

## THE WELLBEING WORKFORCE

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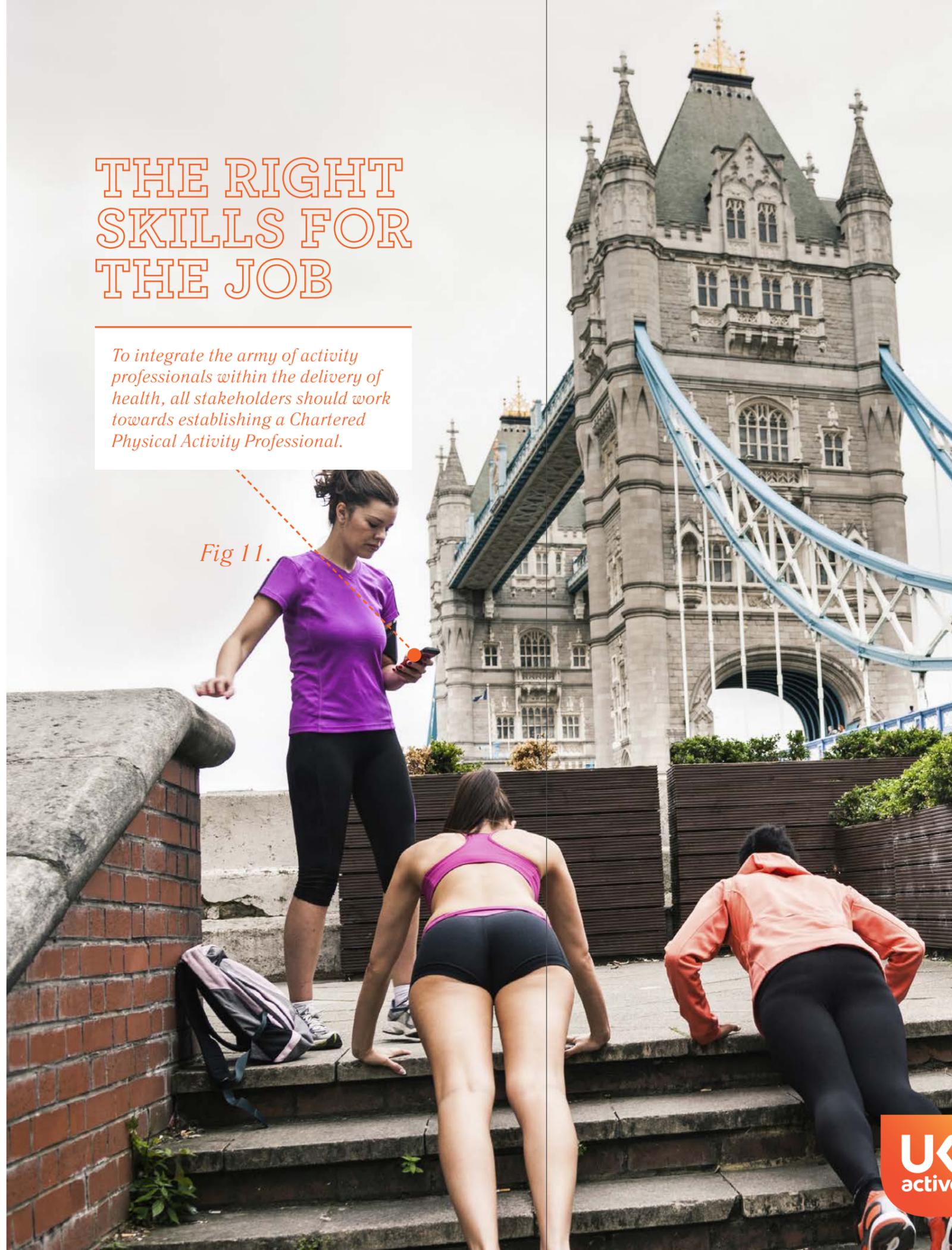
"ukactive's *Blueprint for an Active Britain* aims to put the physical activity sector at the heart of the government's approach to health; it's only through a workforce fit to deliver the mission of more people, more active, more often that this will become a reality. I welcome the fact that there is now so much work being done, both within the sector and in government, to make sure that the skills and training delivered meets the high standards we aspire to reach. The sector's uptake of the Trailblazer programme has shown the appetite that currently exists for this area of work, and we look forward to working to introduce some of the reforms set out in this document which will allow the sector to grow at a faster rate while continuing to serve the needs of consumers everyday."



