

# Walk Leader Guidance

## for Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland



**NO LIFE HALF LIVED**

“Thank you for signing up to support the CHSS Walking For Health project as a Walk Leader. Walking is not only good for our physical wellbeing but it is also great for our mental and social wellbeing and your role will play a vital part in supporting people to ensure that no life is half lived in Scotland. We are delighted to be a part of Paths for All’s Scottish Health Walk Network and play our part in making walking an accessible option across CHSS and across Scotland.”

Jane Claire Judson,  
Chief Executive,  
Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland



“If physical activity were a drug, we would refer to it as a miracle cure, due to the great many illnesses it can prevent and help treat. Physical activity is not just a health issue. It brings people together to enjoy shared activities and contributes to building strong communities whilst supporting the economy to grow.”

UK Chief Medical Officers,  
Physical Activity Guidelines, 2019

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## About this guide

This guide is designed to help you carry out your role and understand how your role fits in to the big picture at CHSS and our physical activity programme.

Our Walk Leader roles: With our friends at Paths for All, CHSS offer a Walk Leader Training course (3.5hrs online) for all our Walk Leaders. Following the training you will be able to support the delivery of health walks via:

- **Local Walking for Health Groups**
- **Group Walking With Our Peer Groups**
- **Group and/or 1 to 1 “Buddy Walks” with our Community Support Services Team (Additional training required for walks via our community services team)**

# Walking is wonderful!

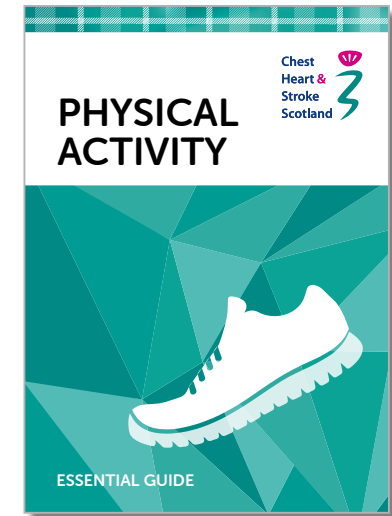
There are so many benefits to getting outside for a walk or a wheel. From boosting your mood to helping improve your health, here are just a few of the reasons we love walking. Physical activity makes us happier, connects people and keeping active is one of the best things we can do for both the prevention and secondary prevention of our conditions:

- **2 hours of walking per week can reduce your risk of stroke by up to 30%.**
- **30 minutes of walking a day can reduce symptoms of depression by up to 36%.**
- **A daily 1-hour walk can cut your risk of obesity in half.**
- **Regular walks of 30-60 minutes can reduce your risk of heart disease by 35%.**

Taking a break, getting outside and connecting with nature can do wonders for your mental health, and regular walks are a simple way to help you look after your physical health too.

Download our [Physical Activity Essential Guide](#) to learn more about the benefits of staying active.

At CHSS, we are committed to playing a key role in ensuring that as many people as possible both living with and at risk of CHSS conditions are supported to meet the recommended physical activity guidelines or to take their first steps towards a more physically active lifestyle.





## What is a health walk?

A health walk is a short, safe, social, local, low level, accessible walk led by trained walk leaders (usually volunteers). Health Walks are free to take part in and last for less than an hour – some are even as short as 10mins. Health Walks are targeted at people who are currently inactive and those who can benefit most from physical activity. The length and pace of health walks are adapted to suit the walkers.

## The role and responsibilities of a walk leader:

Friendly, organised, approachable and confident are some of the important attributes a Walk Leader will have and we are delighted to have you involved with the CHSS Walking For Health project. The role of a walk leader is outlined in full on your Walk Leader Training Manual and we have summarised the key elements at each stage of the walk in the table on the next page.

| Task   | Responsibility  |
|--|---|
| <b>Before the walk – Route and Risk Assess</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Know the route (and potential variations)</li> <li>- Ensure you have read the Risk Assessment</li> <li>- Ask your line manager if you have any questions</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Before the walk – Pack Your Bag</b>         | <p><b>This might include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A fully charged mobile phone</li> <li>- A clipboard for paperwork</li> <li>- <b>New Walker Forms</b> (can be completed <b>online</b>)</li> <li>- Download our <b>Walk Register</b></li> <li>- Download our <b>Standard Health Walk Agreement</b></li> <li>- <b>Download our Accident Report Forms</b></li> <li>- Pens</li> <li>- Walk Leader cue cards</li> <li>- Strength &amp; Balance leaflets</li> <li>- Walk Leader arm band</li> <li>- Small first aid kit</li> <li>- Seasonal items (Hat, Gloves, Suncream)</li> <li>- A bottle of water</li> <li>- A light fleece blanket</li> <li>- A seat pad/sit mat</li> </ul> |



