



New teaching resource for promoting physical activity in pregnancy

Christ Church academics have been working on updating physical activity teaching resources, launched today by the Council of Deans of Health and Exercise Works!, to enable healthcare professionals to provide consistent messaging on physical activity during pregnancy.

The resource forms part of a series of teaching guides for the [#MovementforMovement](#) campaign, which supports teaching on undergraduate health and medicine programmes across the UK, and aims to help healthcare graduates effectively promote physical activity for the prevention, treatment and management of disease, and in the promotion of good health.

Dr Marlize De Vivo and Dr Hayley Mills, from the School of Human and Life Sciences, were commissioned to update the teaching resources relating to physical activity during pregnancy. This follows the release of the Department of Health's new guidelines for physical activity during pregnancy earlier this year.

Drs De Vivo and Mills stated that: "Pregnancy is considered by many healthcare policymakers as a unique opportunity to promote healthy lifestyle behaviours. However, messaging relating to various health behaviours during pregnancy has often been ambiguous and at times contradictory.

Historically, there has been a tendency to view physical activity as a potential risk during pregnancy, and on that basis even active women have reduced their engagement with physical activities. However, data increasingly suggests health and wellbeing benefits for both mother and baby.

The new Department of Health guidelines bring those for physical activity during pregnancy in line with those for the general population that is, accumulating 150 minutes of moderate intensity of activity per week. Some pregnancy considerations and adaptations are noted in

the guidelines, however, they support the maintenance of physical activity among previously active women whilst encouraging those not previously engaged to start gradually. The updated “[Movement for Movement](#)” resources enable these same consistent messages to be taught directly to students in the healthcare professions.

Teaching and disseminating the updated guidance allows for a confident delivery of consistent evidence-based physical activity messages to expectant mums. This in turn, paves the way in normalising physical activity during pregnancy in the wider society.”

Drs De Vivo and Mills will be presenting further work focusing on the psychology of physical activity and Pregnancy behaviour at the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences – European Federation for Sport Psychology (BASES-FEPSAC) conference on November 28th 2017.

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- The #MovementForMovement aims to build capacity in delivering physical activity interventions by all future health care workers through working as a community of practice both professionally and educationally. The resources are available for free to all universities with health programmes.
- The #MovementForMovement resources are available to all undergraduate schools of medicine and health that train health care students (such as doctors, nurses, midwives, dentists, pharmacists and allied health professionals as defined by the NHS).
- Exercise Works! promotes the use of physical activity in preventing and treating disease. For further details, <http://www.exercise-works.org/>
- [The Council of Deans of Health](#) is the voice of the deans and heads of UK university faculties for nursing, midwifery and the allied health professions. For further information about the work of the Council of Deans of Health please see councilofdeans.org.uk.

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*2015/16 Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education survey

Media contact

Jeanette Earl

Media Relations Manager

Canterbury Christ Church University

01227 782391