

## PHIND employer focus group 2

[Transcript starts at 0:12:30]

AN: ...and specifically we're quite interested to hear what you think about the volumes of sitting and certainly in comparison to the office setting and the home setting, and also what you thought about the health consequences of spending too much time sitting. Maybe, Dyvia, I wonder if we could flip back to the previous slide and we'll have the infographic up there. Okay, so does anyone want to be brave and go first? What do you think about the information that we've put out on the infographic? Hi, Jessica.

Jessica: Hi. Thought I'd better put my hand up first in case anybody else comes in. Just for the first part of that question, I think we've kind of evolved a bit throughout the working from home. I think the first year or so I would say we were definitely sitting more because of the circumstances with the lockdowns and the rules that were in place. Especially the first year of the lockdown people didn't have that opportunity to go out for a walk or go to the gym or whatever because we were isolated so much. I think going forward we are still sitting more at home. Definitely not as active. I think a lot of the factors were people had got comfortable in their own home and now they've got that fear of going out a lot of places. A lot of people haven't went back to the gym, and especially during the winter months definitely it stopped any people who would usually maybe have been quite regular in going out for walks have maybe stopped because they don't want to meet people. They've still got that fear of what's around at the moment with COVID. I think that's part of the issue that we still have going on just now.

SM: So did the information about the risks of spending too much time sitting and the volume of time that people spend sitting while they're working from home, did any of that surprise you? Because at times it might not have been a surprise to you or...

Jessica: No, to me it's not a surprise, that information. I've always been one for trying to promote health and fitness throughout the years in [organisation name removed], so it's not a surprise to me, but I think it would be to other people, it would be quite a surprise, who maybe don't realise the importance of health and fitness or don't understand the importance of moving. Even just moving, not so much health and fitness, if you like. But no, it's not been a surprise to me.

SM: That's great. And it's good to see that differentiation between movement and physical activity, they can be two separate things actually. That's great, thanks, Jessica. I think, Maisie, you've got your hand up.

Maisie: Yeah. The information that you've put up doesn't surprise me in the slightest. And it's interesting to hear that other person say that they're better

now than they were at the start. I would say I'm the other way round. At the beginning of the pandemic I was trying to behave like I did when I was at work and I was trying to walk round the block every morning and walk round the block every afternoon and do all sorts of other things. The fact of being at home has just made me lazier and lazier and now I hardly do anything. Just the fact of not going to work and not having to walk between meetings means that my life is absolutely ridged to the spot. I mean, just dreadful. In terms of how I interact with my team, I think they're very different individuals. So I get the feeling that people who ran before the pandemic are sort of okay now because they carry on running, put on their running kit, go round the block. It's other types of people. So I find it really hard to tell my team, encourage them to do anything because I think I'm really bad. I need someone to encourage me so I can then pass that on.

SM: That's really interesting, and we're hearing that there is these two camps of people, there's these really super motivated people that just can't sit still almost and then there's other people who are just trying to find this new normal and make their way through, and what can I do to break up this time that I spend sitting. I suppose there's limited options. If you don't like running you're not going to want to go for a run to alleviate the time that you spend sitting. So that sounds great. So that's almost like there's two categories of people that might potentially need different types of information. Okay, wonderful. Thank you. Then I think, Sofia, you had your hand up next.

Sofia: Yeah. I mean, the data doesn't surprise me either, but I think the difficulty is when you're working at home you're sometimes feeling like are people expecting you to be immediately at the end of a computer, which if they walked along to your office they might find that you're not at the end of your computer because you've gone off for a meeting or you're doing things. And I suppose as a manager as well you've got to think about how it is for your team because I have this hybrid where I'm lucky enough to work half and half and I've continued that with the team more for social distancing, so we have less staff working in the office.

I think it really has to be a cultural thing that you have to make your team feel that they're not micromanaged. I have a lot of working mums within my team and the reality is I think when somebody's working at home, they'll want to get away from their computer and put their washing machine on or go and hang out their washing, all the things they probably didn't do in their working day. If you're a micromanager you might immediately expect that the minute you phone them on Teams or whatever they're going to be there, and it's giving them that freedom to think that's okay. And I tell my team we've got to work on outputs, not on how we used to work traditionally that they might pitch up to the office at eight o'clock and work till five because they can be present in the office but it doesn't matter that they're working eight till five, it's still on outputs that they should be measured. So I think it's about getting a culture over to them that presentism isn't the answer. If you're working at home don't feel micromanaged that you can get up and step away from your PC.

