

EVERY STEP MATTERS. IT IS NEVER TOO LATE FOR ACTIVE AGEING

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ABSTRACT

During old age, there is a population-wide transition from independence and adequate physical function towards frailty and an increased demand for health and social care support services. Physical inactivity is one of the strongest predictors of mobility-related disability in older adults¹.

Very few older people achieve the recommended 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity [MVPA] each week. From a public health perspective, the greatest gains at a population level are likely to occur when moving from the current very low levels of PA to some activity.

Based on UK evidence from a range of observational and intervention studies^{2,3,4,5}, I will demonstrate the importance of being active daily for maintaining physical and mental well-being in later life. I will discuss the recently published US and the forthcoming UK physical activity guidelines for older adults. I will then present a range of innovative, community-based active ageing interventions aiming at increasing daily activity, physical function and social connectedness.

I will conclude my talk by highlighting evidence-based strategies to increase the success of not only supporting older adults to become more active but equally, if not more important, to adhere to an active lifestyle^{1,6,7,8}.

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