

PHIND employee group 1

[Transcription commenced 11:30]

AN: I'm going to kick off and then [inaudible 11:30] is going to take over for the next question. But firstly, what did you think about the information that was in the infographic about sitting? Was any of that new to you? Was it surprising? Or reinforcing what you already know? Who...?

Grace: I'll go first.

AN: Thank you, [inaudible 11:57].

Grace: There's always someone has to. It...none of it was new to me. I'm...my research is in lower back pain and I'm looking into sedentary behaviour so I'm well aware of the, kind of, issues that are alongside it. I liked, kind of, the graphs and layouts you had, 'cause it really made it stick out how these patterns change. Because for me, [inaudible 12:19] on campus, standing and teaching everyone and moving about to then obviously having to teach online. But I wasn't sure how much of a difference that would have made to office workers as such who would be sitting in an office, compared to sitting at home. So that was quite interesting to see that change for me. But it wasn't new information but it was displayed well, I thought.

AN: Okay. Thanks, Grace. Anyone else want to come in at this point?

Noah: I was just going to say, I'm pretty much exactly the same as Grace. I was already aware of, kind of, all this research going on and things like that from my background and I'm very much aware that working from home probably has increased a lot of people's sedentary behaviour and things like that. And, yeah, again that was, kind of, presented really well in the infographic that you gave us.

AN: Thanks, Noah. Oh...Emily?

Emily: Yeah, I'm not familiar with the research already but the findings aren't surprising at all and it's really clear how it comes across.

AN: Great. And, Emily, are you familiar with the, sort of, growing evidence about the issue of sedentary behaviour on health?

Emily: Yeah. I'm a walk leader, or I was pre-COVID. And I'm quite passionate about getting very small people walking from as soon as they can walk, younger kids, for the point of walk rather than just for taking them to a place that they can't get to very quickly. So I'm an advocate for walking specifically. So...yeah. I'm familiar with the benefits of moving and moving more.

- AN: Brilliant. Thank you, Emily. Was any of the information about the health consequences of sedentary behaviour and prolonged sitting new to anybody?
- Freya: So I think it's quite useful to, sort of, see it in a graph as well. I come from a background of never sitting so in this role it's become quite a shock just how fast you can develop lazier habits and the info just, sort of, reaffirmed most of my thoughts as well. And a lot of my staff are quite new to office...well in the office, more at home now. They're all...sort of, got the same type of issues.
- AN: Okay. Great. Thanks, [inaudible 14:37]. Anyone else like to come in? Oh Emily again.
- Emily: Just to add to that. That's such a good point, it's not just about the impact on your health of sitting for longer, but it's the change in your lifestyle that that then because cyclical. So having not left the house for a commute, you then might not get up as early and then having to get up early when you return to work's going to be harder. And also you've deconditioned your body. You've tried to cram more in to your day. The kids are used to being at home instead of them being at a babysitter. It's not just that you're not doing the activity, it's the...reinitiating that activity then is far harder as well.
- AN: Thank you. It's interesting how sitting behaviour can impact on our moving behaviour and our activity. It's, sort of, the whole day.
- Isla: It wasn't new to me, I'd be the same as...I think it was Noah and...I'm not sure who went first but I work in physical activity so I would be aware of it, but I...just thinking there and looking at your infograph again, how it might really not be...you know, if you obviously don't work in this field, you may not have realised the impact of what sitting, you know, can do to you and the, kind of, severity of too much sitting and for too long. Particularly over COVID and that...the pandemic, what...that could have had an impact on your health. So I'm aware but I'm quite aware that maybe members of my family or friends aren't. They probably aren't aware of that.
- AN: Great. Thanks, [inaudible 16:07]. And...oh...sorry, I'm just seeing who's...sorry, [inaudible 16:15].
- Amelia: Yeah, I'd agree with that. Like, it was mostly not new to me. I think...I had a good understanding that sedentary behaviour's not good. But I think the fact that you listed some health conditions there, kind of, makes it hit home a bit more, that what it could lead to. I think it's in the news and things and people have a general idea, it's not the best thing to be sitting down all the time, but sometimes you don't really fully understand what that would mean until you see, like, a bit more specific information like you shared there.
- AN: Thank you, Amelia. And I think what we...we're, sort of, realising from the group that we...many of you have an interest or are involved in research or involved in practice that...around sedentary behaviour and physical activity.

And...but will be...are...have already...you've said that you're aware of others who don't have that, sort of, knowledge around this issue. Does anyone want to bring in any other point about...on that question before we move to the next one? Okay. Thank you. Sarah, can I hand over to you for the next question?

SM: Yeah. Sure. Thanks [inaudible 17:27]. So thinking now about your own context and I guess we're maybe trying to reflect back here to, you know, two years ago whenever you were working in the office and now you're maybe working from home or maybe you're in a bit more of a hybrid situation now but I suppose we'd just like to know or understand if you're sitting more or if you're sitting less over the course of the working day than you were when you were in the office. And, you know, it might be reflecting back two years which is a long time ago now, but just thinking about the, kind of, time and how you're building that up or you're building it up in big chunks of time or is it maybe...is your situation a little bit different? Hi, [inaudible 18:15].

Olivia: Hi. So I was just going to say, I actually started my job within COVID, so I got my induction and everything through this. But if I was properly, you know, in the office environment, I'd be going to more meetings, more face-to-face meetings. And I'd be going out and about more as well in the community.