What I would like to see, and I do remember I worked with a colleague that had SAD and they needed to take frequent breaks and stuff away from their PC and they worked for an oil and gas company and they had one of these apps on their PC that actually said take a break, walk away, move around. I think that's a good initiative that a lot of companies should adopt because I think if every hour you had something flashing on your screen saying, have you got up, take a break, walk around, companies might not like it but the reality is I know I worked at my dining room table for a long time before they sent me an office chair and the reality is after doing that for a couple of days you get a sore back, your posture is poor, you probably eat more because the cupboards are at hand, and so all that data that you've produced probably reinforces that there are a lot of unhealthy habits that creep in working at home versus working in the office. But I do think it's about not micromanaging your staff, telling them that you're working on outputs. Their timings will change, but what you get from a working mum, you might see that the historic times of 8:30 to five have changed and they want to work more at bed time when somebody's in bed. That doesn't matter. It's about you're now measured on outputs. If you want to change how you work that's fine, but we get the same results at the end of the day as an employer.

SM: Thanks, Sofia. That's great to hear that different perspective actually. That's not something that we've come across previously. And those ideas that you've suggested sound really useful. A wee bit later in the workshop we're going to unpick some of the ideas and talk about those a little bit more and think about how it could work in practice. So thanks, that's wonderful. So I will bring in Eilidh and then Daisy. I think you were next.

Eilidh: Yeah, so I used to cycle to the office every day to *[location removed]* from *[location removed]*, and when everything stopped with lockdown I started doing a sort of pseudo commute once a day either in the morning or in the evening to just get out on the bike and get some fresh air and daylight, and the weather was beautiful in April 2020, so it was really easy to fit that in and I was just craving that time outside. But then work pressure just kept increasing and that amount of time was really niggled away. I was wanting to get out but then there was always things that needed finishing off or somebody needed to talk to me from the many people I'm involved with, so that time window ended up closing in and I got out of the habit.

Just over the last couple of months I've started commuting again just a few days a week in a sort of hybrid arrangement, and what an amazing difference it makes. It's been so good, just to have that built in time where you get out, you're not in meetings, and it really helps with just getting my head in the right gear and then switching off on the way back from work. The commute, if you like, from the breakfast table to the corner of the kitchen where I sit, it just feels like a real trap, and I'm there today. So yeah, it's how to make that space for yourself and elbow away all the pressures that crowd in, and that's what I'm finding really difficult when you have all that responsibility and you're trying to make sure you're not holding people up doing their job.

I agree in terms of the micromanaging, what the previous person said. Daylight, fresh air, each time I forget to do it or I'm too busy to do it I just remember the next time and think why am I not keeping this habit up. But yeah, it's not so easy. And I think we're also all spending so much more time in meetings than we used to spend. I don't know how. But, yeah, it's difficult to turn those meetings into walking meetings if you're not in the same place or if you're needing to take notes or anything, so I don't know what the solutions are. But anyway, I'll stop rambling now.

SM: No, that's great, thanks. I'm really interested to hear about your cycling. I remember that time too, because I live out that direction and we say we'll always remember being able to cycle on the car free roads and it was so free, and it was actually a great time to be out on the bike. But it's sort of back to normal a little bit now. So just in terms of the time that you're spending sitting and not thinking about the commute, the statistics on the infographic, do they resonate with your day and how much time your team will be spending sitting?

Eilidh: Yeah, in terms of the risks, I've read about these things in various books and papers so nothing there surprises me. In terms of the statistics, again, that's not surprising. In the office you get built in ways to the bathroom or to fetch a cup of tea or something or to go to meetings, so yes, it's a bit better. I was kind of surprised by the difference between study two and study three, which must be quite different work environments or people do different jobs, and how close study one and study three were relatively speaking. So yeah, I found that interesting. But it does resonate that it can be anything in that range depending on whether you're purely computer based or whether you've got a lab or a field site or something else that gets you away from your desk.

SM: Wonderful. Thanks so much. Daisy, I'll bring you in now, and then just to keep track of time we will pass back to Ailsa to go onto the next question.

