

## Melhorar a saúde promovendo a atividade física: Afinal, de quem é essa função?

A Organização Mundial da Saúde (OMS) define atividade física como sendo qualquer movimento corporal produzido pelos músculos esqueléticos que requeira gasto de energia (World Health Organization, 2017). Sabemos que a atividade física é boa para nós e para os nossos doentes. Há fortes evidências de que a atividade física regular reduz o risco de doenças crônicas tais como doença coronária, acidente vascular cerebral e diabetes do tipo II, ajuda a manter um peso corporal saudável, melhora a autoestima e reduz os sintomas de depressão e ansiedade (Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, The Scottish Government, Welsh Government, & Department of Health, 2011). Em idosos, a atividade física ajuda a manter a função cognitiva e a capacidade de realizar atividades da vida diária e reduz o risco de quedas (Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, The Scottish Government, Welsh Government, & Department of Health, 2011). Em crianças e jovens, a atividade física melhora a saúde óssea, promove a aprendizagem de competências sociais e desenvolve os movimentos e a coordenação (Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, The Scottish Government, Welsh Government, & Department of Health, 2011). A atividade física oferece também benefícios amplamente reconhecidos para pessoas com várias doenças físicas e mentais.

A OMS publicou as *Global Recommendations*

## Improving health through Physical Activity promotion – whose job is it anyway?

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines physical activity as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure (World Health Organization, 2017). We know that physical activity is good for us and for our patients. There is overwhelming evidence that regular physical activity reduces the risk of a range of chronic diseases such as coronary heart disease, stroke and type II diabetes, helps maintain a healthy body weight, improves self-esteem, and reduces symptoms of depression and anxiety (Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, The Scottish Government, Welsh Government, & Department of Health, 2011). In older people physical activity helps to maintain cognitive function, ability to carry out activities of daily living and reduces the risk of falls (Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, The Scottish Government, Welsh Government, & Department of Health, 2011).<sup>3</sup> In children and young people, physical activity improves bone health, supports learning of social skills and develops movement and co-ordination (Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, The Scottish Government, Welsh Government, & Department of Health, 2011). Physical activity also has widely acknowledged benefits for people with a wide

*on Physical Activity for Health* em 2010. Muitas destas recomendações globais sobre atividade física para a saúde foram implementadas ao nível internacional, por exemplo o desenvolvimento e a implementação de diretrizes nacionais para a atividade física e a realização de campanhas nos meios de comunicação social para conscientização sobre os benefícios da atividade física para a saúde.

Então porque é que a inatividade física é um dos dez principais fatores de risco de morte em todo o mundo e um importante fator de risco para doenças não transmissíveis como doenças cardiovasculares, cancro e diabetes? Por que é que um em cada quatro adultos em todo o mundo não consegue realizar o mínimo recomendado de 150 minutos de atividade física de intensidade moderada por semana? Apesar de as vantagens da atividade física estarem bastante documentadas, há uma infinidade de obstáculos à participação na atividade física a um nível e intensidade suficientes para gerar benefícios para a saúde. Tendo em conta os custos da inatividade física - estimada no Reino Unido apenas como sendo 1,06 mil milhões de libras por ano em custos diretos (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2013) - e os riscos para a saúde associados com a inatividade física, existe a necessidade urgente de estratégias que promovam efetivamente a realização e a manutenção da atividade física.

No Reino Unido, iniciativas tais como a *making every contact count* (fazer com que cada contacto conte), que apela aos profissionais de saúde para que aproveitem todas as oportunidades para promover os benefícios de um estilo de vida saudável junto dos seus doentes, e o *physical activity pledge* (compromisso para com a atividade física) dos Allied Health Professions Directors, que visa aumentar os níveis de atividade física na Escócia têm destacado o importante papel que a equipa de saúde pode desempenhar na promoção da atividade física e no incentivo à adoção de comportamentos positivos por parte dos doentes com quem contactam na prática clínica diária. Assim, em resposta à pergunta *Afinal, de quem é essa função?*, gostaríamos de sugerir que cabe a cada profissional de saúde promover a atividade física. Em alguns sectores da saúde, nomeadamente nos cuidados primários, os enfermeiros e outros profissionais de saúde contactam com grande parte da população, tornando-se assim

range of physical and mental health conditions.

