

Building a national strategy to promote physical activity: the ACSM symposium

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Levels of physical activity are low in U.S. adults, and promotion of physical activity remains a public health priority. In the U.S., the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) has been involved in several important initiatives to promote physical activity in older adults. This session will discuss four of these initiatives. 1) The U.S. National Physical Activity Plan (David Buchner, MD MPH FACSM, University of Illinois). The National Physical Activity Plan is the first comprehensive plan for increasing physical activity in all U.S. populations groups. Launched in 2010, the plan identifies high priority strategies for increasing levels of physical activity. This presentation will describe the development and implementation of the plan. 2) The ACSM Strategic Health Initiative on Aging (Michael Rogers, PhD FACSM, Wichita State University). To enhance its activities related to physical activity and exercise in older adults, ACSM established the Strategic Health Initiative on Aging. This presentation will describe the activities and accomplishments of the initiative. These include scientific statements on the benefits of physical activity in older adults, as well as practitioner tools for assessing older adult's ability to participate in exercise programs. 3) Exercise is Medicine (Wojtek Chodzko-Zajko, PhD FACSM, University of Illinois). In 2007, the "Exercise is Medicine" campaign was launched as a joint initiative of ACSM and the American Medical Association. It involves promoting physical activity for both its preventive and therapeutic effects, and seeks to increase the role of the US health care system in promoting physical activity. This presentation will describe the objectives, activities, and achievements of the initiative. 4) ACSM Strategy for Practitioner Education (Amy Morgan, PhD FACSM, Bowling Green State University). ACSM plays a major role in the continuing education of practitioners regarding the role of physical activity in prevention and treatment of diseases. This presentation will discuss issues in helping practitioners stay current on issues in physical activity in older adults, as well as provide an overview of a recent resource from ACSM: The ACSM Guide to Exercise for Older Adults