Daisy: Thanks. I'll just keep my response to the infographic. So, again, the top part wasn't any surprise to me at all, but I've kind of worked in this area so that's probably why it's not a surprise, but I think possibly it might be a surprise to other people. The bottom half of the infographic, again, it kind of wasn't a surprise, but I guess in terms of the infographic, in terms of sharing this information to people I kind of had more questions about that than anything else. So there are differences in the different bars, but also I guess I need some more information about what those percentages represent. So when it says how has working from home changed office workers' sitting behaviour, is that 89 per cent of people are now sitting or 89 per cent of people are sitting more? So I guess the bottom half of the infographic I looked at that and I thought oh yeah, and then I thought actually, I think I need more information to be able to make sense of that graph. So if that was going to go to other people that might be something that would help get the message across. So plenty more to say about the general area, but in terms of my response to the infographic, that's my response.

- SM: That's wonderful, thank you. That's a really good point actually about the table, so I will be swiftly updating that. So that represents the percentage of the working day.
- Daisy: Ah, right, okay.
- SM: So people are sitting up to 89 per cent of the working day, which, off the top of my head I can't remember how many hours that equates to, but I can find out the information. So it's a huge proportion of the working day that is being spent in a seated posture or seated position.
- Daisy: Thank you. That's helpful.
- SM: Thanks, Daisy. So I'll pass back to Ailsa now who is going to take you through our next question.
- AN: Thanks, Sarah. Dyvia, can we move the slide back please? Thank you. So the next question is really around your team and whether you think they are sitting more or sitting less than they were when they were working in the office, and thinking about your team in terms of what's influencing that behaviour. I think your previous comments have been really rich and already given us some insight into some of your thoughts around this, and I was kind of struck by what Maisie said about being ridged to the spot, and I think Eilidh mentioned about being trapped and this idea that we're kind of tied to our computers and expected to be at the end of a Teams call was really interesting. But I know there's two points to this question. Firstly, do you generally think that your team are sitting more as a result of not being in the office? Thinking about your team, what's influencing their behaviour? Willow?
- Willow: So yeah, I think my team is definitely sitting more than before the pandemic. Like Maisie said already, I think at the start of the pandemic a lot of people were walking a lot more throughout the day as their exercise activity, so that was breaking up maybe their working day a little bit. I would say in the main, myself included, that's gone now. You just become lazy the more you stay at home. Unless you're an exerciser previously you're probably not fitting that into your working day as much as you probably should. So I would say that probably comfort of just sitting at home has influenced that. But also there's less opportunity to move when you're at home. So when you're in the office if you needed to speak to somebody you might walk over to their desk or you might have to go to various cupboards to get bits of paper or file things. Whereas now everything is done on Teams and everything is filed electronically. There's no need to go to a printer, to walk round to go and speak to somebody at a different desk, all you do is you click, and that's the problem.
- AN: Okay. Thank you. And I think it was Jessica hand up next.

Jessica: Just on the back of sitting more as well, and I think when we were in the office previously you would have your scheduled breaks and your scheduled lunchtime, and you would also take a DSE break away from the computer, and usually, depending on how big your office is as well, most of our offices are quite large, so by the time you got up to maybe go for a coffee you were walking most of the size of the building, if you like, just to get a coffee or go for a comfort break, whereas that's all generally stopped. A lot of people are working in a bedroom which is maybe right next to the bathroom or they've got an en suite or whatever, so there's maybe five steps to the bathroom, whereas before there maybe would have been quite a few hundred steps going there. I think previously people had a more scheduled day, rather than at home it's not so scheduled. Because they'd maybe say right, to a friend, I'll meet you on your lunchbreak. So they always had their scheduled breaks.

And as well, a lot of people, especially in our organisation, at lunchtime they did walking groups or walked with a friend. So working from home a lot of people don't live near each other so they've lost that buddy to go walking. If you've got it arranged you will go out and walk, whereas if it's on your own it's that health and safety issue and not wanting to walk on your own. I don't mean to be sexist, but for a lot of females that's a big thing, not going out. We've tried to encourage, particularly over the last year, doing walking challenges. So we've maybe set a target of 5,000 a day, kept it relatively low, but then said to people what about in your lunchtime. If it's only 5,000 steps, if you go out half an hour in lunch, it's still light, there's no health and safety issues there. If there is a friend that's working from home or family near you can maybe join up with them. So that's how we've tried to influence getting people up and about, trying to promote the fitness side of things and the benefits that go along with that.

