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Physical Activity [as a] Vital Sign

Dr. Elizabeth A. Joy, Intermountain Healthcare, UT

There is clear evidence that demonstrates that leading a physically active lifestyle reduces the likelihood of developing chronic disease and premature mortality, and for decades there have been reports and clinical guidelines recommending that physicians advise their patients to engage in regular physical activity. However, until recently healthcare has NOT effectively done so in clinical settings. Advances in technology - such as electronic health records (EHRs) and payment reform efforts aimed at lowering health care expenditures - have made physical activity assessment and promotion both easier to perform and more relevant. Intermountain Healthcare integrated the physical activity vital sign (PAVS) into their EHR (HELP2) in February 2013 and will be integrating the PAVS into their new EHR iCentra in early 2015.



All adult patients are asked 3 questions about their current physical activity levels (average minutes per day, at the start of the clinic visit and it is recorded in the EHR for interpretation by the physician. Intermountain Healthcare has also developed an integrated behavioral approach to physical activity promotion as part of its Lifestyle and Weight Management Care Process Model (LWM CPM) which provides guidance to physicians and their care team on why and how to address physical activity (along with healthy eating, adequate sleep, stress management and weight loss) with adult patients. If physicians, physical therapists and dietitians all consistently assess and promote physical activity, as a routine component of every clinical encounter, it is likely that we would start to see changes in patient self-reported physical activity. There is some evidence that the more often a provider discusses physical activity with their patient, the more likely that person is to engage in regular physical activity.

EIM in the Middle East – Jordan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)

EIM closed out 2014 with countries establishing EIM National Centers in the Middle East. On November 23rd and 24th, a National Task Force meeting convened in Jordan in the Intercontinental Hotel in Amman bringing together representatives from the Ministry of Health, primary care physicians and specialists, representatives from academic institutions and medical schools, Senior management staff from Jordanian private hospitals, physiotherapists, and representatives from health insurance companies. Then, two days later, under the support of the Ministry of Health in Dubai, a second meeting was convened for the adoption of EIM in Dubai. This meeting brought together representatives from the Ministry of Health, UAE university, Abu Dhabi Health Authority, Gulf Medical University, Dubai Medical College, Dubai Police and

others and others.



Exercise is Medicine® Jordan (left) and UAE (right)

The ultimate goal for both nations is to make physical activity and exercise a standard part of their disease prevention and treatment medical paradigms, for activity to be considered by all health care providers as a vital sign in every patient visit, and for patients to be effectively counseled and referred to community programs and “exercise professionals” for their physical activity and health needs, thus leading to overall improvement in the public’s health and long-term reduction in health care costs.

The establishment of these two National Centers is very encouraging for the future of EIM in the Middle East. We look forward to the continued growth of the EIM Global Health Initiative in Jordan and the UAE!

Become a Recognized Campus!

Exercise is Medicine® on Campus - A Recognition of Outstanding Programs

At the 2014 ACSM Annual Meeting (Orlando, FL), Exercise is Medicine® on Campus announced its new EIM on Campus (EIM-OC) registration process and also introduced a new global **Campus Recognition Program**, by which campuses can be recognized for their implementation of EIM. At this year's Annual Meeting in San Diego, schools will be acknowledged for on-campus initiatives, programming, work with the local community, and/or the overall impact that EIM is having on campus wellness.



Exercise is Medicine®

The deadline to apply to the Recognition Program for 2015 is **March 30th, 11:59 PM PST**. For more information on how to register your campus and apply for recognition, email eim@acsm.org.

Get Credentialed!

Become an EIM Credentialed Exercise Professional

Exercise is Medicine® (EIM) Professionals are changing community-based healthcare. As Population Health Management (PHM) strategies become the standard within healthcare, exercise professionals have a chance to work more closely with the medical community. Become an EIM change champion in your community by using your skills and experience to slow, stop, and reverse the progression of chronic diseases!



For more information about the EIM Credential, click [here](#)! To learn more about the role of the exercise professional within healthcare, visit our [website](#)!

Community Story - Role of Exercise in Total Well-being

Local communities play a vital role in EIM, where local community resources can be trained and prepared to handle patients with medical/chronic conditions. The community is an ideal location where physical activity can be carried out and can be seen as real medicine for those fulfilling their “prescription”. Exercise plays an important role in not only the physical health of an individual, but in the total well-being of an individual. As described below, existing community resources can serve as the perfect backdrop for Exercise is Medicine:

Blake Crownover has worked with a young girl in one of our heart health programs. Blake is welcoming to all that make up our community, but especially this girl. She came to the Asheville YMCA with her family in October 2013. She instantly connected with Blake, her healthy living coach. Because she has postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS), she is unable to stand for more than a few minutes at a time. POTS is a heart condition where an individual’s heart rate is greatly increased upon standing and at rest her heart rate is 130 BPM, making it difficult for her to stand and/or walk for any prolonged periods of time.

Because of this, her exercise choices at the Y have been seated in nature such as biking, rowing, lifting weights, and swimming. Blake introduced her to the recumbent bike, NuStep and later on, the rower. She started doing a total of 15 minutes, but now can do up to 45 minutes of cardiovascular exercise at one time. She also loves to swim and loves coming to the Asheville Y to swim in the pool.

*Story submitted by Charlotte Vargo
Asheville YMCA, GA*

Tell Us Your Story!

Exercise is Medicine is reaching out to individuals, groups, and organizations all over. The impact is global and while we share our story, we want to hear yours as well! E-mail us at eim@acsm.org about how EIM has impacted you or how you plan on making EIM a part of your local community, organization, or life! Keep an eye out; you may see your story appear in next month's newsletter!

To learn more about the Exercise is Medicine® Global Health Initiative visit our website: exerciseismedicine.org.

If you would prefer not to receive emails from us, go [here](#).

Please send any comments about this email to publicinfo@acsm.org

