ST FINBARR’S A HIVE OF ACTIVITY

MANAGEMENT at St Finbarr’s Hospital Campus (SFHC) in Cork have been working closely with staff from the Department of Public Health and Health Promotion/Improvement (Health and Wellbeing division) to improve staff Health and Wellbeing on its campus for the last three years.

SFHC is located in the heart of Cork City with a total complement of over 1000 HSE staff. Since 2014, a small staff Health and Wellbeing group have been working closely to implement some important staff Health and Wellbeing initiatives aimed particularly at reducing sedentary behaviour of staff that have largely ‘desk-based sitting jobs’ in raising awareness of the dangers to our health of prolonged occupational sitting and the importance of keeping active at work.

In 2014, an audit and staff survey of the walkability of the campus was undertaken by the local Department of Public Health and a revamped “Walkways to Health” 1km walking path, with new signage and stencil footprints marking the route, was officially promoted and launched to staff. It was felt that it was important to maximise walkability on site for staff, patrons and residents and to promote staff walking as a worksite wellness initiative.

Staff lunchtime walking groups were established during months of June and Sept/Cot this year. A follow-up staff survey was conducted in June where 55pc of staff who took the survey stated that they had used the “Walkways to Health” route before, with 42pc stating that they used it at lunch time. Staff were asked about what further improvements could be made to the walking route and these are being addressed.

A communal staff bike scheme is the latest health and wellbeing initiative that was launched in September. The purpose is to replace some car-based trips during the working day around the city, with trips made by bicycle, thus reducing traffic congestion and emissions while simultaneously contributing to improved staff health and wellbeing. SFHC staff can now avail of a bicycle for short-term use during the working day should they wish to go for a cycle at lunchtime or leave the car and cycle to that meeting in the city. Depending on uptake, more bikes will be purchased for staff use.

As of March of this year, St Finbarr’s staff can now avail of an outdoor gym during lunchtime hours weekdays only between 12.30pm and 2pm.

Finally, the campus has an active staff choir that has been meeting every Wednesday at lunchtime for a number of years. Joining a staff choir is a great way to meet other staff and contribute to your sense of wellbeing.