The WHO published “Global recommendations on Physical Activity for Health” in 2010. Many of the recommendations have been implemented internationally such as the development and implementation of national physical activity guidelines, and the use of mass media campaigns to raise awareness of the benefits of physical activity for health.

Why then is physical inactivity one of the ten leading risk factors for death worldwide, and a key risk factor for noncommunicable diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes? Why are one in four adults across the globe not achieving the recommended minimum of 150 minutes moderate-intensity physical activity per week? Despite the well-documented benefits of physical activity, there are a plethora of barriers to participating in physical activity at a sufficient volume and intensity to be beneficial to health. Given the cost of physical inactivity – estimated in the UK alone to be £1.06 billion per year in direct costs (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2013) – and the health risks associated with physical inactivity, there is an urgent need for strategies that effectively promote uptake and maintenance of physical activity. In the UK, initiatives such as *making every contact count*, aimed at healthcare professionals seizing opportunities to promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyle with their patients, and the Allied Health Professions Directors *physical activity pledge*, aimed at increasing the levels of physical activity in Scotland, have highlighted the important role that healthcare staff can play in physical activity promotion and encouraging positive behaviour change in the patients they encounter in day-to-day practice. So, in answer to *whose job is it anyway?* we would suggest that it is the job of every healthcare professional to promote physical activity. Some healthcare sectors, such as primary care, particularly lend themselves to healthcare professionals such as nurses and allied health professionals reaching large proportions of the population, thereby making them an important component of the public health workforce

uma parte importante da força de trabalho em saúde pública, numa posição privilegiada para promover os benefícios da atividade física. Têm sido testados vários métodos para promover a atividade física, incluindo intervenções breves ou muito breves, sinalização para grupos, classes e recursos, intervenções com pedómetros e a utilização crescente de intervenções em saúde. No entanto, apesar de ser fácil dizer que todos os profissionais de saúde devem promover a atividade física, tal é mais difícil de colocar em prática. Bakhshi, Sun, Murrells e While (2015) verificaram que, numa amostra de 623 enfermeiros, menos de metade promove a atividade física na sua prática clínica, reforçando a necessidade de formação sobre aconselhamento para a realização da atividade física e estratégias de promoção da atividade física (Bakhshi, Sun, Murrells, & While, 2015). Numa revisão sistemática, Huijg et al. (2015) concluíram que os fatores mais suscetíveis de influenciar negativamente a promoção da atividade física nos cuidados primários incluíam a falta de tempo e educação formal, as prioridades concorrentes e as percepções dos profissionais de saúde em relação à falta de motivação dos doentes para serem fisicamente ativos. A promoção da atividade física é uma área complexa e estimulante e uma prioridade para os educadores e investigadores em saúde e para os governos. No momento em que escrevemos este editorial, a época festiva está próxima e será seguida pelas tradicionais resoluções de ano novo, que para muitos (tanto profissionais de saúde como doentes) incluirá o aumento dos níveis de atividade física. Gostaríamos de apelar a todos os profissionais de saúde para que incluam a promoção da atividade física na sua própria prática e na dos seus colegas, contribuindo assim para esta importante questão de saúde pública.

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and well-placed to promote the benefits of physical activity. Various methods for promoting physical activity have been tested, including brief or very brief interventions, signposting to groups, classes and resources, pedometer-based interventions, and increasingly the use of Health interventions.

It is however easy to say that all healthcare professional should be promoting physical activity but less easy to put into practice. Bakhshi, Sun, Murrells, and While (2015) found that just under half their sample of 623 registered nurses were promoting physical activity in their clinical practice, and their study highlighted a need for training on physical-activity related counselling and strategies for promoting physical activity (Bakhshi, Sun, Murrells, & While, 2015). Huijg et al. (2015) in their systematic review reported that factors most likely to negatively influence physical activity promotion in primary care were lack of time and formal education, competing priorities, and healthcare professionals' perceptions of patients' lack of motivation to be physically active. Physical activity promotion is a complex and challenging area, and a priority for healthcare educators, researchers and governments alike. At the time of writing this we are approaching the festive season, which will be followed by the traditional resolutions in the new year, which for many (whether healthcare professional or patient) will include increasing physical activity levels. We would like to call on all healthcare professionals to consider what they could do to embed physical activity promotion in their own and their colleagues' practice, in order to contribute to this important public health issue.

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