after the implementation of the Workplace Health Promotion (WHP) programs into a *Guideline*: distilling the research related results and the workshop staff's conclusions into a guidelines operationalizes the findings of the project.
- Companies fostering the test sites were added as project partners, generating commitment to joint common quality standards for the implemented programs.

Recommendations for future projects:

- A real adaptation of the WHP programs according to the differences of the test sites regarding the exposure (of the workforce) to occupational risks.
- A *personalization* of *physical activities' routines* based on the exposures to physical risks (office type of work vs manufacturing type of work).
- Developing and presenting to companies a sound *business case* will further smooth the process of implementation; presenting to companies' management similar programs / company case studies and their perceived experiences.

We do recommend the use of multiple sources of data when evaluating a WHP program enclosing a strong "physical activities" component



## RESULTS

Approaches which should be replicated by other projects:

- Identified lacks in physical activity programs implementations.
- *Physical activities' routines* embedded the infrastructure of the company, and provided easiness and comfort to the employees who were exercising;
- Positive attitude changes of the workforce in relationship to physical exercise should be identified and promoted across departments, with a well-articulated communication procedures and planning. This provide immense benefits and diminishes the attrition rate.

Recommendations for future projects:

- To produce company specific leaflets, describing company's specific WHP program, with indications on timing, exercises, fitness counselling, fitness materials provided, etc.
- To generate audio-visual material to support the actual implementation of the *physical activities' routines* – this is beneficial for both participants and managers.
- To make available to the test sites the services of fitness trainers for few hours per week.

## KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

- Monitoring & evaluation: special emphasis should be placed on using multiple sources of data when performing the programs' evaluation, using both quantitative & qualitative data.
- Embedding *motivation* features in WHP programs requires adequate planning, adequate timing & time allocation, adequate expertise, and adequate funding.
- Cultural idiosyncrasies should be accounted when translating standardized questionnaires into foreign languages, when designing *physical activities' routines* (differences in attitude towards physical exercise), or when implementing *physical activities' routines* (what does it really mean *intense physical exercise* as opposed to *mild physical exercise*).
- WHP programs should be articulated and supported through company policies, procedures, and working instructions.