



Strategic Inter-Governmental forum on Physical Activity and Health (SIGPAH)

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Physical Activity Measures for Adults

A key initiative outlined in the SIGPAH Work Plan is to promote the adoption of uniform definitions, standards and procedures for the measurement of physical activity. In response to this, the Commonwealth has recently commissioned two studies designed to contribute to the evidence base on existing population survey questions on physical activity.

The aim of the '*Comparison and reliability study of physical activity questions for use in Australian population surveys*', is to undertake a calibration study to develop algorithms to enable the results from various physical activity population self-report survey questions to be compared and used to derive trend data. This study also assesses reliability of questions through test-re-test.

The aim of the '*Australian validation study of the major self-report adult physical activity population survey questions*' is to develop, conduct and report on an Australian validation study of the major self-report adult physical activity population survey questions that measure the prevalence of people who undertake adequate levels of physical activity to achieve a health benefit. These surveys are the Behavioural Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), the long and short International Physical Activity Questionnaires and the Active Australia surveys.

A steering group has recently been set-up to ensure credibility, usefulness, quality of evidence and the opportunity to provide input to the studies. Organisations represented on the group include SIGPAH, the Computer Assisted Telephone Interview Technical Reference Group, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Australian Sports Commission and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care.

Physical Activity and Health Training Course

This year the Physical Activity and Health Training Course, with the support of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, was conducted in Adelaide by the Department of Human Services SA and in Brisbane by the University of Queensland and Queensland Health. The courses, attended by a range of sectors, were a great success attracting 53 participants in SA and 80 participants in QLD.

The course combined the latest information for both research and practitioner streams over three days presented by experts in the field, including Professors Wendy Brown and Adrian Bauman, and those running local programs. Both courses will be evaluated by Adrian Bauman to provide recommendations for future courses, possibly in 2002.

- A forum for national leadership in physical activity and health in Australia -

Better Practice Guidelines

The '*Getting Australia Active: best practice for the promotion of physical activity*' document is undergoing final revisions before being professionally edited and delivered to the Commonwealth. It will then be published by the Commonwealth for distribution by the new year.

NPHP Transport and Physical Activity Portfolio of Interventions

Last year the National Public Health Partnership, with the support of SIGPAH, commissioned a portfolio pilot on active transport as a case study to illustrate the planning framework. It also aimed to identify a portfolio of interventions addressing the promotion of public transport and physical activity. The consultant's report on the portfolio to promote active transport has now been finalised and approved by SIGPAH to be sent to the National Public Health Partnership for endorsement. Implementation of interventions will be discussed by SIGPAH once the document is endorsed. It is anticipated that the report will be available on the Partnership's website at www.nphp.gov.au

SA Active Children Strategy

The Department of Human Services SA is developing an active children strategy that aims to increase physical activity by South Australian children in order to promote health, well-being and positive educational outcomes. It will incorporate a broad range of strategies, based on available evidence as well as a communications strategy to be complemented by activities within a range of sectors. The strategy is expected to be launched early in 2002.

Pedestrian Council of Australia - National Walk to Work Day

National Walk to Work Day 2001 will be run again this year. The Commonwealth has funded a national coordinator, located with the National Heart Foundation, SA Division, to coordinate activities supporting the event from a health sector perspective.

Bill Bellew completed his term as Chair of SIGPAH and was thanked for his skilful leadership and commitment to increasing physical activity in Australia.