Obviously because of COVID, I have been sitting and all my meetings are on Teams, so sometimes it's back to back meetings, so I definitely sit more than I would have been, you know, within the office environment. We have gone back to hybrid working but it's still not as much movement as it would have been previously. Apart from the commute to get there and walking in to the office, after that you're just sat down for the whole day in front of a laptop. So it's not even that you're going to speak to somebody else in the office because we're trying to keep a distance and...so it's very different.

SM: So almost the new office environment is very similar to the home office environment actually because you're...even though you're doing this hybrid working, you're not actually back to a normal office environment. You're doing largely what you might be doing at home. Whereas you're, kind of...you know, tucked in your office, and we're not really allowed to do all the social stuff and have a chat at the water cooler or with a cuppa or wherever you normally have your chat. And we're not walking to meetings. Even though you're in the office, you might still be having an online meeting.

Olivia: Yeah. We've had Team meetings sitting in the same open plan office sometimes, just to, kind of, keep separate and share screens and show each other what we're doing so...yeah, it's different.

SM: Okay. So just...not digressing too much but I guess maybe whatever has developed for the home would be appropriate in the new office environment if we continue to have some restrictions even. So I guess we're maybe not just looking at the home, we're looking at home environment and the hybrid

working environment that this, kind of, intervention or solution would be useful for. Okay. That's great. Thank you. Hi, Emily.

Emily: Hi. I think that my working day if you compared it like for like is probably about the same on balance as it was on the office. I sit for longer periods at home but I'll take a longer break because I'll go and put a wash on and things like that. Whereas in the office I'd be getting up more frequently to walk across the room to a printer, for example. But the printer's closer to me at home.

And where I'm finding it's affecting me is that my working day isn't like for like anymore. I'm far more likely to start work earlier before I've even got dressed in the morning. I'm far more likely to sit and do a bit more in the evening. And the sitting isn't the same because I'm not sitting a desk that's the correct size with the ergonomic chair and lots of flat space. And I'm constantly having to move the cat or the dog out the way and the children out the way. So it's not good sitting at home, as well as the fact that it's a different pattern, if that makes sense.

SM: Yeah, absolutely. And I guess sometimes at home it's a little bit more comfortable maybe. I don't know, sometimes I find myself on the sofa and that's, you know, quite a nice place to sit. So the urge to move is much less than if I was at my desk at work and sitting upright in the chair thinking about my posture and all that sort of stuff. So I guess there's that influence at home. Like, the comfort of being at home too, potentially.

Emily: Yeah. And I also have ME so it's good for me to rest horizontally. And I wouldn't do that in the office. So that is very much a benefit for me, is that I can work horizontally. However that has impacts on my body in other ways.

SM: Of course, yeah. Absolutely. And that's really interesting actually because, you know, there's benefits to that for you but it...I suppose it's about balance, finding the balance. Right, thanks, Emily, that's great. And I think, Grace, you've got your... Grace...sorry...

Grace: You got it right, thanks. So I, kind of, wanted to follow on on what...I think it's Olivia, sorry if I've crucified your name, but I very much find that I'm sitting a lot more at home, but I really was, kind of...I linked on to what you were saying about the, kind of...the flexi working and now we're doing both, because I'm clinically vulnerable, I've got lung disease, so when I'm in the office I'm very much hiding in a corner and not going to any meetings and everything else. So I don't think I'm actually currently walking more when I'm on campus teaching and doing my meetings than I am at home. This is...it's quite interesting, kind of, thinking about it that way 'cause I was still thinking, oh I'm back in the office, I'm being better, but actually I think if I tracked my steps, the only difference would be that walking in and back, not actually when I'm on campus 'cause I'm just...I'm hiding away from everyone.

SM: And I think we're hearing a lot, you know, even though people are sitting more at home, actually there's a lot of benefits from it too and it's really helpful for people to be able to be at home. So I think it's about getting that balance right, I guess, for everybody. Okay, so we've got three hands up. I can't remember who came up first but I'm going to go with Noah 'cause I think you had your hand up first.

Noah: No, thanks. I'd probably say that I'm not really sure whether I'm sitting more at home or in the office. I think...like, I'm quite an active guy myself so in my own time I'm really active and I think at home I do usually get up and go through the kitchen and things like that all the time. And I'm just, kind of, up and down. Whereas I would feel you couldn't really do that as much in the office. But then obviously all the meetings I have are obviously online and things like that. So although...if it's a bigger team meeting and I've the camera off and stuff like that, I probably will stand up and, kind of, do other things. But walking in the office and stuff like that...so I'd probably sitting is probably less but actual walking or moving about would be more in the office.

SM: Okay. And that's really interesting 'cause that's something different again. You know, it's really doing something whenever your break up you're sitting too, so I suppose...yeah, okay. Great. That's brilliant. Thank you. And then I think, Isla, you were next.

Isla: Yeah. I would say I probably sit...well I would...I do sit more at home and I think it was Olivia saying, you know, your meetings are just back to back, so you just sit there and just click, like...so I was working obviously and then just click to do this, do you know, and you don't really think, oh I need to go and move now even though we probably should. But then just listening to everybody, when I'm in the office, I would have probably before this said, yeah, I do walk more, but just listening to what you're saying, I obviously...I live outside [location removed] so it can take, like, 45 minutes, so I'm sitting on that commute in the car. So I'm still sitting.