AN: That's great, Jessica. It sounds like you're doing a lot to support your team in terms of increasing their activity and reducing their time... They're both our sort of social environment and the physical environment that we're in is having an impact. Thank you. I think Daisy and Eilidh.

Daisy: Yeah, just a couple of things. So the first thing again, just to answer the question, I think the team is definitely sitting more. You can see that. But not everybody's sitting more. So some people, myself included, I used to have a 70 mile commute every day in my car, which wasn't very good for me, and what I did at the beginning of the pandemic and I have managed to continue it is I...and I just really said this pseudo commute, I've swapped my commute for a walk because I have to get out of the building and come back in again. So I know that I'm walking more. But I don't know how many people are doing that in terms of the rest of my team. But I wouldn't say exclusively everybody's sitting more. So that was the first point I wanted to make.

The second point, and again just thinking about what some of the other people have said about hyper responsiveness and so on, I think another issue is people look in other people's calendars and they block out hours,

and the problem is if you work seven or eight hours a day you've got these hours blocked out, I think in terms of what influences it, when meetings are booked the meeting is booked for an hour and then somebody else books another hour and there are no breaks. So I don't want to pre-empt your question number three, but I think the influence is that there are no breaks. Whether they're going out to meet each other for a walk or going to the loo or going to the printer, but it's du, du, du, du, du, one after the other, and I think that there needs to be... We tried to do it in the [organisation name removed], [organisation name removed] where people have tried to instigate 50 minute meetings rather than 60 minute meetings, but they are consistently overrun usually by people in positions of leadership, oh we'll just use the extra ten minutes just to soak things up. So there are really good ideas but there needs to be some kind of leadership in terms of making them happy.

AN: Great. Thank you, Daisy. That's definitely a recurring theme is this idea of back to back meetings and people squeezing in many more meetings than we would have had in the office. Thank you. Eilidh?

Eilidh: Yes. Answer to your first question is yes. What's just been said about back to back meetings, that was on my list of things as well, especially for busier people and people in leadership roles, they just have so many more meetings. And, yes, meetings tend to expand into the allotted slot rather than just cover what needs to be covered, which maybe used to be the case previously. The opportunity to move again, that's been mentioned earlier, has gone away if you're just having short distances in your own flat to go from the bathroom to the kitchen to your desk or whatever you're doing. Whereas in the office there's just built in time. When I went back to the office a few weeks ago I actually was amazed just how much more I was walking and I was counting the steps to the kettle and all these things and thinking wow, I used to do virtually nothing between back to back meetings, so no wonder I was tired.

Somebody in my team got a dog, which clearly means you have to break very frequently, with a puppy especially, to go and exercise it and get it outside. We did have a few team meetings during lockdown outside, which is a bit hard to arrange because people don't live next door to each other so you can't just say let's go for a walk at lunchtime, some had to come from further away and some from nearer by, so we tried to rotate round and ended up with more one on one meetings instead where it was easier for people to arrange. And one colleague and I went out for a few weeks at least until he moved house on lunchtime bike rides down to [location removed], which was lovely, and then just sat on a bench for five minutes and then carried on back, because we didn't have to take any notes during those meetings so we just moved our catch ups onto the bike. So yes, what influences the time sat is other people plonking meetings into your diary.

AN: Thank you, Eilidh. Some really nice ideas there as well in terms of how to potentially reduce this behaviour. Ruby, thank you for your patience.

