



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

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Communique of the Twelfth SIGPAH Meeting Face-to-face Meeting held on Tuesday 15 August 2000

SIGPAH reporting mechanism to the National Public Health Partnership (NPHP)

SIGPAH is now a formal subcommittee of the National Public Health Partnership (NPHP). Dr Andrew Wilson of NSW and Chair of the NPHP Group is SIGPAH's physical activity 'sponsor' on the NPHP to communicate and promote physical activity initiatives. SIGPAH will formally report to the NPHP by forwarding its meeting minutes and communique to the NPHP Secretariat. SIGPAH information will be available soon on the National Public Health Partnership website www.nphp.gov.au

Population Survey Monitor

The ABS is discontinuing the Population Survey Monitor (PSM); an omnibus household survey, which collects data on a wide and varied range of topics each quarter. To date the Australian Sports Commission (ASC) has provided the ABS with funding to obtain physical activity and sport trend data from the PSM. The ASC is now organising its own survey which will include physical activity questions related to sport. There are opportunities to include health promoting physical activity question in the ASC survey.

SIGPAH/General Practice Working Group

In December 1999 the SIGPAH/General Practice (GP) Working Group was established to develop a strategy and action plan to increase the promotion of physical activity in general practice settings. The GP Working Group is chaired by Mr Philip Vita, NSW Department of Health and has membership from the: GP Branch of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care; Australian Medical Association; Australian Division of GP's; Royal Australian College of GPs (RACGP); Heart Foundation; South Australia, Victorian and Queensland Health Departments; the Active Script Program (VIC); and the Joint Advisory Group on General Practice and Population Health (JAG). The Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care provides Secretariat support to the GP Working Group.

At a face-to-face meeting on 26 July 2000, the GP Working reviewed the draft strategic plan and developed a draft discussion paper for SIGPAH which identifies objectives and associated strategies for promoting physical activity in the GP setting. The discussion paper should be endorsed and finalised by key stakeholders by March 2001. Mr Vita spoke about the draft discussion paper at the JAG teleconference 30 August 2000.

Chairs of National Strategies Meeting 24 July 2000

The Chairs of National Strategies: Physical Activity; Nutrition; Tobacco and Alcohol; and the Joint Advisory Group on General Practice and Population Health (JAG) discussed a possible integrated approach to facilitate risk factor identification and management in the general practice setting. Professor Mark Harris, Chair of JAG, wrote to the Chairs of National Strategies seeking views on this approach. SIGPAH communicated to Professor Mark Harris that it supports the initiative and emphasised that integration should take a 'settings' approach to general practice. The SIGPAH/GP Working Group (as mentioned previously) has incorporated feedback and comments from the Chairs of National Strategies and JAG meeting into their discussion paper. The strategy outlined in the discussion paper recognises the need to use existing resources and structures to incorporate physical activity promotion into the work of general practitioners.

National Public Health Partnership Planning and Practice Framework Pilot for Physical Activity

The National Public Health Partnership Planning and Practice Framework is a process for analysing and acting on public health issues and evaluating the results. In March this year, SIGPAH was invited to pilot the framework methodology on a physical activity priority. SIGPAH accepted the framework and endorsed 'transport and physical activity' as the pilot topic. A content researcher has been selected to: specify a portfolio of interventions to increase incidental physical activity in the transport setting; gather evidence supporting the portfolio and provide a report of the process used and suggest improvements. The Steering Group for the project has been established and a Decision-

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

Making Group is currently being formed with representation from key stakeholders. The final project report is expected to be finalised by mid February 2001.

Pedestrian Council of Australia (PCA)

The Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care has committed funds to evaluate *National Walk to Work Day* which will be held on Friday 3 November 2000. SIGPAH members were invited to fund oversampling in their jurisdictions if they wish to get a State or Territory specific evaluation.

Physical Activity and Health Training Course for Researcher and Practitioners

The first physical activity and health training course for researchers and practitioners was held in July 1999 at the University of NSW, with the support of a grant from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care. The course was well received by participants, as indicated in post-course evaluations. Recommendations include repeating this course in 2000 or 2001. A small group of SIGPAH members will determine the best process for running the Training Course and communicate this with Professor Adrian Bauman, the principal proponent for the conduct and delivery of the course, and Professor Wendy Brown.

Active Australia Alliance

The Active Australia Alliance received a letter requesting endorsement of the Children's Charter for Physical Activity and Sport for Children and Youth, developed by the NSW Children's Hospital. The Alliance is writing back to say that it is supportive but unable to endorse the Charter in its current form. Should the Charter be revised and the wording changed to suggest a broader approach to health promoting physical activity, the Alliance would consider endorsing the Charter.

Australian Sports Commission

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) has undergone a major restructure. The Participation Division has been dissolved and absorbed with other functions and is now called the Sport Development Group (SDG). The role of the SDG is to provide a base for sport at community, regional and national levels. All SDG programs will be marketed and delivered under Active Australia. The SDG has five sections, with Ms Henny Oldenhove as the Manager of the SDG.

The ASC is running a major post-Olympics campaign to encourage more Australians to be physically active by joining a club. The strategy will consist of three components: a component that encourages clubs and organisations to become Active Australia provider network members; Active Australia Day 29 October 2000; and a community service television commercial encouraging Australians to "participate and feel great – join a club".

Primary Prevention Section

The Primary Prevention Section of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care (website address is www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/strateg/pp/) is funding a consortium consisting of Professor Adrian Bauman; Professor Wendy Brown; Professor Neville Bowen and Dr Michael Booth to undertake a six month project on Monitoring and Evaluating Physical Activity. Project outcomes will include an update of evidence on the health benefits of physical activity and determinants of physical activity; consultations with key stakeholders on monitoring and evaluation of physical activity; a report on the required linkages between data systems; and a Physical Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

Better Practice Guidelines

The development of "Better Practice Guidelines for the Promotion of Physical Activity in Australia" is a priority in the SIGPAH work plan. The Guidelines will identify best practice interventions for the promotion of physical activity and is expected to be used as a resource by Health Departments Australia wide in promoting physical activity for health. The NSW Department of Health jointly funds the project with the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care. The project is expected to be completed by the end of August 2000.

The Physical Activity Measurement Workshop

A Physical Activity Measurement Workshop involving key stakeholders in the area of physical activity was held on 14 September 2000. The aim of the workshop was to improve stakeholder's understanding of the various tools used for the measurement of physical activity participation, and if possible achieve a consensus on the most appropriate tool(s) for population surveys. Key stakeholders that attended the workshop were: SIGPAH; the ABS; AIHW; the National Health Data Committee (NHDC); the Computer Assisted Telephone Interview Technical Reference Group (CATI-TRG); the ASC; Professor Adrian Bauman; Professor Wendy Brown; and the Primary Prevention Section of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care. The outcomes of the workshop will be included in a discussion paper which is currently being drafted.

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