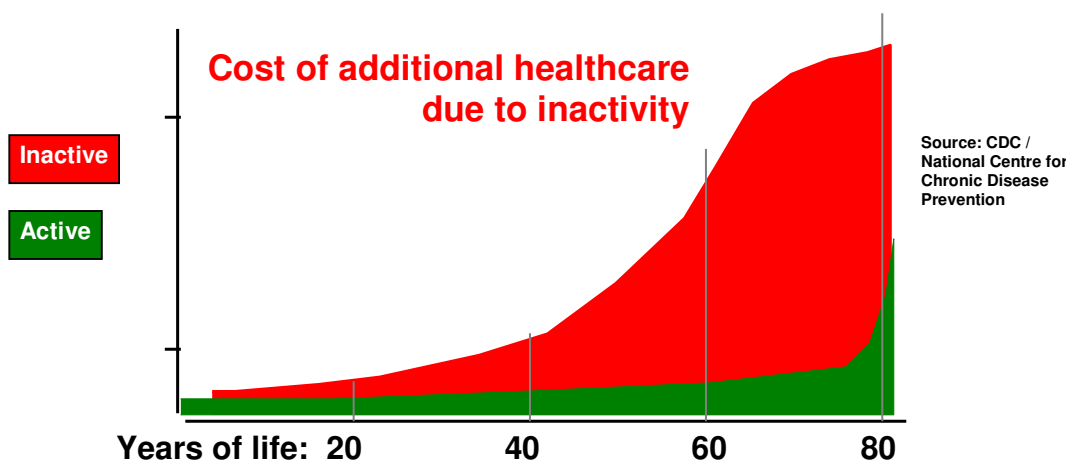


Physical activity – invest to save

"An estimated 35,000 deaths every year in the UK are directly related to physical inactivity. Two-thirds of these deaths are due to cardiovascular disease, this equals close to 100 deaths a day, which is equivalent to one person dying as a result of inactivity every 15 minutes." (Allender et al 2007)ⁱ

- We know inactive people have higher healthcare costs and the difference increases with age.
- Commissioning services that are targeted at population segments will quickly provide a return on investment.



Given the multiple effects of physical inactivity on health, there is a need for PCTs to increase their investment in the commissioning of physical activity promotion and behaviour change interventions as part of their prevention strategy.

Commissioning physical activity – savings and interventions

There is a growing body of literature around physical activity best practice guidance from the National Institute for Health & Clinical Excellence (2009)ⁱⁱ. The weight of evidence around the cost savings that can be derived from investment in physical activity interventions has recently been detailed by Health England (2009)ⁱⁱⁱ.

"Brief Interventions for physical activity cost between £20 and £440 per Quality Adjusted Life Year – (significantly below the £30,000 cost-effective threshold) and therefore represent exceptional value for money." NICE 2006^{iv}

Key activities to commission and address

Primary Care

Primary care practitioners should take the opportunity, whenever possible (including health checks), to identify inactive adults (using the General Practitioner Physical Activity Questionnaire) and advise them to aim for 30 minutes of moderate activity on 5 days of the week (or more) using brief intervention or

motivational interviewing techniques e.g. commissioning the Lets Get Moving care pathway;
http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/publichealth/healthimprovement/physicalactivity/DH_099438

Partnerships - Sport and Physical Activity Alliances (SPAA)

Ensure each local Sport and Physical Activity Alliance takes an effective partnership approach and ensure strong health representation on the SPAAAs

Walking

Invest in and support local Walking the Way to Health schemes and promote walking for journeys of less than 1 mile as is one of the easiest and most accessible activities for sedentary populations

<http://www.whi.org.uk/>

Social Marketing approach

Commissioning or delivering social marketing campaigns to promote the benefits of physical activity, utilising the promoting activity toolkit. Insight analysis has developed key trigger messages for different market segments, including which types of activity are most likely to appeal

<http://www.promotingactivity.com>

Workplace activity

Provide support to employers who want to implement the NICE workplace guidance to encourage their employees to be more physically active, prioritising enterprises where a high proportion of employees are from a disadvantaged background.

Provide workplace health projects that promote physical activity to all NHS staff groups. All employers should have an active travel policy <http://www.nice.org.uk/PH13>

Active Travel

Prioritise active travel by committing 10% of transport budgets to cycling and walking initiatives, a 20mph speed limit to be made the norm in residential areas and provision of a high quality network of walking and cycling routes that link everyday destinations

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/cycling/cycletoworkguidance/>

Swimming

Ensure the free swimming for older people targets the most sedentary and the most deprived areas.

http://www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/sport/5896.aspx

Target the over 50s

By raising the awareness of the importance of physical activity in the over 50s, increasing the accessibility of opportunities focusing on the principles of active living and involving health professionals who can promote and support older people trying to change their patterns.

Infrastructure and planning

Ensure there is effective partnership working between LA planning departments and PCTs to ensure health and physical activity are a significant criterion in all planning procedures. E.g. ensure planning applications for new developments always prioritise the need for people to be physically active as a routine part of their daily life, ensure local facilities and services are easily accessible by active travel modes and invest in and promote the use of safe, attractive and accessible green space

ⁱ Allender S, Foster C, Scarborough P & Rayner M (2007) *The burden of physical activity-related ill health in the UK*. Journal Epidemiology & Community Health, 61:344-8

ⁱⁱ Matrix Insight (2009) *Prioritising investments preventative health*. On behalf of Health England.
<http://www.healthengland.org/publications/HealthEnglandReportNo5.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ Matrix (2009) – Prioritising investment in preventative health.

^{iv} NICE (2006) *Four commonly used methods to increase physical activity*. London. NICE public health guidance PH2.