- Ruby: Thank you. Just really concurring with what everybody else says. In the government my experience is yes, I think the team are sitting more. Through the first year of the pandemic we had team meetings daily that you tended to go in for an hour or even more and it became a bit overkill because you'd get to the end of the week and practically a whole day's been spent just on team meetings and talking about workloads. So I did request that they were reduced, so we're just gradually reduced them, and they're now down to two a week, and that's helped. There's lots of initiatives that I've brought in and other people have. I'm happy to come in when we get to that question.
- AN: Thanks, Ruby. I think that's maybe a fitting point to move on, unless anyone wanted to raise anything, last point, in relation to question two. Orla.
- Orla: Yeah, hi. I was just going to say I think it's a real mixed bag because yes, there's more Teams meetings being put in rather than just informal conversations happening in the office, it's the only way to communicate. But also people working from home, they can go for a run in their lunchbreak, they don't have to worry about there not being a shower at work, or people who've got dogs can walk their dogs through the day. So there's a bit more of that going on where people have got a bit more of a work/life balance as well. But I think it depends on your state of mind. So obviously some people certainly with COVID going on there was a lot of anxiety so that will have changed people's frame of mind around going out. But also sometimes you just get cabin fever and get in a bit of a funk. So it's a bit of both and it's a moving thing as well, isn't it?
- AN: Thanks, Orla. I think there are opportunities from this pivot as well. It's not all doom and gloom. But thank you for raising that. Can I hand over to you now, Sarah, for the final question?
- SM: Of course. Thanks, Ailsa. So thanks, it's been really interesting to hear the discussion so far, and I think some of this has already been touched on a little bit, but I suppose if we could just maybe focus specifically on anything that you can think of that would support your team to break up long periods of sitting when they're working from home, and that might be things that you haven't tried yet or have just come to you over the course of the discussion this afternoon, or maybe anything that hasn't already been suggested so far. Okay, great, we've got hands up already. Ruby, I think you were first there.
- Ruby: Hi. Thank you. Yes, I don't know if you may have heard of this, but the government encouraged what's called the daily mile for preschool and primary school children. So I'm quite an advocate of health and fitness and my directorate led some of these step count challenges in the beginning, and then I thought why couldn't we do the daily miles? So we got agreement from directors that we could actually take the 15 minutes during the working day, whether that be mid-morning or mid-afternoon and just schedule the time out in your calendar to go out and do that daily mile, whether it's on your bike or walking or running. I'm now working with *[organisation name]*



*removed*] on that. So just to really drill down into the health and benefits that you get from doing that. So yeah, that's just one initiative in our area that we've been doing.

SM: Wonderful. Thanks for sharing that. Then, Jessica, I'll bring you in now.

Jessica: Hiya. Just about encouraging to break up the long periods, what we try and do is we're encouraging staff to if you've got a meeting at ten o'clock, say, schedule it for five past, or if you've got a meeting starting at 11 you finish at 25 past so there's maybe that five to ten minutes in between each meeting. Because we were finding you were just back to back, especially the first year of the pandemic when everything was so manic, with it being *[organisation name removed]* you could log in at eight o'clock and that would be you till maybe two or three o'clock in the afternoon. It was just back to back constant meetings. So to try and give staff that bit of breathing space in between the meeting so you can have potentially at least five to ten minutes in between each of your meetings, so at least that way you can get up, you can go...if you've got ten minutes you can get up and move around the house or go and get yourself a coffee, so at least that way you were getting up and about. As I put in the chat, we've got weekly yoga classes as well, and these were aimed mainly at people for mental health reasons and people that don't have a high level of fitness or very restricted, some of the yoga you could do that sitting down. A lot of the yoga was mainly about relaxation and stretching, it's not like your basic class you would go to out with, it's more of a relaxation. So it was just to try and encourage the mental health aspect going through this time at the moment.

SM: I think that's great because these things plant the seed and then people maybe want to go back to doing something a bit more or something extra, so I think all these things are great. And I was interested what you were saying about the five minutes, others have spoken about that. But the question I had, as you say, is do people actually move or do they use it to blast off a few emails. So I think there needs to be that message there too that you've got permission to move away and you don't need to sit and do all those emails that have come in while you've been in your meeting. So that's wonderful, thanks, Jessica. Willow, your hand was up next.

Willow: Yeah. So I think all of these ideas are great but when you're busy it can be really hard to take time away, which all these ideas are taking time away from your screen and away from your work. So if I have five minutes between meetings I don't get up and use it to walk around, I go oh, I've got five minutes, I'll quickly respond to that email before my next meeting starts. So they're great initiatives, but it's making yourself do it is the problem. So it's trying to think of things that are completely integrated with you still doing work but moving, I think, for me would be the most helpful. So it's not exactly moving but it's not sitting, would be to have a standing desk or to make it normal to have a meeting where you're standing. I know that that's going to be really difficult to do because culturally we just feel odd when we're standing and having a meeting. I even had a colleague who for health reasons was having problems sitting, it was painful, and when we were

having a meeting I was saying, well, let's have our meeting standing, and even she didn't want to do it even though it was less comfortable for her to sit than to stand because she just felt weird doing it. It just needs to be a cultural change where we find it normal, we stand round a pedestal table or we stand up during calls. But I'm doing this just now but I'm finding it difficult because I don't have anything that raises the computer up, so if I want to type it's completely wrong for my shoulders.