So probably actually when you're in the office, mine is just going, I don't know, to...the kitchen or the bathroom's further away than it is in my house, so really I'm probably similar in both. So what you were saying, we do need to think about both scenarios now because...yeah, we can't...I...we're based, like, on a hospital site, and we would go to the main site of the university. But that's all stopped. So, you know, it was nice when you walked across and you met people but I don't know if we will do that. And tutorials and things are online.

I know they're probably changing at the end of this month but...yeah, it's probably at the minute the same. And I guess with guidelines, until they change or if it's safe to do so, we won't go to...just call in and chat with someone or have meetings. So, yeah, it's really interesting what you're saying, we need to maybe think about both. I didn't think about that up until today.

SM: Yeah. I...well I, kind of, had but not really put it in context until we started having this discussion actually and now, you know, the cogs are turning thinking about how that can be a reality. Okay. So I...we've got lots of hands up and I think, Freya, you were next.

Freya: So...because it's winter actually I sit more. I would have a 40 mile commute in to my main office base, so if I was to factor that in, my dog would have less time being walked and whatnot, but because it's winter, he absolutely refuses to go outside at the minute. So I find...'cause I'm quite busy with work, I can focus more and forget time effectively and end up sitting much longer.

If I'm in the office I have constant distractions, volunteers come in to talk to me or crew come in, if we're really lucky, the helicopter takes off and that's always quite cool...always. So in winter I definitely do sit more but in summer I can be more active. My team already agreed we want to do, like, walking meetings. And because I cover the whole of *[location removed]*, I'm never going to be in the same room as everybody I need to see anyway. But it's...yeah, the typical January blues, no one wants to go outside at the minute.

SM: Yeah. Very interesting actually. We've heard that in other health research that we've done, you know, things...do we need seasonal interventions potentially, seasonal solutions, one for one time...or, you know, people are just happy to go out in the summer months when it's nice and warm, and in the winter, that's when actually we need to be, sort of, pushing some sort of solution. Okay. So just in the essence of time, we've got Amelia and then Olivia and then we'll move on to the next question, if that's okay.

Amelia: Yeah, it's interesting just from what Freya said about the weather. I was thinking...I never thought I'd say I miss the commute...like, I live in *[location removed]* at the moment, I used to spend an hour commuting, but I miss the walk to the bus, the walk to the...you know, the tube as well. I found that sitting...I definitely sit more during the day. It's not far for me to walk, like, I'm in a fairly small one bed flat and the kitchen's, like, right behind me. But if I was out at work already, I'd then almost have more energy to go to the gym. Whereas five o'clock now, it's dark. I'm not leaving the flat when it's cold to go to the gym. So I think it...it has an impact, not only for me during the day but how I'll spend my evening as well.

SM: Okay. And that's really important to bear in mind, you know, we're sitting a lot in the evening too actually. Although we're talking about the workplace, our working environment, today, we need to bear that in mind that the evening actually, that...we're accumulating time in the evening too. So...and...thank you, Amelia. And then Olivia and we'll move on to the next question.

Olivia: I was just going to say about structuring movement more at home. I find that very, very difficult. So when I'm at work, usually I will, you know, take out half an hour for lunch and then I'll go for a walk or I'll go to buy my lunch.

So that means that you're getting a bit of a walk, fresh air. But in the house, I just keep continuing with the task that I'm on. And I just get so engrossed in it that, like, I'm eating my lunch, very quickly throwing something together and eating it while I'm working. So I'm sitting again. So I'm quite conscious that it's very difficult to, kind of, structure any kind of movement. Yeah, I might walk to the kitchen or the bathroom during the day but actually exercise or, you know, having a walk is not something that I fit in to my day. Whereas at work I would.

However what we did start doing which was good at work was walking meetings. So that was quite beneficial doing that, getting out in the fresh air, meeting your colleagues. And, you know, having a walk at the same time, so that was really good.

SM: No, that's great. Thank you. And here, here, you know, I've yet to define my lunch hour and we're two years in to this working from home. So it just, kind of, happens when it happens. So, yeah, it makes it difficult to plan, you know, 'cause...and the weather too I guess, as well. So I will hand back over to Ailsa who's going to go through our next question with you.

AN: Thanks, Sarah. And thanks everyone. And the next question is around what sort of things influence the amount of time that you spend sitting. And we...you've already shared with us lots of really rich information, we've talked...you've talked about the weather and the seasons and how that can affect it, the environment in which you're in with...in terms of the size of your house, whether you've got laundry to do, all these factors are influential. Is there anything that, sort of, comes to mind as being a key influence on the amount of time that you spend sitting? And even if it's something that's come up already, then we'd love to hear again about that. We've got Emily and then Grace.

Emily: I think for me although my employers are very flexible and very supportive and they're all working parents working from home and everybody gets it, I have anxieties about feeling as if I'm not available. So if I was in the office and I was at the kettle, people would wait for me to sit back down. But I've got this real thing that if I'm in the kitchen and I don't hear my email beep and I don't immediately reply to that Teams message, that they might think I'm skiving. And I've never been asked what I was doing when I didn't reply immediately. And no one's ever – to my knowledge – asked anybody what they were doing when they didn't reply immediately, but I'm so used to being available because they could just verbally ask and get the answer quickly.

Now I'm conscious that they've typed that message out and they're sitting waiting for a reply. So it feels very different and it feels like my time is also someone else's time and I'm almost accountable for that. And I feel quite tied to my desk because of that. And having to justify when I'm not as well and say, I'm going for a walk now, I won't be available. And declaring that you're taking your breaks where we wouldn't for.

