

Up-to-date health - Running and Walking Centre in Tondela, 'CMMCTnd' Portugal

Title in original language:

Saúde em Dia - Centro de Marcha e Corrida de Tondela (CMMCTnd)

Which 'life stage' for CVDs prevention targets the intervention?

The intervention "Saúde em Dia - Centro de Marcha e Corrida de Tondela" (CMMCTnd) CMMCTnd is focused on the senior population of the Municipality of Tondela, but it also includes adults.

What is the level of implementation of the intervention?

Local. The intervention has been implemented in the Municipality of Tondela.

To which type of interventions does your example of good practice belong to?

Individual intervention.

Short description of the intervention:

The intervention CMMCTnd targets adults, especially the senior population, of the Municipality of Tondela, Portugal. The main goal of CMMCTnd is to reduce the sedentary lifestyle and the isolation of the target population, through activities promoting healthy and active ageing. The main operational objectives of CMMCTnd are: to disseminate the practice of technically oriented physical exercise; to establish partnerships with the health sector, identifying beneficiaries from medical appointments and introducing them to physical exercise activities in the presence of a Sports Technician; to assess and monitor the health parameters; and to register physical performance and health of participants. Besides these main objectives, this program also enabled a better occupation plan of the local sporting facilities, the stimulation of the associativism and the creation of job opportunities for sports technicians.

The project comprises sessions of exercise (2-3 times a week), in public spaces dedicated for fitness, walking, jogging, swimming, among others. Some activities are also oriented to the promotion of cognition and include cultural events, allowing the establishment of partnerships with local institutions. The intervention also includes the presence of a Sports technician at the Health Unit Centres that orients the beneficiaries from the diabetic medical appointments towards an exercise programme in CMMCTnd. In addition, the presence of three nurses at the CMMCTnd allows the diagnosis and the monitoring of the beneficiaries, registering potential useful information for the general practitioner or the Sports technician in the "Exercise and Physical Health Bulletin". There is also collaboration with one nutritionist (training and monitoring healthy eating habits) and one psychologist (working in psychomotricity and cognitive development areas).

What are the main aim and the main objectives of your example of good practice?

The main goal is to fight sedentary lifestyle, isolation, and loneliness of the elderly population in the municipality of Tondela. This is accomplished through activities promoting healthy and active ageing. The main objectives are to provide a platform of health promotion through the practice of regular physical exercise activities, supported and monitored by specialized staff (Physical Education professional), and to provide space for counselling, information and study of questions related with health and physical exercise. The specific objectives of CMMCTnd are:

- to evaluate the physical condition of the beneficiaries of the programme and to perform the diagnosis using several test batteries (e.g. Fullerton Advanced Balance Scale and Senior Fitness Test) and physiological parameters (e.g. glycaemia, cholesterol, and body index mass);
- to promote and develop institutional capacities to recommend to the adequate health services;
- to establish partnerships with the Health Units in order to adjust the physical exercises to the needs of the beneficiaries;
- to register the physical exercise performance of the beneficiaries, providing the health professionals (general practitioner) with complementary data for clinical monitoring;
- to provide technical support to the beneficiaries, whether or not practicing physical exercise;
- to allow research projects implementation with groups of citizens, in partnerships with Universities and Health Institutions.

Was the design of the intervention appropriate and built upon relevant data, theory, context, evidence, previous practice including pilot studies?

Yes. According to the Resolution of the European Parliament, dated February 6th, 2013, about the European Innovation Partnership for the Active and Healthy Ageing, there is an urgent need to increase the levels of physical exercise of the elderly population, promoting healthy and active ageing, since lack of regular physical exercise leads to several health problems, which constitute the fourth most common death risk factor. In addition, in 2007, a study was performed to evaluate the sports habits of the population of the Municipality of Tondela, and it was concluded that almost 41% of people with more than 40 years-old were not practicing physical exercise, pointing the lack of offer in the Municipality as the major cause for the registered lack of physical activity.

Did the design thoroughly describe the practice in terms of purpose, SMART objectives, methods?

Yes. Participants become aware of the programme through dissemination activities of local associations and by the Professor of Physical Education (weekly present at the Health Units Centre). The physical exercise sessions are held in various locations in the Municipality, from January to December, 2-3 sessions per week, lasting 60 minutes each session. The activities consist of training of physical capacities as a mean to prevent decline of physical and cognitive functions. The physical performance and health indicators are evaluated by a team of nurses that registers the performance in the "Exercise and Physical Health Bulletin". These records are forwarded by the participant to the general practitioner. This communication channel allows a more sustained evaluation of the progress of the participant, taking into account possible diseases. Single sessions (workshops) in the areas of health and physical exercise complement the practical part with theoretical knowledge on the importance and influence of these vital factors in the quality of life of citizens. The main objective of the intervention is to promote healthy lifestyles fighting physical inactivity, isolation and loneliness, which tend to increase in our society.

What core activities are/have been implemented?

In general, physical exercise activities are scheduled regularly (2-3 times per week) and there are training sessions (workshops) on nutrition issues, physical exercise and diabetes prevention. The individual performances (physical exercise and health status) are registered in the booklet ("Exercise and Physical Health Bulletin"), joining information from/to doctors, nurses and sports technicians.

Please give a description of the problem the good practice example want to tackle:

In 2007, a study was performed to evaluate the sports habits of the population of the Municipality of Tondela. The data presented in the “Sports Letter” registered that almost 41% of people with more than 40 years-old were not practicing physical exercise, pointing lack of offer as the major cause. In order to find solutions to reduce this index and to satisfy the targeted population, it was created an “anti-sedentary lifestyle” program, along with the institutional partners. Besides the main objective, this program also enables a better occupation plan of the local sporting facilities, the creation of partnerships and job opportunities for Physical Exercise technicians.

Was the target population/s defined on the basis of needs assessment including strengths and other characteristics?

Yes, the target populations were chosen based on previous needs identified on a diagnosis analysis of the Municipality of Tondela.

Was the engagement of intermediaries/multipliers used to promote the meaningful participation of the target population?

Yes. In addition to the local health institutions through general practitioners refer beneficiaries (especially those with conditions susceptible to improve with regular physical exercise), we engage associative institutions that, through its members, locally organize activities to promote the advantages of the intervention (organized walking groups, free screenings of blood glucose levels, and body mass index, etc.). In addition, there were several awareness-raising events, including generalized diagnosis to the population (free screening of cardiovascular risk; evaluation of physical performance - overall strength, flexibility, etc. and assessing, in collaboration with the Faculty of Sport Sciences and Physical Education, University of Coimbra and Sports School of the University of Porto). The organization of workshops and information sessions on health, exercise and nutrition, with the support of experts in the respective fields, promoted the awareness of potential beneficiaries.

During implementation, did specific actions were taken to address the equity dimensions?

Yes. The programme is open to all population of the Municipality of Tondela interested in participate, with a special attention to the senior population, particularly the citizens living in more rural, isolated locations.

In design, did relevant dimensions of equity were adequately taken into consideration and targeted?

Yes. The programme was designed taking into account that there are senior citizens living in rural isolated areas, and some with physical disabilities. The activities are planned in accordance the attendees.

Which vulnerable social groups were targeted?

The programme encloses all population of the Municipality of Tondela, particularly the senior population. This means that there are persons with low income and low education, and some may have a physical disability, and live isolated.

Is the intervention embedded in a broader national/regional/ local policy or action plan?

Yes. This intervention has the support and is being promoted by the Municipality of Tondela. It is aligned with the Portuguese Plan of Walking and Running (framed by the Portuguese Institute of Sports, Portuguese Athletics Federation and Faculty of Sport of the University of Porto).

Did the intervention have a comprehensive approach to health promotion addressing all relevant determinants?

Yes. The intervention was designed taking into consideration the senior population of the Municipality of Tondela, knowing that this group of people usually lives isolated, and has low income and low socio-economic conditions.

Was an effective partnership in place?

Yes. CMMCTnd has established partnerships with the Health Care Units, private sector and with private charity institutions.

Who implemented the intervention?

The programme involves the Municipality of Tondela, the partner institutions (Health Units of Tondela, local associations and parish councils, Fresenius Kabi-Labesfal, among others). Direct involvement of health professionals (medical doctors and 3 nurses) with 21 Physical Education professionals (graduated in Physical Education), acting synergistically with nutrition specialists (training and monitoring healthy eating habits) and 1 Psychologist (working in psychomotricity and cognitive development areas).

Was the intervention designed and implemented in consultation with the target population?

The population of the Municipality of Tondela responded to a questionnaire identifying that one of the reasons to explain the high levels of inactivity was the lack of offer.

Did the intervention achieve meaningful participation among the intended target population?

Yes. In 2013 there were 1387 attending the activities and in 2014 there were 1420 beneficiaries participating in the 65 local projects.

Did the intervention develop strengths, resources and autonomy in the target population(s)?

Yes. The questionnaire in 2014 showed that the beneficiaries feel healthier, more mobility, more strength and energy, since their participation in the project. The results also show the importance of acquaintanceship with others, reducing isolation and loneliness of senior people, promoting their integration in the activities of the society.

Was the intervention implemented equitably, i.e. proportional to needs?

The intervention has been implemented fairly, without gender discrimination, age or vulnerable social groups.

Were potential burdens, including harm, of the intervention for the target population addressed?

The beneficiaries of CMMCTnd are monitored by nurses and physical exercise is performed in the presence of specialized staff.

Was the objective/strategy transparent to the target population/stakeholders involved?

Yes. The Municipality of Tondela is a public institution; therefore it follows the transparency guidelines to public institutions. In addition, the information is available to the target population and partner institutions upon request.

How is this example of good practice funded?

CMMCTnd is funded by Regional government (Municipality of Tondela – 80%) and the other institutions coordinating local projects (20%).

Did the intervention include an adequate estimation of the human resources, material and budget requirements in clear relation with committed tasks?

Yes. The activities/local projects to be implemented annually by the CMMCTnd are identified, in order to allocate the needed human resources, material and budget.

Were sources of funding specified in regards to stability and commitment?

Yes. The intervention is funded by the Municipality of Tondela and by other institutions coordinating the local projects.

Were organisational structures clearly defined and described?

Yes. The intervention is managed by the councillor for Sport of the Municipality of Tondela, working in collaboration with his team.

Did the intervention a defined and appropriate evaluation framework assessing structure, processes and outcomes?

Yes. We use the following validated instruments, among others :

- The Short Form (36) Health Survey on health status;
- Senior Fitness Test (Rikli and Jones, 1999);
- Fullerton Advanced Balance (FAB) Scale;

Did the intervention have any information /monitoring systems in place to regularly deliver data aligned with evaluation and reporting needs?

Yes. The intervention is evaluated annually.

Who did/does the evaluation?

Both internal and external parties

Specifically, what has been measured/evaluated?

Internal process evaluation: questionnaires to the beneficiaries & informal interviews. Satisfaction survey to the participants/beneficiaries - Results from the survey (2014): from the 234 respondents, 191 answered that it was "very important", citing the following main reasons: "I have more mobility"; "I feel healthier" and "I feel happier."
External process evaluation: Intervention recognized (2014) as having "High potential for Social Entrepreneurship" certified by the project "Map of Innovation and Social Entrepreneurship in Portugal" (based in ES+ methodology, which was developed by researchers at the IES in collaboration with INSEAD, ISCTE, the Universidade Católica do Porto and a doctoral student from the University of Lancaster).

What are the main results/conclusions/recommendations from the evaluation?

Taking into consideration the clear benefits of promoting regular physical exercise activities and reducing socio-economic exclusion, in addition to the positive feedback of the beneficiaries, it is recommended that this program should be extended.

Did the evaluation results achieve the stated goals and objectives?

Yes. The target population (senior population of the Municipality of Tondela) has been actively participating in the project, thus increasing the levels of physical exercise. In addition, it is contributing to reduce the isolation of some citizens.

Is the evaluation report available?

Yes, but only in Portuguese.

Was there a follow-up or is any follow-up evaluation planned in the future?

The intervention is evaluated annually.

Is the continuation of the intervention ensured through institutional ownership that guarantees funding and human resources and/or mainstreamed?

Yes. The CMMCTnd is promoted by the Municipality of Tondela and it is aligned with the National Plan of Walking and Running.

Is there a broad support for the intervention amongst those who implement it?

Yes. All partners are committed with CMMCTnd. Indeed, the partnership with the Health Care Units has been extended, supporting the favourable feedback of the institutions involved.

Is there a broad support for the intervention amongst the intended target populations?

Yes. As seen in the "Satisfaction survey" on the participants/beneficiaries.

Is the potential impact on the population targeted assessed (if scaled up)?

Yes. The physical conditions and health status of the population enrolled in the project are assessed by specialized staff (nurses and Physical Education professional).

Are there specific knowledge transfer strategies in place (evidence into practice)?

The initiatives/activities taking place at CMMCTnd can be performed by other national institutions and can be adapted in other countries.

Is there available an analysis of requirements for eventual scaling up such as foreseen barriers and facilitators? (e.g.. resources, organisational commitment, etc.).

Yes. In this context there is a commitment with the Parish Councils, Associative institutions and health care units.

What were, in your opinion, the pre-conditions for success? Were there any facilitating factors?

- 1) Human Resources. Qualified personnel in the area of physical exercise and health (specialized staff in Physical Exercise, nurses and medical doctors).
- 2) Material Resources. Existence or acquisition of materials and sports equipment, such as cardio-frequency meters, ropes, dumbbells, etc., and for health status assessment (equipment for blood glucose quantification, lancets and strips, sphygmomanometers, bio-impedance scales, etc.).
- 3) Financial Resources. Financial contribution for technical, material and logistical support.
- 4) Partnerships (Establishment of a network of institutional partners). Involvement of Health Care Facilities; Parish councils; local authorities; Companies; schools and universities.
- 5) Target population. Target the more sedentary groups (elderly, people with diagnosed conditions; patients referred by the general practitioner/other doctor, requiring regular physical exercise).

What were, in your opinion, the main lessons to be learned?

1. Finding that the strategy to improve health, autonomy, personal independence and quality of life of citizens of the Municipality of Tondela was achieved;

2. The promotion of factors that lead to social life and to fight isolation and loneliness, promoting the creation of healthy life styles;
3. The recognition that partnerships between institutions, local (local authorities, health authorities, sport, cultural and social associations, private sector and others) are important, leading to the establishment of a "network of common interests" in the promotion of health and wellbeing of our citizens;
4. Recognizing that important association between physical exercise and health as fundamental and complementary contributions to improve health and the quality of life;
5. The value and importance of promoting active and healthy ageing;
6. Knowing that the senior population is satisfied, which is perceived as a significant improve of their condition, autonomy and personal independence, and especially their health status (physical and psychological);
7. The privilege of receiving public recognition from prestigious Institutions, such as Universities, Health Care Units.

Web page related to the intervention

<http://www.cm-tondela.pt/index.php/servicos/desporto/programa-saude-em-dia/centro-municipal-de-marcha-e-corrída>

References to the most important articles or reports on the intervention

Master thesis (2012) "The practice of physical activity and recreation as informal education agents"

Master thesis (2013) "The impact of an exercise program for 16 weeks in health status, physical performance and quality of life of type 2 diabetes patients of Tondela"

Other relevant documents (implementation manuals, training manuals, posters, videos or other tools available for use or adaptation, etc.):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRqeZEzy8S8&list=PLXaHwIYRoo_eq5VuADFQ-CYfnfIHApSX8

www.facebook.com/marchaecorridatondela

<http://www.cm-tondela.pt/index.php/servicos/desporto/programa-saude-em-dia/instrumentos-de-avaliacao>

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