SM: Yeah, absolutely. I think a lot of people find that too, they end up looking down, and some people might even get the vertigo with doing that because of the position of the neck. So I guess it's a bigger picture thing, it's not just about supplying these bits and pieces that can support you to do the standing or spend less time in a seated posture or whatever you're capable of doing, it's about making sure it's individualised and safe for the individual as well. That's wonderful, thank you. So, Sofia, I will bring you in and then we will move on to the next slide. I'm just conscious of time.

Sofia: Sure. I think everybody's points are so valid, and I think we're all busy, but when I used to work purely in house I would block out an afternoon session or 45 minutes to go to our in house gym, and I think in the pandemic that totally fell by the wayside and I haven't been in the gym, certainly in an in house gym, for over a year and a half, and I would say that's affected my weight and my health. I'm lucky to have dogs that I've managed to keep up a level of walking at home. But I think it is about blocking out that time in your diary as well and flagging up to your leaders this is my time. I know that means that your day might be extended, whether it's in the morning or later on in the day, but the reality is to sit for a full eight hours is not healthy for any of us.

So I get what the other lady said about stepping away but I'll just do that email, and I think we're all in that mind-set of oh, I've just got five minutes and I'll just do this. But it is almost making that conscious blocking out and whether you have to block out periods in your calendar to go right, I am going to step away from the screen for 40 minutes, which is to the benefit of your eyesight and benefit of your posture, and, like I say, I'm lucky when I've got the home working, I've got a dog and that almost forces me to go right, that's 20 minutes I physically have to... By the time you've changed your clothes and done all that bit to get on boots and a coat and a jacket, but the dog's out for 20 minutes and you're seeing daylight. Especially in the winter, and winter in Scotland is very hard, you can wake up in the morning and if you're doing your working day all inside you've never seen daylight. You can feel like a mole. So it is almost going I've got to physically step away because it's so bad on our health otherwise.

SM: That's great, thanks, Sofia. Yeah, the health message is really important. I think that's probably the carrot to get people to engage in a bit more movement across the course of the working day to actually just knowing the implications for your health, because I think potentially a lot of people just think I'm just sitting and they don't realise that they might be damaging their health too. That's wonderful, thank you. Okay. So I'll ask Dyvia if we can

move on to the next slide please. Great, thank you. So we have identified some initiatives and intervention strategies that have worked in office environments for very similar populations, people are spending a lot of the day at a desk type rule.

We're wondering if you think these types of initiatives would work with your teams and how they might work, so how we could adapt them from the office setting into the home working environment. So we've come up with three. We've actually got six, but we're just going to talk about three today. We're talking about others with different groups. So we've got the workplace initiatives which is things like standing and walking meetings, and we've talked about that a little bit. Also a supportive environment. So that might be a desk or a change in the social cultures. Or it could be a role model that's potentially encouraging more movement and training and support, and that might be things like what to do, how to do it and when to do it. So we can either have a wee chat [inaudible 0:49:12] or if anyone wants to jump in with any specific opinions on any of them that would be great. Okay, so maybe start with the workplace initiatives, does anyone have any thoughts on how that could work at home? Thinking standing, walking meetings, but that might be other things like the daily mile. So Willow I'll invite you.

Willow: Thanks. Yeah, I've tried the walking meetings. As a line manager I hold monthly conversations and thought that would be quite a good opportunity because we don't tend to record anything in these, so it is a type of meeting where we could go out for a walk. I line manage a lady in [location removed] and I'm in [location removed]. Unfortunately half the time the weather's terrible in [location removed] and she doesn't want to go out for a walk, so we end up stuck at the desk in Teams. So it's just about managing it with different people and levels of fitness. I tried standing desks pre-pandemic before we were in the office and it just wasn't for me at all, but if anybody's got any ideas how you encourage people to do more of these walking meetings I'd love to hear it.

SM: Great, thanks. Yeah, I think it is tricky logistically. So, Orla, I'll bring you in.