AN: That's so interesting. Thanks, Emily. I think we've almost got in a way of working that we immediately respond to...when things come in and...yeah. So I'm just going to... Emily, you said you'd...nobody's ever said to you, there's never been a, sort of, sense that you have to be accountable to that, it's just something that's, sort of, evolved through working practices.

Emily: Yeah. And I know that others feel the same and then there are those who don't at all. As I say, my employer's very, very supportive and my manager doesn't work that way. She's not immediately responsive. But I think that...it feels more formal now when someone asks a quick question because they've had to send it electronically.

Where before it would just be a chat in the office and you'd immediately get your answer and move on. Now people are waiting for that answer. They can't see if I'm available just as easily. I might show available on Teams but be in the middle of another task. So it has changed things. And it's meant we've had to structure time with each other. And also with meetings, the meetings are back to back now where they wouldn't be before because you would have to factor in time to move from room A to room B, or for people to arrive. And we don't. So I think we do also try and cram more in.

AN: Great. I'm going to move on but I suspect we'll come back to some of these points when we're thinking about, well how...what could we do differently. Grace?

Grace: Yeah. So I was just going to say that I'm finding since we've not got the online or even hybrid...but I'm having much more...many more meetings, kind of everything just seems to be more scheduled in. So I find that on a day I'm teaching I've got three hour seminars that I've got to give online and there'll be an hour break. But someone's like, oh we need to get that meeting in, and you're now booked up. So I think you're booked up all day rather than usually I would have, kind of, gaps to move about the university 'cause they'd put timetabling in so...obviously the students have got to get to the other side of campus, I've got to get to the other side of campus and vice versa.

But now they're not doing that. And I'm finding I'm booked 24/7. And then as Emily saying, you're feeling that you're, kind of, stuck to your desk and have to respond. I'm finding I'm working much later in the evenings and feeling if I get a response in the evening, I still have to respond because everyone's so rushed and trying to get everything done all the time. And I think there's more pressure currently as it is. So I find that I'm constantly sitting in my meetings all day and then I'll get an email later and I might be at the gym and I'll be there...and I will literally stop doing what I'm doing and reply to my emails. And it's like, this is ridiculous, I need to stop. But there's just not that divide anymore I'm finding. And just feel like you have to respond. It's interesting.

AN: So the boundaries between work and home life are, kind of, merging, aren't they. Thank you. And I think Noah was next and then Isla.

Noah: So for me, it really depends on...not only how busy I am at work but also the type of things. So, like, a lot of time...the biggest example for me is I'm writing a paper then that...you know, I'll be sitting for two/three hours 'cause I really want to get involved and I feel I don't really want to break that time up 'cause you're really concentrating and getting the flow and things like that. Whereas if it's just, kind of, replying to emails or, sort of, analysis, it's...I almost try to break that up because I don't want to do that for so long.

You, kind of, feel, you know, I don't really have to sit here and do all that. I can break it up and go for a walk at lunch or, like, go and make a...cook something or something like that instead of just sitting here. So I feel like the type of work that I'm doing as well as how busy I am as well, like you were saying earlier, is just...you try get through it all and things like that. Whereas if you're, like, in the office you know when you're going home, so you just get it done and then you go home. Whereas you're just, kind of, sitting here and going, oh I'll just work a wee bit longer or I can just do an extra half hour here and there and before you know it you're, kind of, sitting for even longer than what you thought you were going to.

AN: Thanks, Noah. And that point you're saying about getting absorbed in work, I think Isla mentioned a similar thing, that you, kind of, just want to get it done and you're absorbed in it so don't want to step away. So... Isla?

Isla: Yeah. Mine isn't actually really related to work, I don't know, maybe this is the wrong answer but when I was thinking what influences me, I...through COVID...through the pandemic was doing online exercise classes at night. So I would always bear that in mind and, you know, if there was one night I wasn't, then I would make an effort to get up, go for a walk and that kind of thing at lunch. But then the days when I wasn't, I was...you know, when I was doing a class, I would then be like, oh well I can sit longer all day today, I'll, you know, have lunch at my desk and it's okay 'cause I'm exercising later, that kind of thing.

So I found depending on what I was doing in the evening would then influence my day. But when I was in the office, I would have still done the same kind of thing. But I would never really have thought about it in the office. I don't know if I just am more conscious now that I'm sitting all day. Once I leave my son with the childminder, I just come and sit and that's it. But...yeah, it would be more what I'm doing in the evening would influence...and, yeah, make me think I need to get up and do something during the day.

AN: So almost like what you're going to do in the evening could compensate from...for what you have or haven't done during the day when working.

Isla: Yeah, exactly. I don't know, I also went to a seminar...well online...during COVID, of O'Fechlan [inaudible 37:13]'s work all about the compensation with...so then that maybe actually was a bad thing for me to listen to because then I calculated, almost like, oh I'm okay. Whereas, like, if I

didn't...hadn't done that then maybe I would have, you know, spent less time sitting and that kind of thing. But...yeah, so it's compensating for both but...yeah.

AN: Great. Thanks, Isla. I see Emily wants to come back in here.

Emily: The other thing that affects me is having the children at home with me while I'm working, where they wouldn't normally be with me. So the parts of the day where they're not with me, I feel like I really need to get everything done so that I can be more present with them when they come home. So there's guilt if they come home and I'm writing a report or sitting doing something that my head's really in. If I'm just answering a quick email I'm far more likely to engage with them.

