physical activity levels. Lower levels of physical activity have been associated with elevated levels of obesity which increases the risk for the negative health consequences associated with a higher BMI.

PURPOSE: To compare the prevalence of obesity, musculoskeletal pain, and the difficulty to engage in physical activity of Correctional Officers (COs) to the U.S. adult general population at two time points. Furthermore, to explore the associations between musculoskeletal pain and health behaviors amongst COs.

DESIGN: Seventy-seven Correctional Officers from two maximum security correctional facilities in the Northeastern United States were enrolled in the study. The health profiles (musculoskeletal pain, difficulty to engage in physical activity, and BMI characteristics) of participants were collected at two time points (Time 1 (2011) and Time 2 (2013)) and compared to the U.S. adult general population. The health profiles of COs were also used to investigate associations between musculoskeletal pain and the difficulty to engage in physical activity at two time points. Also to explore if musculoskeletal pain at Time 1 predicts the difficulty to engage in physical activity at Time 2.

RESULTS: Correctional employees exhibited a significantly higher prevalence of overweight and obesity, musculoskeletal pain, and difficulty to engage in physical activity than the U.S. adult general population at both time points (p<.05). Musculoskeletal pain was associated with a difficulty to engage in physical activity at both time points (p<.05). Musculoskeletal pain was predictive of the future difficulty to engage in physical activity (p<.05).

CONCLUSIONS: As a result of the musculoskeletal pain, COs report difficulties to engage in physical activity. The results of this study provide a rationale for the implementation of feasible ergonomic interventions in the environment of corrections to alleviate musculoskeletal pain and improve the health behaviors of COs.