

National Procurement for the Provision of Behavioural Interventions for People with Non-Diabetic Hyperglycaemia

Living Streets response

We are Living Streets, the UK charity for everyday walking.

We want to create a walking nation, free from congested roads and pollution, reducing the risk of preventable illnesses and social isolation and making walking the natural choice. We believe that a walking nation means progress for everyone.

Our ambition is to get people of all generations to enjoy the benefits that this simple act brings and to ensure all our streets are fit for walking.

Living Streets welcome the opportunity to respond to the NHS Diabetes Prevention Programme (DPP) procurement proposals consultation.

Summary

Living Streets supports the development of a national Diabetes Prevention Programme but believes the current programme focus on individual behavioural interventions is too narrow.

We would like to see future iterations of the NHS DPP to take a more place based approach focused on creating more 'active places' and communities as well as targeting individuals.

Consultation Question:

***To what extent do you think the NDDP will help us to achieve our aims and objectives?
Please explain what you think might help the NDPP achieve its objectives.***

The procurement proposals rightly identify physical activity as a 'core goal' of any behaviour change intervention (4.11) and the importance of individuals to be, '*supported to incorporate active travel into their daily routine either through walking or cycling*' (4.23).

However, while individual interventions to promote physical activity may be important, they are not the only solution. Other issues, including environmental factors, need to be tackled. As Schmid and colleagues say (1995), 'It is unreasonable to expect people to change their behaviours when the environment discourages such changes'.¹

Walking offers the best chance to achieve the necessary increases in physical activity - it's accessible to people of all ages and backgrounds with no barriers to entry in terms of fitness or finances and it can be incorporated into daily life as part of everyday journeys to school, work and the shops. For an inactive person seeking to be more active, walking is the easiest way to start.

Walking levels are related to the built environment and altering it has been shown to encourage greater activity – through simple measures like provision of pavements, better connectivity and availability of walking routes. The probability of obesity is lower in areas where there is land-use mix (i.e. the area has a mix of residential, commercial, office and institutional uses), and also where streets are 'pedestrian- permeable'.²

Whilst there is clearly no single answer to the question of how to reduce physical inactivity, we would like to see future iterations of the NHS DPP to take a more place based approach focused on creating more 'active places' and communities as well as individuals.

Evidence would suggest that a place based programme that provided a mix of hard (physical infrastructure) and soft (marketing, promotion and behavior change) measures would have the biggest impact on increasing population walking and cycling levels.³

Living Streets runs successful projects, like the Walk to Outreach programme, that aim to both tackle physical barriers and promote active travel in combination to get people walking.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss with you how you might develop a more place based approach as the DPP programme develops.

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¹ NICE (2008) PH 8 Physical activity and the environment

² Faculty of Public Health. Built Environment and Physical Activity: a briefing statement
<http://www.fph.org.uk/uploads/briefing%20statement%20-%20built%20environment%20and%20physical%20activity.pdf>

³ Transport for Life, Sustrans, WSP (Dec, 2014) Finding the Optimum: Revenue/Capital Investment Balance for Sustainable Transport