So I feel guilty if I get up during the day. But if I'd been at work, I would get up to wash the dishes that I'd used at work. I would clear my desk. I would empty the bins. But I feel like I've doing that at home, those are chores that can wait 'til after home time. So I'm definitely prioritising my non-sedentary time for times when the kids are there. But of course it's a fallacy because the kids come home and then I'm sat on the couch listening about their day. And because I sat all day, I don't feel like moving. I think somebody else had said that too.

AN: So...interesting. So those people who are around you are having an impact on you sitting, so for you, your children.

Emily: Yeah. It's just about demands on time. So I'm trying to give the best of myself to them so I am not having an optimal day, to try and just be as productive as I can to compensate for the times when I know I'll be less productive at work.

AN: Thanks, Emily. This is so interesting, but very mindful of time so we'll move on to the next question, Sarah. And I wonder whether we can take the next two together, do you think? I'll let you...I'll leave you, Sarah...

SM: Oh yeah, sure, that's absolutely what I was thinking. I think just...we've got...we want to show you some of our ideas or some that we've found that have been effective in the office environment, so we'd like to get your take on that. So if we can group these last two questions, then I think that's ideal. And we'll have time to fit everything in. So really the crux of both of these is, you know, is there anything that would encourage you to spend less time sitting across the course of your working day? Or, do you have any ideas that might be useful for supporting people who are working at home to break up the time that they spend sitting?

So I think just, you know, ideas or suggestions, potential solutions and you might have already tried these or it might just be something that you've heard about or that you've thought of actually over the course of our discussion today. And, Emily, you were there first so I'll let you come in now.

Emily: I love the idea of walking meetings, but I also enjoy video meetings. And I think video calls have become such a big thing. But I think Noah had said that when he's not got his video on, he's more likely to move around, even just having calls where the video doesn't need to be on and having the chair saying, you can turn the videos off for this one, guys, you can move around if you want to, would maybe encourage more people to do. Or if we scheduled conference calls rather than video calls, I could do that while I'm walking. That could be my outdoor time for the day.

Whereas if it's a video call, there's an expectation I'll be at the desk. Having a manager lead that way would probably make a big difference.

SM: I guess it's...there's a cultural thing too though, if you can't see the person then you don't...are they listening to me, are they, you know, having a gourmet meal while I'm trying to talk about something really important. You know, are they playing with the puppy, it's...or, are the kids there. It's all these sorts of things that, you know, you don't know. And I guess we need to maybe get over that, to be able to...but the Wi-Fi doesn't work sometimes, it's better to turn the video off. So we've got all those, kind of, issues that mean you can't have it, so it is a really good suggestion I think.

And we have a colleague who quite often goes on her bike while she's in the meeting and she's moving around, sort of...she always announces it beforehand so that we know that's what she's doing. But, yes, absolutely, that's great. Thanks, Emily. I think...Millie, I can't see you on the screen 'cause I'm not sure if your video's on, but I'm pretty sure your hand's up, so...if you want to come in.

Millie: Yeah. Hi. Yeah. Something I've noticed because I've changed jobs from being in the lab and constantly on my feet to suddenly sitting down so much. And so relatable, what everybody's saying. So I've...I think I've...I'm making a kitchen space with a higher, sort of, table so I can stand up most of the time now...or I will be once it's finished. And also bought on of those, like, big exercise balls so I can just, like, sit and...maybe not exercise but, like, wiggle my bum around just because I did feel the back pain strangely. And it was so surprising changing jobs from active. It's, like, your muscles are sore but in a different way. Like, after exercising your muscles are sore but this time they're, like, moaning that you're not working.

And I've also signed up for a...from being, like, a...just a casual once a week runner, I've signed up for a marathon but I think it was a bit too much of a bite to chew. It's in May. So I really, kind of, need to make a target for practising and going maybe four times a week. That's...I don't think it'll work, but we'll see. Thank you.

SM: Yeah. That sounds great. Well just give the marathon a go. You can always not finish it. You know, at least you've tried it, that's my theory anyway. But that sounds great, so good luck for that. And well done, yeah. So Olivia, if you want to come in...

Olivia: I was just going to say what Emily was saying about accountability. I feel that even in the video calls, if you aren't...got your camera switched on and people can't see you, that you're in, you know, the right frame of mind, you're not just sitting there in your pyjamas or whatever. I think there is a sense of, you know, wanting to be present in the meeting. So that's why you, kind of, want to attend and if you're outside walking, then that will be seen as...that this is what you do during your working day, that you go off for, you know, your own leisurely walks and things like that.

I was also going to say in terms of ideas, what I think is quite good is, kind of, encouraging a walk for the organisational culture. So within [organisation name removed], and I think a lot of the health boards do this, we did, like, a step challenge. All staff could get involved. So it was doing...taking part in teams to do ten thousand steps each day. And that was really, really good because it made you...even if it was dark, raining outside, you knew that you had to get the steps in. And it actually made you move because I remember sitting for seven hours really a day and not moving and feeling so still and sore. But then actually getting up and doing something.

So I think, kind of, doing something structured around getting people to move is really good. And also just being aware yourself. So now every 20 minutes, I do, sort of, think, oh I've been sitting for 20 minutes on the laptop, I'm going to just go and do something. I'm going to either make a cup of tea or I'm just going to walk downstairs, whatever it is. So being conscious of that more. I think that's quite good.

