

Physical activity and aging: a challenging couple (EUNAAPA Workshop)

European nations face increasing numbers of older people. It is a fact that exercise/physical activity (PA) for community-dwelling as well as institutionalized older people has beneficial effects on physiological, psychological and social health. Reviews have demonstrated an overwhelming amount of evidence on the positive effects of PA on risk of mortality, onset of co-morbidity, and delay of the onset of dependency and frailty. Promotion of PA in older people will contribute to maintaining and improving the quality of life and to reducing the (economic) burden of disease and disability.

One might think that –knowing the beneficial effects- older persons are lining up for exercise classes or other physical activities. However, in real life the proportion of seniors being physically active (meeting the recommended levels), decreases with advancing age. This challenge in health care is important and is topic of the workshop

Marijke Hopman-Rock (TNO Quality of Life/VU university medical Center, Amsterdam the Netherlands) will address the evidence on the merits of PA and the knowledge about changing behaviour of older patients in clinical practice and care.

Nina Waaler Loland (Oslo University College, Faculty of health Sciences, Norway) will address ageism as a barrier for PA and how to overcome this by both professionals and patients. She will also give an overview of the work from the European Network for Action on Ageing and Physical Activity (EUNAAPA).

Federico Schena (University of Verona, Faculty of Exercise and Sport, Italy) will give examples of successful programs and interventions.

The presentations will be followed by discussion between the audience and the present country experts. A moderator is available for leading the discussions.