



Matts Story: Great North Run

Employer: Healthworks

Area: Newcastle, Primary Care

Theme: Physical Activity



Matts Story: Great North Run

I've signed up to run the Great North Run this year for Healthworks. When I signed up I was a complete novice runner – I'd never even been jogging in the park – so this has been quite a journey for me! I decided to sign up because I have quite a sedentary lifestyle, and as I approach 40 I'm starting to think more about my fitness levels and the risk of my health deteriorating to the point where I'm not able to enjoy time with my children and any future grandchildren.

Healthworks has been great in supporting me. The gym facilities are free for staff to use in their own time, and I've been going after work hours to build my confidence on the treadmill. I was allocated a member of our physical activity team as a 'buddy' and she developed a training plan for me to follow, then checked in with me regularly. When I twisted my knee, she provided some advice for low impact exercises until the inflammation went down. The fundraising team who are organising the day have also been great with checking in on how everyone's training is going. Overall, I feel very supported and am starting to look forward to the run itself.

I wouldn't say that I've experienced a miracle transformation in my fitness! But there have been some really positive outcomes. First and foremost, I would never have dreamed of trying to run a half marathon a year ago, and while I'm expecting it to be hard going I do now feel my confidence growing. I've noticed my stamina has improved, as has my core strength.



The main change has been in the way I think about my health. I'm more conscious about smoking, and have massively cut down my alcohol intake. Although there is a lot I could and probably should still do – getting to bed earlier, and improvements to my diet being key – I feel as if I'm on a journey now, I'm really grateful to Healthworks for helping me to take the first steps.

Matts Story regarding increasing his Physical Activity and being supported by Healthworks to access the Great North Run 2023

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