SM: And the permission, if that comes from your organisation...you've got permission to do that almost so it, kind of, overcomes that cultural social barrier where you feel like, oh I'm not allowed to do this, but if your organisation has set you that challenge and, kind of, validated it and approved it, then you've got the go ahead I guess from them. So it makes it a bit easier potentially. Okay. Great. And...sorry, I think Millie has just left. I think I've missed her...was saying bye but...anyway, that's great. Okay. So I've lost tracks of hands again. I'm not very good at keeping an eye on things. I think, Freya, if you want to come in, that would be great.

Freya: We're actually quite lucky as a charity 'cause we do the ten thousand steps challenge and, like, miles for the month. So everyone from our CEO is really competitive. I'm quite lucky 'cause obviously paramedics, they're really active in their roles. If we were in the office, there's actually loads of running paths. So everyone's quite active naturally. And I've noticed quite a difference if we're on Teams calls with just my colleagues. Anything goes in a Teams call. If you want to be outside, that's fine, if you want to be in the dark, if you want to wear a housecoat, that's also fine. So we're quite lucky in that respect.

But we have a culture of your video must be on all the time, which is quite scary sometimes. I myself at home, I started using Alexa to give me

reminders to go do something. And I...because I suffer migraines since taking over this role, I have to print a lot of my work and just work old fashioned pen and paper. So I'll actually wander about my house with pen and paper, doing that as well. Not great for the environment, but I do recycle the paper at least, is how I, kind of, see it.

We also...we're all quite active on our smart watches. So we get really competitive every month over that. So I think we're quite lucky culture-wise. But I've tried the yoga ball as well and I'm about to put in a stand up desk, 'cause coming from a role where I never got to sit down every, it's...I feel like I've been hit by a bus.

SM: Okay. And that's interesting and not good, especially if it's such a big change to your lifestyle as well. And...but it's nice that you're doing lots of good and quite novel things to, sort of, support yourself. So...great, thanks, Freya. And then I think Grace.

Grace: I'll happily go but I don't think I was next so if you want to...

SM: Sorry, well...anyway, we'll go for Grace, Amelia and then Isla we'll move on to our next slide.

Grace: Okay. I was just going to say, for me, I find...'cause I teach lower back pain in specific classes in an evening, so it doesn't really help with the moving around in the day, but if I was, kind of...if my work were going to give me something like that, whether it was a little 20 minutes here, 20 minutes there and, kind of, had a Teams thing you could, kind of, log in to if you were free and they gave you some sort of exercises and movement I would do it if I had a gap. Whereas motivating myself to go and do that in the middle of the day when I think I should be working, I'm not going to. But if it was an option, kind of, for the organisation, come in and do this, you don't have to have your cameras on, they can just teach you and you can just move, I think that could be quite useful, helping break up sitting.

SM: Wonderful, thanks, Grace. And then Amelia.

Amelia: Yeah. Just quickly for me. I think it is about a culture shift. Like, for example on a Friday I'll go to a gym class during lunch and it takes maybe slightly over an hour to get there and get back but a Friday I feel like it's acceptable. But I feel...kind of relating to what some people said earlier, I feel a bit anxious trying to do that in the middle of the week. Even if it's an hour 15 I take for lunch, I just think, oh people will think I'm taking the mick and things. So I think it's important to have that culture and for managers or someone to say that it's fine 'cause you make up the hours if you want. We've got flexible working but I think there needs to be a bit of a culture shift so people feel less pressure to attend.

My partner's company do the Vitality...have Vitality health and so they get points for ten thousand steps and things. It has no influence on him, but I'm willing to walk to get his points 'cause I'm weirdly completely with myself

it seems. So...yeah, that kind of thing I think, if it's a culture thing then it...I think it would work for me.

SM: Okay. Yeah. That's great. So it sounds like from above...messages from above would be really useful and supportive for all staff probably. Thank you. And then, Isla, we'll just bring you in and then I'll move on to the next slide.

Isla: Yeah. No, it was just...I was thinking about what everybody was saying about the camera. And I completely agree that, do you know, maybe we do need to shift, so if you don't have it on when you're walking or whatever it is that you're doing, but then I'm, kind of, contradicting myself because when I see...when you do tutorials or teach, and then the students don't have their cameras on, it always, kind of, makes me think are they there or...you know.

So then I guess I don't have that level of trust so then I guess maybe if we want that trust, then maybe we need to give it to students. But I was just, kind of, thinking, my...I, kind of, do question it when other people or...you know, particularly the students don't have it on. So...yeah, maybe we all need to change that view or...I know we are becoming more comfortable with it but...yeah, I guess, I want it one way but then I won't tell...let it the other way, I guess.

But...and then I was just thinking...I remember, like, at the very start when we were allowed, kind of...remember when you were allowed, like, out once a day to exercise, I really structured that in and I would work then, like, 8:00 to 4:00 and then go out for a walk with my husband and my son. And I don't know if there's something in that that...I know...well my job is flexible but I don't know if there's something that you can...you get to finish early for the purpose of exercise.

I know some people wouldn't maybe exercise then, and I guess sometimes I wouldn't. I would end up cleaning the house or meeting a friend for coffee. But maybe if there was something from your organisation that, you know, there's time scheduled for exercise, when you're allowed to do it. And I know we all work flexibly and we can, but maybe if it was part of your job, that you can go for a walk, and that's part of your working day, you're encouraged to do that, or go to the gym, there's absolutely no problem at all, yeah, then that would be good.

