

## **Chiropractic clinicians' recording of exercise in minutes per week following a focused education module**

**Dr. Chris deGraauw FRCCSS(C)**, Principle Investigator  
Co-lead

**Dr. Scott Howitt FRCCSS(C)**, Principle Investigator  
Co-Lead

**Dr. Brittany Boot RCCSS(C) Resident**, Research Assistant

Sedentary lifestyles are one of the largest contributing factors of chronic disease and premature mortality. According to the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (CSEP) guidelines adults should receive at least 150 minutes per week of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity to be deemed sufficiently active for health benefits. **Our exercise is medicine workshop will provide knowledge translation to CMCC's primary clinicians while the research will confirm any changes in their exercise vital sign collection rate comparing before and after the education module. This education module fills a gap in our clinical and teaching practices identified from our previous research.**

**The goal of this project is to further contribute to a data set that is multi-layered and robust enough for future research while answering research questions that will yield an additional publication.**

The main objective is to **examine whether an exercise is medicine workshop influences whether or not exercise minutes per week is being recorded** in the 'OSCAR' electronic patient files by CMCC clinical pods. Additional objectives are to examine if increasing exercise minutes per week recorded influences patient physical activity levels: **do our patients meet, exceed, or fall short of the Canadian Society Exercise Physiology (CSEP) guidelines** for exercise minutes per week for their corresponding age category? These guidelines are supported by the Public Health Association of Canada and often regarded as the 'gold standard' for the assessment of weekly physical activity that constitutes part of a healthy lifestyle.

We would like to understand if the typical patients seeking treatments at CMCC clinics are continuing to engage in physical activity or if there is an opportunity to further increase this key determinant of health and disease prevention. The relationship between physical inactivity and poor health outcomes has become a well established major public health concern over recent decades with sedentary lifestyles often cited as one of the largest contributing factors towards the development of chronic disease and premature mortality. [The clinical effectiveness surrounding physical activity assessment and intervention should be optimized wherever possible.

Individuals between the ages of 18-64 should receive at least 150 minutes per week of moderate to vigorous intensity to be deemed sufficiently active; however, only 1 in 5 Canadian adults actually meets these recommendations, implying that approximately 80% of Canada's adult population could be classified as sedentary. As such, there is an urgent need for clinical

strategies that creates continual opportunities for physical activity assessment and counselling. Implementing exercise as a vital sign (EVS) into part of every routine health exam may provide an opportunity to promote physical activity thereby addressing the overwhelming need for improved population exercise interventions.

The effectiveness of traditional vital signs is determined by three main factors: First, that they help predict likelihood of future disease or illness. Second, that they identify temporal patterns in health that may highlight areas for clinical intervention. Lastly that they can be used to educate and involve patients in their own treatment. When considering the application of physical activity or exercise minutes per week in the context of a “vital sign” not only does it satisfy these core principles, but more importantly, integrating this into routine clinical practice would allow for more accurate and frequent counselling on the health benefits of regular physical activity. While all primary health care practitioners have the ability to utilize exercise as a vital sign, chiropractic clinical interactions are ideally suited to incorporate exercise as a vital sign and to further use this to assess and monitor patient health. Understanding potential challenges in collecting EVS data and further interpreting what this data suggests will help chiropractors to better monitor and modify patients’ physical activity and thus promote overall health and wellness through improved standards of care.

**We expect that the exercise medicine workshop will positively influence the EVS collection rate and therefore confirm the need and usefulness of continuing education on this topic with our clinical faculty at the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College. This would also help confirm the benefit to this education being provided to the larger chiropractic community; we feel the our sports fellowship in Canada is well positioned to help stay involved and lead this movement within chiropractic in Canada.**