# THE RIGHT SKILLS FOR THE JOB

*To integrate the army of activity professionals within the delivery of health, all stakeholders should work towards establishing a Chartered Physical Activity Professional.*

Fig 11.



GOVERNMENT  
SHOULD  
CONTINUE  
TO PLACE  
THE FUTURE  
WORKFORCE  
STRATEGY FOR  
THE ACTIVITY  
SECTOR IN THE  
HANDS OF  
EMPLOYERS.

### INTRODUCTION

The capability of the workforce – from shop-floor to boardroom – has an unrivalled impact on the ability of physical activity to become a core part of health delivery.

As the physical activity sector grows and adapts into new areas, it must also ensure that it brings the workforce with it, closing skills gaps where they are found, and providing clear, employer-led guidance to training providers and awarding bodies around what is needed to progress.

A skilled workforce, backed up by a strong regulatory framework, will be a great asset to the health delivery sector and a welcome addition to the delivery landscape. It is only through detailed reform, of both the sector's own workforce regulation procedure, as well as significant support and guidance from the Government, that the physical activity professional can begin to be seen for what it is; a front line deliverer of wellbeing.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

**1 Government should support the strategy for workforce development that has been articulated by leading employers within the physical activity sector.**

>> Employers have called for a single unified skills development strategy under the leadership of employers, and informed by stakeholders, such as those in government and the medical community. This strategy must cover all job roles at all levels, providing a clear line of sight between entry to the workforce and the boardroom. It must have a single process for employer-led stakeholder-informed standards development, a single process for endorsement of training against it, a single process for assessing graduates' competencies and a single process for recognising professional competencies through professional registration that drives on-going Continuous Professional Development. This process should lead to the establishment of a Chartered Physical Activity Professional. Where exercise professionals are working with patients, from levels four and above, their process of registration should include independent regulation and a process of withdrawing their professional status in the event of malpractice.

A COMPREHENSIVE  
WORKFORCE STRATEGY MUST  
BE CREATED THAT COVERS  
ALL JOB ROLES AT ALL  
LEVELS, FROM ENTERING THE  
WORKFORCE, TO MANAGING  
THE BOARDROOM.

**2 The physical activity sector provides a huge number of jobs and apprenticeships for young people, with a low barrier to entry for people of all backgrounds, and opportunities for growth and development at all levels. In order to support the growth of apprenticeships within this sector, the government should work with the active leisure community to ensure funding arrangements fit with the operational landscape of business.**

- >> The Department of Culture, Media and Sport should continue to follow the direction of travel it is currently taking in placing the future workforce strategy for the activity sector in the hands of employers.
- >> As part of a wider Industrial Strategy championed across government, the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills should commit to working alongside physical activity providers and the healthcare workforce to create a long-term strategic vision for the wellbeing workforce. This will upskill the workforce to meet the current needs of employers, as well as the long-term needs of the health sector.
- >> The Skills Funding Agency should make special concessions for employers within the physical activity sector when introducing new funding reforms. This will recognise the potentially harmful impact that the rapid introduction of employer contributions will have on many employers' ability to deliver their contribution to the overall target of three million more apprentices.



**3 Physical activity professionals must play an increasingly central role in the nation's health and wellbeing through existing practice, as well as developing its role further in the health and wellbeing sectors.**

>> The Department of Health should commission a diagnostic review of the physical activity delivery landscape within the physical activity and public health sectors to establish where any skills gaps may lie, and what will be required from activity professionals in five, 10 and 20 years' time. This should be done in partnership with employers and in conjunction with ukactive and the UK Commission on Employment and Skills.

>> Local authorities should increasingly commission physical activity training for the wider workforce, both those working in a leisure delivery capacity or as part of wider public health delivery.

>> Under the guidance of Sport England, and to meet the availability of jobs provided by employers in the sector, National Governing Bodies of Sport should scale back the training of sport-specific coaches, focusing instead on a more blended, multi-sport approach to allow for flexibility in delivering a range of physical activity sessions and programmes for all ages and backgrounds.