



## **Doctors leaders offer solutions to health committee challenge of physical activity**

*March 2013*

**Doctors leaders have welcomed a report by the parliamentary health committee on the need for greater emphasis on the benefits of physical activity. Doctors from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow say concrete actions must now be taken to increase physical activity levels across the population.**

President of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, Professor Frank Dunn, said “As this report points out, taking regular physical activity is one of the best things we can advocate for our patients. For too long it has been seen as part of the strategy in tackling obesity, but physical inactivity is itself a major health challenge of our age. We have worked with many doctors leaders to suggest solutions to help get people more active, which will ultimately make them much happier, and help to reduce many illnesses such as type 2 diabetes, heart attacks, some forms of cancer and dementia.

“As a health service we have paid less attention to helping our patients be active, than for example stop smoking. Both are hugely important and of equal value to many current drug treatments. We feel the health service can do more, and politicians can help.”

Dr Andrew Murray, a GP and Sports and Exercise Medicine consultant who works as a physical activity advisor for the College, said

“Worldwide, many people have buried their heads in the sand and hoped for the problem of physical inactivity to go away. This can only lead to people being less happy and less well than they could have been, and a darker economic outlook for our children. It is pleasing that in Scotland the last few years has seen efforts like 20mph speed limits in our cities, and a commitment to 2hrs of PE in primary schools. Scotland is one of very few countries worldwide where levels of physical activity are going up in adults (62 to 64%) and children (71-75%) according to the most recent Scottish Health Survey, but much more can and must be achieved.

“We commend the recent position statement of the Scottish Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties, sharing evidence-based concrete actions to be taken, many of which would be applicable south of the border also. Our simple message for patients is to consider sitting less and walking/exercising more.”

Recommendations of the Scottish Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and Faculties include:

- Teach physical activity for health in every medical curriculum by the end of 2015
- Teach physical activity for health in every health professional curriculum by end of 2016



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- Asking patients about physical activity levels, and offering advice should be a routine part of care in hospitals and in GP practice
- Well marked walking routes should be established in every hospital

**ENDS**

**The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow produced a report Jan 2015**

<http://rcp.sg/physicalactivity>

**The Scottish Academy made recommendations to Scottish Government in this report Feb 2015 can be accessed [here](#).**

**The Parliamentary (Westminster) report, and press release are below**

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/health-committee/news/activity-diet-health-substantive/>

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmhealth/845/845.pdf>

**For further information please contact**

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