

S08: Physical Activity Policy Monitoring at the National and Sub-National Levels: From Tools Development to Their Real-World Impact

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Insufficient physical activity (PA) in the population is a growing global health problem, with nearly one-third (31%) of adults worldwide not meeting the recommended levels of PA in 2022, compared with 23% in the year 2000. Policies have been identified as systemic determinants of PA opportunities and, eventually, changes in PA behaviour in populations. Following guidance from international and scientific organisations, national and sub-national governments have developed and enacted their own policy initiatives to tackle the inactivity epidemic and support more active environments, societies, and individuals. However, in most cases these initiatives are not (properly) monitored and evaluated, and their actual population impact remains largely undocumented.

This symposium addresses this problem by presenting studies analysing PA policy monitoring tools at national and sub-national levels. The presentations cover various perspectives, including the development, implementation, and potential impact of these tools, as well as their strengths and limitations.

The first presentation will provide a mapping of national level PA policy monitoring tools and explore the potential impact of these tools on the policy process. The second presentation will summarise the results of a grey literature review of sub-national level PA policy monitoring tools developed by governments and researchers. The third presentation will explore the process and outcomes of developing and pilot testing a PA monitoring tool in co-production with the government, while the fourth one will focus on PA monitoring at the local level in different settings (e.g. municipality and school), combined with other health themes such as nutrition, mental wellbeing, fall prevention, and smoking.

Discussions will include the feasibility of government led, ongoing PA policy monitoring using the tools developed by academics, the audience's experience related to PA policy monitoring/evaluation, but also how to streamline the efforts to promote and support the institutionalisation of policy monitoring/evaluation and the use of monitoring data for policy improvement and increases in population's PA behaviour.



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