

KEEPING EMPLOYEE WELLBEING ON THE RIGHT TRACK

A new app that allows employers to reward staff for their healthy activity throughout the year has been launched by Irish start-up KudosHealth, which has created an online employee engagement tool to keep track of their wellbeing in this long-term health initiative.

The app aims to replace current outdated step challenges or other one-off health initiatives, which only suit people with certain levels of physical fitness.

It will allow employers to reward staff for physical activity, health milestones, screening tests and medical check-ups in the same way they currently reward sales, attendances, and work anniversaries.

The algorithm used in the app — also called KudosHealth — has been scientifically proven to ensure that points are allocated to each specific employee based on their individual statistics as well as fitness ability. It has been in development since June 2015, using expert health and wellness coders in the UK in collaboration with experts at the health and science departments at IT Sligo.

Traditionally, employers who are concerned about employees' health engage with staff once or twice a year by holding one-off time, date and location-specific events such as a 5K run or walk or a sponsored cycle once or twice a year to engage their employees in healthy activities.

Others use the outdated mode of allocating points to employees through step or pedometer challenges," said KudosHealth founder, Declan Trumble.

"All points are unique to each person, depending on their BMR (Basal Metabolic Rate), their height, weight and the intensity of activity. It is scientific and specific and no one else is doing this in Ireland. This can be used to engage employees in all locations, all-year round at an affordable cost and with minimal administration required," he noted.

AT YOUR OWN PACE

For one person who is relatively inactive, a short walk could be just as intense – and earn them as many points – as a 10k run for an active person.

This allows people who might have shied away from



KudosHealth founders – Declan Trumble (third left) and Mario Gheghici (third right) – pictured with team members at the running track at IT Sligo. (Pic: James Connolly)

physical challenges to get involved at their own pace, while allowing those who are more active to push themselves further.

The app supports several popular activity trackers – including FitBit, GoogleFit, Strava and RunKeeper. The simple and flexible tool also allows people, departments or different sites to compete against each other in monthly competitions. Bespoke leader boards make the app interactive, engaging and fun for employees.

"This app will help companies who want to encourage their employees to be more active – especially those who are sitting in front of a screen for eight hours a day. It is aimed at those concerned about the health of their employees as well as those wanting to engage and retain staff," added Trimble.

Based at the Innovation Centre at IT Sligo, the company is an Enterprise Ireland client and received Competitive Start-Up Funding in December 2016. KudosHealth has a team of six with two full-time staff and four part-time, and also a team of specialist developers based in the UK.