

Obesity and sedentary lifestyle - a practical national initiative using existing digital technologies

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Abstract

A WHO report in June 2024 highlighted that 1.8 billion adults, nearly one third (31%) of adults worldwide, did not meet recommended physical activity levels in 2022. It further reported failing to achieve these goals drastically increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain cancers.

The World Health Organization (WHO) outlined that adults require at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity per week to maintain optimal health.

The study showed that almost half of the world's countries have made some improvements over the past decade, and 22 countries were identified as likely to reach the global target of reducing inactivity by 15% by 2030, if their trend continues at the same pace.

The National Health Services (NHS) of the UK has, in response, initiated a national program using digital technology which is due to commence in January 2027. The scheme, called Movement 26.2 tracks individual efforts via a 'smartwatch' or 'smartphone' and incentives are provided to individuals who are rewarded shopping vouchers or discounts if they meet their monthly targets of 26 miles.

Key words: physical inactivity, digital technology, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, national fitness programs