

Government launches health checks to improve workplace health

2 years ago



More than 130,000 people across the country will be better protected from diseases such as heart disease, kidney disease and diabetes, as the government today (30 August 2024) rolls out a life-saving health check programme to workplaces across the country for the first time.

The checks, which can be completed quickly and easily for employees at work, record a range of information about each patient, which is then used to determine their cardiovascular risk.

Employers from a range of professions will take part in the programme including those from the building, hospitality and transport sectors, and social care.

Today's announcement is part of the Health and Social Care Secretary's commitment to supporting the government's mission to boost economic growth by improving the health of the nation.

With every check providing the equivalent of an NHS appointment, these checks will save thousands of hours of valuable NHS time, helping to cut waiting lists and rebuild the NHS.

Andrew Gwynne, Minister for Public Health and Prevention, said:

We know so many deadly diseases can be avoided if we seek help in enough time. That's why we're working to improve access to treatment while also taking steps to address the preventable causes of cardiovascular disease.

This innovative new programme is an important step towards community-focused healthcare and supporting economic and productivity through improving health, shifting the focus from treatment to prevention, easing the strain on the NHS and helping people to live well for longer.

Over 16 million people are eligible for an [NHS Health Check](#), but current data shows that only around 40% of those invited went on to complete one. This is especially true for men, who are less likely to get early help but who are more likely to develop cardiovascular disease at an earlier age than women. This new

programme aims to reach more people through their place of work and make it more convenient for people to understand and improve their cardiovascular health.

NHS National Clinical Director for Stroke, David Hargroves, said:

“Convenient and efficient NHS checks in the workplace could spot thousands of people at risk of a range of cardiovascular diseases, and with high blood pressure the biggest risk factor for stroke, early detection will undoubtedly save lives.

“This new programme shows the NHS is committed to preventing ill health and I would urge anyone invited for a check to come forward and get support to improve their cardiovascular health.”

Councillor Louise Gittins, Chair of the Local Government Association, said:

“Health checks can save lives. They can prevent people from developing largely preventable diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, type 2 diabetes and liver disease.

“Councils are exploring new ways to boost uptake, targeting individuals or communities at increased risk, and using proactive outreach programmes to get into those communities who are less likely to attend their general practice.

“However, there is more that can be done, and by partnering council and employers, we can make sure more people get a health check and hopefully prevent illness later on.”

Jaguar Land Rover Chief Medical Officer, Dr Steve Iley, said:

“Jaguar Land Rover is investing £15 million a year in its global health and wellbeing programmes because we know that healthy and happy colleagues help us to deliver high-quality products and ensure a positive future for our business. Health checks are a fundamental part of prevention and therefore feature in many of our programmes.

“Our collaboration with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council on the workplace cardiovascular disease checks pilot presents a unique opportunity to work together on providing awareness and signposting for our employees.

“We are excited to provide these vital checks to approximately 4,500 of our Solihull employees before the end of this financial year, thus supporting the great work of our NHS.”

In addition, the government has today also announced the development of a new digital version of the NHS Health Check which will be ready for testing early in 2025.

The service will be available through the NHS App, meaning users can undertake their health check at home and have the results automatically written back into their GP electronic health record, within a few clicks.

Local authorities in Norfolk (East of England), Medway (South East) and Lambeth (London) have been selected to pilot the new digital health checks in early 2025.

The digital programme will deliver around one million checks in its first 4 years. Plans are being put in

place to make digital NHS Health Checks available nationally, alongside the face-to-face programme to give patients more choice.