



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

Communique from the meeting held on 31 August, 1999

The Strategic Inter-Governmental Forum on Physical Activity and Health (SIGFPAH) is the national public health coordinating body of physical activity and health in Australia. The forum aims to improve the health of all Australians with the support of the National Public Health Partnership, through the promotion of physical activity.

Key outcomes of the meeting

1. Overview of current activities

- The Commonwealth is predominantly working in policy development and research. Their largest project, currently in development, is a monitoring, research and evaluation of participation in physical activity across Australia. The Commonwealth also plans to further develop links with the transport sector and is currently developing a contract for an 'audit' of transport and health programs and issues across Australia.
- The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) is planning for a major public campaign designed to prepare the sporting industry for the surfacing of latent motivation created by the Olympics. They are also preparing for Active Australia Day on Sunday October 10, involving 63 local governments across Australia
- Territory Health Services is also preparing for Active Australia Day, followed by ANF Nutrition Week. They are keen to adapt posters promoting the Physical Activity Guidelines to be more suitable for Indigenous Australians and have recently presented the Preventable Chronic Diseases Strategy to Government.
- Qld Health is currently working on a Strategic Action Framework for developing supportive environments for physical activity in Qld. A draft strategic framework will be trialed in a local area of the Gold Coast. They are also developing partnerships with various groups and organisations on transport issues in support of bikeway and walkway development.
- SA Department of Human Services have recently drafted a Strategic Plan for SA due to be finalised by December. They are planning to run the 'Rusty Man' public education campaign late 1999 or early 2000. Also, plans for the April 2000 Physical Activity conference in conjunction with the ACHPER conference, are under way.
- NSW Department of Health is also re-running the 'Rusty Man' in October around Walk to Work Day and Active Australia Day. They are also working with the transport sector on Pedestrian Access Mobility Plans and are submitting the final Physical Activity Task Force Progress Report to the Premier by the end of October.



- TAS Department of Health and Human Services is currently re-structuring the reference group comprising Local Government, Education, Sport and Recreation, Health and human Services and the Active Australia State Reference Group. A forum for Physical Activity and Health is planned for October. A follow-up of the 1998 Healthy Community Survey is also planned.
- The Health Department of WA is proposing to conduct stakeholder surveys to assist in the development of a Business Plan for Physical Activity. Useful state-based data is not available on levels of physical activity in WA and it is proposed that a physical activity survey be undertaken to provide baseline data.
- Department of Human Services, Vic aims to have an Implementation Plan finalised by mid 2000, while the Active for Life Physical Activity Strategy document is scheduled for completion by December. The Active Script and Walk and Talk programs have proven very popular.
- ACT Department of Health and Community Care purchases a range of community health based physical activity projects for people at risk. The Department supports the physical activity focus of Healthy Cities Canberra. The ACT Physical Activity Industry Group, which is led by ACT Bureau of Sport and Recreation, is driving an upgrade of Canberra's outdoor fitness circuits and the ACT Division of the National Heart Foundation has commenced a women and heart disease project.

2. Development of SIGPAH Work Plan

The main aim of this meeting was to develop a Work Plan for SIGPAH based on the group's goals and current areas of activity.

The group established nine key areas in which to operate, with relevant strategies suggested for each case area. Draft Strategic Directions will be developed on the basis of this consensus for SIGPAH, and in collaboration with the ASC, for the Active Australia Alliance. These Draft documents will be subject to further consideration by SIGPAH and by the Alliance in the coming months.

3. National monitoring, evaluation and research system

As part of the SIGPAH Work Plan, the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care will be tendering for a National physical activity monitoring, evaluation and research project to collect and analyse data on participation in physical activity across Australia.

An early draft of the specifications are currently with SIGPAH members for comment and feedback.

For further information about SIGPAH, additional information about this meeting or contact details for SIGPAH members, please contact Ms Penny Graham, of the SIGPAH Secretariat, on (02) 6289 7939.