| Task  | Responsibility  |
|---|---|
| <b>Starting the walk - Welcome the individual</b>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide a warm welcome for new walkers</li> <li>- Ask to complete new walker form</li> <li>- Ask walker to read and agree with the Health Walk Agreement</li> <li>- Complete the <b>Walk Register</b></li> </ul>   |
| <b>Starting the walk – Welcome the group</b>                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduce yourself</li> <li>- Explain role as a Walk Leader</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Starting the walk – Explain the planned route</b>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Describe route (where to, how long it will take)</li> <li>- Use Risk Assessment to flag any potential hazards and controls</li> <li>- Ask if everyone is happy with the route</li> </ul>                           |
| <b>Starting the walk – Outline the group rules / go over the Walker Agreement</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health walks are designed to be social and fun</li> <li>- Stay safe</li> <li>- Stay together</li> <li>- Don't leave without telling Walk Leader</li> <li>- Tell a Walk Leader if you are feeling unwell</li> </ul> |



| Task  | Responsibility   |
|---|--|
| <b>Starting the walk – Explain stages of the walk</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Walk very gently for 5 minutes to warm up</li> <li>- Ensure everyone is comfortable and enjoying the walk</li> <li>- Keep the pace gentle and steady during the walk. Everyone should be able to walk and talk</li> <li>- Introduce 1 or 2 strength and balance exercises during the walk if suitable for the group and you've completed the training</li> </ul>            |
| <b>During the walk – Manage, Observe, Share</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manage the pace to suit your walkers</li> <li>- Observe your walkers</li> <li>- Dynamically risk assess the route as you go</li> <li>- Converse and share with the walkers</li> <li>- Support anyone who feels unwell</li> </ul>  |
| <b>After the walk – Check, Thank, Encourage</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Check that all walkers have returned</li> <li>- Thank everyone for attending</li> <li>- Remind individuals to complete <b>new walker form online</b></li> <li>- Promote opportunities to get involved eg becoming a walk leader</li> <li>- Encourage people along for next time (eg tell a friend)</li> <li>- Submit your register to <b>walking@chss.org.uk</b></li> </ul> |





## Volunteer training & other requirements

| Training                     | Local Walking for Health Groups | Walking with our Community Support Services |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Walk Leader Training         | ✓                               | ✓   |
| PVG / Basic Disclosure       | Basic Disclosure                | PVG   |
| Confidentiality              | ✓                               | ✓   |
| Roles & Boundaries           | Walking for Health Boundaries   | CSS Roles & Boundaries                      |
| Safeguarding Online IHASCO   | ✓                               | ✓   |
| CHSS Our Conditions Training | ✓                               | ✓   |
| Lone Worker Policy           | ✓                               | ✓   |

\* Peer Groups to talk to their Peer Support Involvement Coordinator.

\* Please note all training is subject to change.

## Volunteer training & other requirements (continued)

| Training                                    | Walking for Health in the Community Groups | Walking with our Community Support Services |
|---|--|---|
| First Aid*                                  | Optional                                   | ✓   |
| Assisting With Mobility                     | Optional                                   | ✓   |
| Emergency Protocols (Included in this pack) | ✓  | ✓   |
| Paths for All – Strength and Balance        | Optional                                   | Optional                                    |
| Paths for All – All Ability                 | Optional                                   | Optional                                    |

\* Please note CHSS recommends all Walk Leaders complete First Aid Training, however if you are supporting local Walking for Health Groups or group walking with our peer groups then it is not a mandatory requirement. CHSS will however support you to do your training at no cost to you. If you are working within our Community Support Services you will be required to complete First Aid training.

If you feel you would benefit from additional training not mentioned above then please get in touch with [walking@chss.org.uk](mailto:walking@chss.org.uk).

# What type of walking do we offer through CHSS?

## Local Walking for Health Groups:

CHSS offer a range of walks in the community including through our community hubs and networks, retail spaces and through our Health Defence Team. These walks are open to anyone and will play a part in our prevention and secondary prevention work.

## Group Walks with CHSS Peer Groups:

CHSS supports over 105 peer groups across Scotland and we are encouraging groups to include walking as a part of their offer. Walking is a fantastic low risk activity with routes that can be adapted to suit wheelchair users. It may be that groups decide to include a short health walk as part of their normal session or it may be an additional offer allowing the group to get together in the fresh air, share a walk, a blether and enjoy the benefits of a walk.

## Group and/or 1 to 1 "Buddy Walks" with our Community Support Services Team:

Our amazing Community Support Services team will offer 1:1 "buddy walks" for individuals living with our conditions, aimed at those who are looking to increase their levels of physical activity through walking. This may be to support a personal goal of walking to their local shop or café or it may be purely to build up their confidence levels and to increase their physical activity levels. Community Support Services also support small groups of service users to walk together if a local health walk is not accessible.