Orla: Yeah. My company actually at the moment we're developing a workplace offer and they've been testing the app. I don't know if you know about [smartphone app name removed], but they're doing some projects in Scotland at the moment, but we're developing an app to go along with it, and they've been trialling it with the staff. So what they said to us is we're giving you the time out of your day to go out, take an hour, it doesn't have to be your lunchbreak, and go and hit beat boxes. It's a bit like Pokémon Go, go collect points and we're all using it to feed back on the app and stuff. For me it's been really good, because normally I'm meetings, meetings, meetings, like you say, back to back, and what it's done is it's given me permission from my boss that they want us to go out and be active, they want us to break up the day. So I think it's a cultural change because there's a real mind-set of bums on seats from nine till 5:30 and actually it's making sure that we're communicating with staff, we want you to take breaks, we

want you to go and be active, as long as you're getting your work done, like someone mentioned, work output rather than just putting in the hours, I think it's just about making sure that staff know that you are giving them a bit of time to be active during the day and to maintain their health so they're not just sitting at a desk all day.

SM: That's great, thanks, Orla. I think we're going to interview other colleagues at another focus groups potentially about that app so it's really interesting to hear a wee bit more about it actually because that's a bit more detail than we've had previously. It sounds brilliant. It covers a lot of those things, like the workplace initiative, the supportive environment. It can also train people and support them to engage with the movement, so it kind of kills lots of birds with one stone, so it sounds brilliant. Thanks for telling us about it. All right, Maisie, I think your hand was up next.

Maisie: Yeah. It's just occurred to me as we were talking that actually we're all working harder than we did pre-pandemic. Everyone we speak to says I'm doing more now than I was. And it's all those minutes where you used to be walking to the toilet or running to a meeting or whatever it was you're now using to work. So actually if senior management could acknowledge that and rather than saying take time out of your day and put it on the end of your day they could just say we know you're all working harder, take some time out, go and do something. I think that would be enormously helpful. Rather than us feeling we're stuck here for the full eight hours and not able to move, just say well, you should be stuck here for six hours and the rest of the time you can get up and do what you like.

SM: But it that balance between working really long hours and being productive, because sometimes you're more productive if you're working less hours and you've had movement. So I guess it's that message from above and the permission to move and all those sorts of...the validation that it's okay to do it and management are bought into it. So I'm conscious of time and we're almost at the hour and I don't want to run over because I want to make sure you've got an opportunity to move before your next meeting or whatever else you've got to do this afternoon. So there was just a couple of hands up, and I'll bring you in and then I'll pass back over to Ailsa. So we've got Sofia, you had your hand up.

Sofia: Yeah. Just going to be really quick. One of the things I remember from my [organisation name removed] colleague days and they were great advocates of walking meetings, and we're going back a long time, but also I recall people sitting on yoga balls to do office work was a great thing I used to see. I don't have one myself. I got a really bad chair delivered to my home. Maybe I'll go purchase one of these massive yoga balls to sit on, I think they're better for your posture. I know in the [organisation name removed] they were great advocates of them. It might be something that would help things.

SM: Wonderful, thank you. Eilidh, did I see you had your hand up or did I imagine that?

- Eilidh: Yeah, I did have my hand up and I decided to take it down in the interests of time. Just to say culture change really needs to be actively encouraged from the top. At least one of our very senior directors keeps blundering and implying that people don't work as hard from home even though all the evidence to the contrary is in the books of our institute. So I don't know what to do about it apart from keep battering him.
- SM: Yeah. I think if we find the magic potion for wide culture change we would be millionaires, definitely. But it guess it's just chipping away and trying to make small changes gradually and hopefully bigger changes will come from it. Okay, that was a really great discussion, conversation. Thank you so much for being so open and honest and such great ideas. Gosh, we really do have quite a lot to go away and think about for our next steps. So thanks again, and I'll just pass over to Ailsa who will close up the session for today.
- AN: Thanks, Sarah. Just to echo Sarah's thanks, really appreciate your time. I've got masses of notes here, lots of fantastic insights you provided so thank you. The next steps, we've got one more focus group to do next week and then our plan is to make sense of all the findings and review the findings and then we're planning a workshop in probably the end of April into May where we will present the findings and some of the potential solutions. If you are willing and able to be involved we'd really like you to be involved with that, but that's no obligation. We will just keep in touch with you with updates on the project. Unless you specifically say to Sarah I really don't want any further information we'll just keep you in the loop and then if you're free for any of these sessions then that would be great to have your involvement. Next slide please, Dyvia. And just another massive thank you. We've left you with one minute to get up and stretch and move around. I knew this would be a quick hour. But just again, thank you. Your insights are so valuable to us, we really appreciate you taking the time, so thank you. We'll share the findings with you in due course.

**End of transcript**