



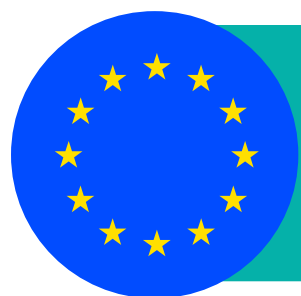
Promotion of physical activity and lifestyle education for prevention and treatment of depression in adolescents through physiotherapy programmes

Physiotherapy in mental health is focused on the promotion, prevention, and treatment of mental health disorders, such as depression, through a person-centered approach to achieve personal and lifestyle changes with the use of biopsychosocial and holistic techniques. These physiotherapeutic modalities empower individuals towards greater independence and self-management of personal health and wellbeing.

A sedentary and inactive lifestyle is one of the major issues regarding mental health. Significant links have been found between greater amounts of sedentary behaviour and both increased psychological ill-being (i.e. depression) and lower psychological well-being (i.e. satisfaction with life and happiness) in children and adolescents. Promoting physical activity is essential for the wellbeing of the population in general and in particular in adolescents and children, as physical activity patterns tend to track into subsequent adulthood. Scientific evidence shows a wide range of effectiveness of physical activity, body awareness therapies and body-mind exercises. Physical activity shows positive effects on symptoms of mental illness, quality of life and/or physical health even at levels of activity below the public health recommendations. Research shows that it can also be a viable adjunct treatment in combination with antidepressants.

Objective and scope

Promotion of physical activity and lifestyle education for prevention and treatment of depression in adolescents. This will be achieved through the creation of guidelines and recommendations which will include the prescription of therapeutic exercise to adolescents suffering from depression via supervised and guided group exercise physiotherapy programmes of moderate aerobic intensity.

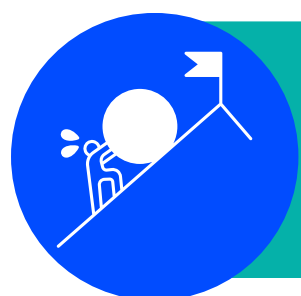


What is the EU added value of the action?

Physiotherapy in mental health uses psychologically based approaches which are drug free, non-invasive, secure and with low risks of side effects that may be delivered in individual or group settings. It ensures equity and accessibility to healthcare and decreases stigma.

These treatments are evidence based, cost-effective and manageable. In addition to this, it is an environmentally friendly healthcare alternative which addresses the social part of care such as lifestyle behaviours and functionality within the workplace. Physiotherapy has a pivotal role on support programmes for adolescents, improving access to mental healthcare of these patients and most importantly improving their compliance to treatment which has a direct effect on quality of life with a positive economic and social impact both at national and EU level. Physiotherapy interventions can be implemented in any social and economic condition making it a universal tool. Our value is the prescription of therapeutic exercise as an effective treatment for depression and other mental health disorders.

The new challenges of our society put us in front of situations that challenge EU population's mental health as climate change, pandemics, wars or other human or natural catastrophes. There is a direct correlation between post-traumatic stress, anxiety and depression, and therapeutic exercise is an effective treatment in all these conditions.

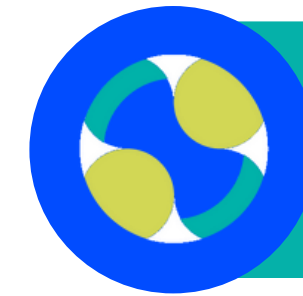


Challenges

Young people are more vulnerable to suffer from mental health problems derived from the misuse of technologies and sedentary lifestyles.

Physical activity, therapeutic exercise, body and movement awareness training and supervised and group exercise programmes of moderate aerobic intensity are effective to alleviate symptoms of depression in adolescents.

In adolescents exercise programs have a treatment time of 6 weeks, with 4 sessions per week and with each session being 30 minutes long. In this regard, adherence and compliance to exercise is a key factor which in many cases is lacking. Therefore, it is important that young people have a lifestyle where they incorporate exercise into their daily lives. Physiotherapists can lead and perform programmes to accompany these patients in discovering the physical and functional activity that best suits them. These programmes follow a biopsychosocial approach which includes a motivational and behavioural analysis to accompany adolescents in discovering their favourite physical activity in order to enhance compliance of the personalised treatment.



Implementation

Europe region World Physiotherapy promotes the role of the physiotherapists in mental health in primary, secondary, rehabilitative and community care through a holistic approach that incorporates education, occupation and the societal element of care. Physiotherapists prescribe therapeutic exercise for mental health disorders such as depression in adolescents and have the knowledge to develop educational and training strategies for use at clinical, community, national and European levels. These strategies include skills that address not only the intervention methodology but also a motivational analysis as well as behavioural and biopsychosocial aspects.

Our organisation has a membership of 37 national physiotherapy associations which represent a total of 200,000 physiotherapists in Europe. The Mental Health Working Group of the Europe region World Physiotherapy can lead a team composed by experts in the field from various EU countries to come up with a common and holistic strategy to tackle depression in adolescents. This will include guidelines and recommendations for programmes that can be implemented at national level in primary care, socio-health, educational and community social centres in all European countries. National physiotherapy associations will advocate for the adoption of such programmes in their countries.



6 Weeks

4 Times / Week

30 Minutes

Keywords

Promotion
Prevention
Lifestyle change
Adolescents
Depression
Anxiety



Europe region World
Physiotherapy &
Mental Health

References:

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