# Volunteering with CHSS – Additional Information:

## CHSS Background information Confidentiality

### First Aid

CHSS recommends that walk leaders complete basic first aid training but this is not compulsory unless stated otherwise. CHSS will organise First Aid training on a regular basis and this will be made available to CHSS Walk Leaders free of charge.

### Safety Guidance

Walking is a low risk activity. Despite all the planning and preparation and good group management, incidents and accidents will occur occasionally. We are human after all. Many of these incidents will be very minor but all require a calm step by step response. Anyone requiring personal medication may appreciate being reminded to have it with them ie GTN spray, inhalers for asthma and the individual should know how and when to use it.

### **In the event of an accident you should:**

- Stay Calm
- Ensure the safety of the injured person and the other walkers
- Assess the situation and if medical attention is required
- If you do need medical assistance do not move the injured person, keep them safe, keep talking to them and call for help
- If you do not need medical attention – encourage the person to take their time and recover in a safe place

### **If you need to call for help in an emergency call:**

- If someone is seriously unwell, injured or their life is at risk then call 999

### **Medical Emergencies and Appropriate Responses:**

- Check the time and be ready to describe the who, when, where, how of the incident (keep a note, this can be helpful for the emergency services but also for completing the **accident/incident report form**)
- Stay on the phone and answer any questions
- Ensure only one person is calling the emergency services
- Return the group to start point with at least one person waiting with the casualty.
- Watch out for the emergency services and post a lookout to help them locate you.



## Accident/Incident Reporting

In the event of an accident or incident, please use the accident/incident report form to record details of what happened, ask the person to sign the form (if possible) and get a witness to sign it. Please complete the form even if the accident/incident was minor and if the person has fully recovered. Sometimes injuries can take a few days to appear, and it is important that this form is logged and send to the project lead. Please email this form to [walking@chss.org.uk](mailto:walking@chss.org.uk).

## Safeguarding

Keeping our people safe and well is central to our ethos and values as a charity, and everyone has a role to play. If you notice signs of abuse or harm, you must report it to your volunteer line manager.

You can also contact the CHSS Safeguarding Team directly on 0131 609 0252 or

[safeguarding@chss.org.uk](mailto:safeguarding@chss.org.uk). Additional information on Safeguarding can be found in the CHSS **Welcome to Volunteering booklet** (where you can also find the volunteer agreement and overview of policies).

## Insurance

Provided that the Walk Leader has been trained, the routes have been risk assessed and all other mandatory training/requirements are met (as above) then your walk will be insured.

# Tips & Hints To Help Your Walk

## The 5 E's



**Everyone** gets a welcome with a smile



**Engage**– keep it simple, interesting and fun



**Encourage** – listen and observe



**Enjoy your role** – it is making a huge difference to people's lives



**Empower** – play your part in supporting people to make a positive change and a step towards a healthier more active lifestyle

## Tips & Hints To Help Your Walk (continued)

**Paths for All:** have lots of information on their website, including some great information available regarding **Walking For Health and Long Term Conditions**. CHSS are proud to be members of the **Movement For Health** charity coalition – you can read more by following the link.

**Stats & Stories:** As mentioned previously, it is important that we are able to gather the stats from your walks to demonstrate the fantastic impact you are having across Scotland in helping people get more active. Behind every stat though is an important story so as you are out and about leading walks the length and breadth of Scotland keep in touch and share your stories with us.

Please contact: [walking@chss.org.uk](mailto:walking@chss.org.uk) for further information



@CHSScotland  
@Walking\_CHSS



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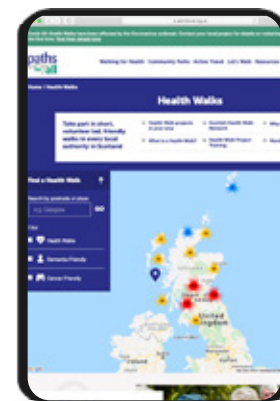


@chsscotland

## Paths for all

We couldn't do this without our friends at Paths for All and by joining our Health Walk Project at CHSS, which is one of many hundreds supported by Paths for All across Scotland, you are joining thousands of other walk leaders making a huge difference to people's lives right across the country!

<https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/health-walks>



## Guidance and resources

**CHSS Website:** For further information on our conditions and the work CHSS do, please visit [www.chss.org.uk/services/physical-activity/walking-for-health/resources](http://www.chss.org.uk/services/physical-activity/walking-for-health/resources)

Paths for All have loads of fantastic resources to support projects and Walk Leaders spring in to action so if you need leaflets, certificates, posters or some guidance please don't hesitate to get in touch with [walking@chss.org.uk](mailto:walking@chss.org.uk) and if we can't help you straight away we will speak to our friends at Paths for All to seek further advice.

If you do have a question it may already have been answered. Download our **Walk Leader FAQs**.

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