

Cooler hydration for the health sector

A Watercoolers Europe fact sheet



Healthy hydration matters. Whilst water is of course not the only source of fluid in our diet, it is one of the healthiest.



This fact sheet is one of a series produced by Watercoolers Europe (WE), a federation of associations representing those who provide water cooler services and offering a recognised quality and safety mark. By using an accredited supplier who is member of WE, or of a national association belonging to WE, you know you are choosing a reliable supplier. This fact sheet helps you choose the best cooler for your organisation's needs.

Hydration in the health sector

The law requires employers to provide a source of drinking water for employees and those working in a health organisation should be leading by example. Healthy hydration is important. Providing hydration through water coolers is one of the best and most convenient ways of providing healthy, safe and hygienic hydration – and it's sustainable too.

Benefits of hydration

Healthy hydration helps **mental well-being**

- Helps speed our reflexes
- Improves concentration
- Helps prevent mood swings
- Aids work performance

Hydration helps improve **physical performance**

- Aids optimum physical performance
- Helps avoid accidents
- Helps prevent more minor ailments such as headaches, tiredness and constipation
- Helps prevent serious illnesses including heart disease, obesity and kidney stones

How much fluid do we need?

On average, adults need two litres of water daily. More fluid is needed if temperatures are high or physical activity is increased; and pregnant women also need more fluid.

Recent research showed that despite knowing the advice, only one in three people drinks as much fluid as they should (Source: IFOP, 2014 for the French Association, AFIFAE). Which fluid we choose matters. Everything is fine in moderation, but too much caffeine or sugar will not aid good health.

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Can you give guidance on the best way to provide safe hydration?

- Advise colleagues not to wait until they feel thirsty before taking a drink, as by then they are already dehydrated.
- Ensure colleagues start each shift well-hydrated and have access to a water cooler at all times.
- Encourage water breaks – especially in hot weather or in a busy work setting such as a hospital ward.
- Encourage care, nursing and medical staff to ensure that everyone, including patients, maintains hydration levels by drinking water.
- Use an accredited water cooler supplier – a member of WE or a country association belonging to WE. Accredited suppliers undergo rigorous, third party annual safety inspections and must follow best practice guidelines.

Which type of cooler is best for my organisation?

Choosing a cooler is easy and your supplier will advise you. Here is a quick guide to making the right selection:

Bottled water coolers	Mains-fed (plumbed-in units)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You can move the cooler where needed if necessary (but follow your supplier's instructions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offers a continuous supply of chilled water
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You can choose a supplier to offer the kind of water you prefer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have no need to store bottles
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires suitable (cool, dry and dark) storage space for bottles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No need for deliveries of water
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff will need to be able to lift the bottles onto the machine	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fixed unit and not capable of being moved within your premises

For some premises, a mix of the two types is useful. Whichever type you choose, water coolers are a sustainable means of providing healthy hydration.

The sustainable choice

Bottled water coolers are highly sustainable: most bottles are collected, cleansed and reused many times over whilst main-fed coolers of course use water from the mains that is filtered before being dispensed.

More information For details visit the WE website www.watercoolerseurope.eu

For further information: