



Experiences in paediatric healthcare of using physical activity on prescription for children with obesity – a focus group study

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Background

Insufficient amounts of physical activity are an increasing public health concern that is closely related to childhood obesity. While Swedish physical activity on prescription (PAP) is successful in increasing levels of physical activity in adults it has not been well-studied in children.

Swedish physical activity on prescription (PAP) with core components

Swedish
Physical activity
on prescription

1. Person-centered dialogue
2. An individually tailored, written recommendation
3. An individualised structured follow-up

Kallings L. 2016

Purpose

The aim was to get an in depth understanding of paediatric healthcare professionals' experiences of working with PAP for children with obesity.

Methods

Seven focus group discussions with 26 healthcare professionals from paediatric outpatient clinics in western Sweden were conducted. Data were analysed both inductively and deductively, framed by the Normalization Process Theory (NPT) and its four domains coherence, cognitive participation, collective action, and reflexive monitoring.

Normalisation Process Theory domains

Coherence The "sense-making" work to initiate an intervention

Cognitive participation The relational work around an intervention

Collective action The work to enact an intervention

Reflexive monitoring The appraisal work to understand an intervention

Rapely et al. 2018

Preliminary results

Coherence: PAP is about helping children with obesity to become more physically active but the PAP work is considered unclear.

Cognitive participation: Participants experienced a lack of guidelines for the PAP work although collaboration with physiotherapists and activity organisers was considered necessary.

Collective action: The collaboration with activity organisers included barriers that need to be addressed to better meet the children's needs.

Reflexive monitoring: Participants identified important determinants from their work with PAP.

Results of NPT domains - thematic headings

Coherence

PAP has potential value for the child with obesity

Collective action

PAP is used inconsistently amongst collaborators

Cognitive participation

Collaboration around PAP is necessary

Reflexive monitoring

New insights about PAP

Conclusions

PAP is a well-known intervention that is used inconsistently for children with obesity. To meet children's needs, physiotherapists and physical activity organisers are perceived indispensable as collaborators, although there are several barriers that need to be addressed to adopt and improve the delivery of PAP.

Take home message



This is the first study exploring implementation prerequisites of physical activity on prescription for children with obesity in paediatric healthcare uncovering important determinants for contextual integration and utility.