I don't know...I know I did do it at the start of it and I don't know if that was 'cause you thought, oh I'm allowed out once a day so I'd best go and not waste it but I don't know if there's something... Yeah, I just thought permission to move, yeah, and to go out, it would be...could be quite good.

SM: Yeah. But actually it needs to be quite individualised 'cause what you're saying maybe going to the gym or doing a bit of housework, well actually doing a bit of housework is still moving, you know. You're still doing something. And if that's what you want to do with that, sort of, permission

to move time, then why shouldn't you be able to do that without feeling guilty actually. Okay. So...yeah, that's great, permission to move. So I think we need to move on to the next slide just to keep ourselves...we're...we've only got five minutes left and...but, please, I know we're due to finish at 3:00 and if you need to go, you know, that's absolutely fine, don't feel that you can't.

Okay. So over the past, sort of...since August time, we have been working on this research. And what we did, before we wanted to have the focus groups was have a look at which types of interventions or solutions have been effective in the office environment. So that would prime us for, you know, coming to these focus groups and have an idea of things that already work.

And so we identified about ten thousand studies and we sifted it down to 24. And then within that there were different types of solutions that we were able to grip. So we'll just show three of them today. There's more than this but this is three just to keep the discussion focussed. And so we've heard about education, about sedentary behaviour and the various health consequences that come with it.

We have seen regular prompts have been effective in the office and that might be through your computer or a smartphone app or something else, maybe an email. And then also things like personal or individual feedback on sedentary behaviour. And that could be through coaching or information that, you know, you feed in that...about your activity and then a health professional feeds back on that.

So we just want to know if you think these would work in the home environment and maybe, sort of, how they might work. Or if they would even work at all. Grace, Emily... Grace. Go Grace, and then, Emily, you can go in, if that's alright. I'll do alphabetical order.

Grace: Sorry, Emily, it keeps being me. I was just going to say, with the regular prompts, so I have a Garmin watch which tells me to move every hour anyway and as part of my PhD that I'm doing at the moment, I've got...one of my groups are following these prompts. People don't follow them at all. I can tell you that it's been really bad uptake on it, and that's despite these people have agreed to be part of the PhD study and agreed to do these prompts and do it. So I would...don't think the regular prompts will work long term. I think it worked for my group for the first week, but we're in a six month study and it's already just, kind of, fallen off the wayside. So I think regular prompts doesn't really work, in my experience.

SM: Okay. Great. That's really good to know. And that's backed up with some data, so that's good. Thank you. And, Emily, over to you.

Emily: I would echo that. My experience of prompts in the office was that when we all committed to it together, we did it. We needed that social interaction. So somebody would say, oh that's me, it's time to get up. And she'd stand

up, so we'd all stand up. And we'd have a 30 second chat while we walked on the spot or something like that.

The thing that's always worked best for me is just making a lifestyle change. So when I'm in the office, I made a commitment to use the downstairs toilet rather than the one on the floor we were on. And my employers accepted that my toilet breaks lasted longer than they did before because I had to walk to the toilet and back. And I got loads more steps in. But it was all about everybody keeping me accountable for that. If they noticed that I'd just been to the one down the corridor, they'd say, oh are you not doing that anymore. And it'd give me a bit of a kick up the bum to get going again.

At home, it's too easy to just hit snooze on that alarm and then before you know it, it's been another 20 minutes or another hour. So I totally agree that prompts don't work unless you've got something holding you to it, holding you accountable.

SM: Okay. Great. That's brilliant. Thank you. And Amelia.

Amelia: Yeah, on the whole I'd say prompts don't work. I've also got a Garmin on. It doesn't work for me 'cause I don't have far enough to walk. I think I had to walk, like, 35 or 40 lengths from the corner to the kitchen to move the bar and it just annoyed me to be honest. So I tend to just turn the watch off if I'm not going for a run.

I think individual feedback might work more but on a longer scale...like, I'm thinking about the ten thousand steps so you...it's not an immediate prompt. It's, kind of, something that you're thinking about over the day and you can maybe not do something immediately but schedule it in for your lunch break. So I'm thinking perhaps...so for me, having some kind of prompt that's, like, remember at lunch, you were going to go outside for a bit or...if it's...I don't know, collect your kids or whatever it is. I don't know, I think something...it's more the lifestyle change than the immediate just get up and move for a minute or so.

SM: Okay. Great. So some of the contextual potentially, like, a suggestion not just something buzzing on your arm. I mean, I know exactly what you're all saying. I went for a run at lunchtime and mine is buzzing already. So, you know, it's kind of like, oh...you know, am I allowed to have a break? Okay. Thank you. And Freya.

Freya: I just agree. So I'll ignore the watch but if I use Alexa I'll make it specific but I also hide my work all over the house on purpose and I deliberately hide all my pens over the work. I'll keep my work phone further away and as a volunteer coordinator, I do get calls. So if I'm on the call, I'll make sure I do walk about too. But extra education about it would be helpful. So I know a lot of staff, they wouldn't always, sort of, go in to the finer details of it because our age range at work is really different. So some of them are very entrenched, that love sitting down all the time. So to even set aside some team meetings in to it could be interesting as well.

SM: Okay. Great. Thanks, Freya. And Isla.

Isla: Yeah, I have a Garmin as well. It doesn't...I don't...but I also have Vitality which someone was speaking about. And it does make me 'cause there's an incentive. So with it you can obviously get points for, like, Amazon and you can get a free coffee and things like that. So I think incentives work. I know that's not maybe what we're talking about but they...I find they work for me personally.

