

Physical activity on prescription in primary care

Impact on physical activity level, metabolic health and health-related quality of life, and its cost-effectiveness – a short- and long-term perspective

There is strong evidence for the relationship between regular physical activity and positive health effects, and that physical activity can be used to prevent and treat diseases. In Sweden, licensed healthcare professionals offer physical activity on prescription (PAP) as a method of supporting patients to increase their physical activity level. However, further studies are needed to elucidate clinically feasible and effective PAP treatment strategies. The Gothenburg PAP study on which this thesis is based, started in 2010 at 15 health care centers by offering PAP to 444 patients (aged 27–85 years) who were physically inactive with metabolic risk factors and following them for 5 years. The overall aim of this thesis was to evaluate the Swedish PAP treatment regarding physical activity level, metabolic health, and health-related quality of life, and to explore factors that may predict increased physical activity levels. In addition, this thesis evaluated two different PAP treatment strategies, supported by either the health care center or a physiotherapist, for patients who still had not reached a sufficient physical activity level after a prior 6-month period of PAP treatment. The cost-effectiveness of the two strategies was evaluated in a health economics study. This thesis shows that both short- and long-term PAP treatment can be used as a feasible intervention in ordinary primary health care to increase physical activity level, metabolic health, and health-related quality of life in adult patients. Well evaluated and widely implemented, PAP-treatment has the potential to become an important method and may result in major health benefits for physically inactive patients and benefit the healthcare system.



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