Education. We're obviously in this group of people who know about it. But obviously when you think wider to offices, a lot don't. So don't really realise. So maybe...yeah, there needs to be education. And then the feedback...I think feedback does work. And what I was talking about earlier, like the work by O'Fechlan [inaudible 58:52], so letting people know that, yeah, you do, for example, do exercise but is that enough. You know, 'cause I do think people have this perception that if they exercise it doesn't matter that I sat all day. But it's making sure that it was the right intensity and length et cetera.

So, yeah, maybe individual feedback, looking at whether it's about sitting or whether it's about compensating or what it is. So I think there's something in feedback and education. And definitely there's something in incentives. I know that's not in...that...think there is. And then that might actually work with prompts because then if you get a prompt and you're like, oh well, doesn't matter, but actually if there's an incentive to get up, then that might work. I don't know.

SM: So a package approach rather than just one thing. It needs to be more than one thing for it to work. What was it that you had said there? Oh I can't remember. I was...I had something that I was going to...I've totally forgotten. Sorry. I'm sure it'll come back to me. But, yeah, that's great. Thanks, Isla. So I think it needs to be a whole package. And this individualised...oh I...what I was going to say was dosage. About dose, I think needs to be individualised too which is, kind of, what you were saying. It's not just the same dosage of movement for everybody because some might need more and some might need less and some people might be really physically active and...we need to balance all that out I guess with the workload too. Okay. So...sorry... go ahead.

Isla: I was going to say, just the other thing, I've seen a lot recently about, like, sedentary and sitting time and people who have, like...I know this isn't [inaudible 01:00:26] but, like, a disability. So I think sometimes we forget...well I know in our work we forget that sometimes. So then thinking about other ways of encouraging people, particularly in offices who may not be able to always just stand up. But other things. So then when we individualise it, that can help with that as well.

Because sometimes it's not...you know, if people can't stand for long periods or...you know, so...other...and that would be more individual. And

education. Other ways to, kind of, break up the day but...yeah, that's probably totally different. But I just...I've seen quite a lot of that recently.

SM: Yeah. No, totally relevant actually. And, you know, we have had this discussions about inclusivity and how we do this, but we're at a starting point now, I guess, so we're just having those kind of...you know, what...trying to work out what we can do. And then we'll start distilling down to the more individualised, I think. So...yeah, that's great. Thank you. So Emily, I will hand over to you and then we'll pass back to Ailsa to close the focus group today.

Emily: Just a really quick one for me. And it sounds really obvious but encouraging people to drink more water means that they're more likely to move more 'cause they get up to go to the loo. Some days that's the only time I'll get up from my desk is if I drink too much tea. So encouraging people to drink water will have a knock on effect. And it's good for you too.

SM: Yeah. Absolutely. We've heard this before in some other sedentary behaviour research, if people drink more they'll go to the bathroom and it's, like, this automatic thing, you know, your body just will help you to move more and you're doing a good as you say with the drinking water. So, yes, that's great. Thank you. Okay. So...thanks for that. That's all really useful and appreciate your honest and open feedback on those. Okay. So I'll hand back Ailsa who just...through the next steps and close.

AN: Thanks, Sarah. Yeah, such fascinating discussion. Really grateful to you, just echoing Sarah's comments for sharing that with us. Just in terms of our next steps we're running a number of focus groups with people who are working at home, but also those who are managing people who are working at home. And it's been really interesting to hear about, sort of, the importance of culture and importance of leading from the top in terms of supporting behaviour change. So we really want to end up with some ideas that are going to be supported and can be implemented.

And following the focus groups, we'll review the findings and we're planning to have a follow up workshop in roundabout May/June I think is the scheduled time to present back the findings. And if you're available to be involved, we'd very much appreciate that.

Just a few housekeeping...Sarah will be in touch soon to arrange thank you vouchers, really just a token of our appreciation for you giving up your time and sharing your views. And we will be in touch with further updates about the project. If you would rather we didn't do that, then just let us know but otherwise we'll, sort of, assume that you're happy for us to continue communicating with you. Oh...Olivia.

Olivia: Sorry, I just wanted to ask, the employers that you said that you'll be interviewing and line managers, are they all mostly from health and social care settings and academia or corporate organisations as well?

AN: So we have been reaching out to a whole range. Sarah's the person who's managing it all. Do you have a sense, Sarah, of where they're coming from?

SM: All sorts of organisations. We've got people from academia, the NHS, government, we've got corporate as well. Charities too we've been in touch with. So, you know, there's a whole range. And I think just to say, you know, we are aware that there's large organisations, small organisations, different funding and, you know, we are trying to have as much of that included, you know, different...the variation I think of organisations, we're trying to include that. But it just...depends on people who want to take part and participate too. So broad range, yeah.

Olivia: That's lovely. Thank you.

SM: Sorry, that was a long way to say yes.

AN: Thanks, Sarah.

Olivia: Thank you.

AN: And just finally just again to thank you for your time and input today. We are still recruiting so if you are...have had a nice afternoon and would like to recommend this experience to anyone you know, please do do that. We are slightly over time and apologies for that. That...I think that's because we've had such lovely rich discussion. We...if you would like to go, great. If you've got any questions that you want to pose to us, then we're more than happy to stay for a wee bit longer if you want to do that. But just to, sort of, formally close this part of the proceedings and the focus group and we'll stop the recording now, but just to thank you again. Really, really rich discussion and really interesting information that you've shared with us. So thank you.

Olivia: Thank you.

End of transcript