

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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Curtin University

Physical Activity as a Path to Recovery: A Qualitative Evaluation of a Residential Motivational Intervention

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Physical Activity Interventions for AOD

- Effects of physical activity (PA) in AOD populations:

↑ increased	↓ decreased
cardiovascular function, neuromotor skills & physical fitness ¹	craving & substance use ²
mood & affect ⁴	psychological distress ³
perceived quality of life & relapse prevention efficacy ⁵	depression & anxiety ⁴

- Issues with **motivation** and **long-term maintenance of PA**⁶

References:

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² Piché, F., Daneau, C., Plourde, C., Girard, S., & Romain, A. J. (2023). Characteristics and impact of physical activity interventions during substance use disorder treatment excluding tobacco: A systematic review. *PLOS ONE*, 18(4), e0283861.
³ Saxena, S., Van Ommeren, M., Tang, K. C., & Armstrong, T. P. (2005). Mental health benefits of physical activity. *Journal of Mental Health*, 14(5), 445-451.
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⁶ Thal, S. B., Maunz, L. A., Quedest, E., Bright, S. J., Myers, B., & Ntoumanis, N. (2023). Behavior change techniques in physical activity interventions for adults with substance use disorders: A systematic review. *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*, 37(3), 416–433.



Motivational Group Intervention⁷

- **Aim:** Increase (quality of) PA motivation
- Support group format = 12 x 60min sessions
- Adjunct to treatment as usual
- Motivational Interviewing + Self-Determination Theory principles
- F2F delivery followed by group exercise

References:

⁷Thal, S., Ntoumanis, N., Bright, S., Myers, B., Kwasnicka, D., Verboon10, P., & Quested, E. A Group Motivational Intervention to Support Motivation for Physical Activity among Adults in Residential Treatment for Substance Use Disorders: Protocol for a N-of-1 Study. <https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/jmr38>



Semi structured interviews

- N = 10 intervention participants
- N = 5 facility stakeholders (clinicians, managers)
- Reflexive Thematic Analysis

Fostering autonomous motivation and positive change

- “I wasn't aware that I was holding that value in my, in my belief system, that it's actually a core belief that I've developed, and that exercise will help me to have a more productive and better life”
(Participant 8).

Self- monitoring increased motivation

- “[...] first of all, it started just as a watch. But then slowly it became the steps that you make. And then slowly it will buzz, and you look, it will be the activities that you've done in that day. So, you know it just gives you this morale and a bit of boost” (*Participant 2*).

Meaningful and motivating content

- [...] I wanted to do 100 push ups and 100 sit ups and 100 squats a day [...] and [PT] would say, “it's not really manageable, because you could probably do that one day. Yes. But the next day, you're going to be stuffed, so you're not going to do anything. Yeah. So you're better off setting yourself a smaller goal” (*Participant 5*).

Collective support through connection

- “I think it changed through the project, to be honest, especially in the gym environments, like the, you know, the teamwork, the camaraderie, you know, the supportiveness I definitely think that evolved and increased throughout the project. You know, and it was it was done in a positive way of like, everyone doing their best, everyone with an encouragement, you know, reaffirmation things like that” (*Stakeholder 3*).
- “Connection is the opposite to addiction. So, engaging in physical activity with other people, keeps you, keeps the connection with like-minded people, you’re not going to fall back into your old addict mentality” (*Participant 9*).

Amplifying impact through facilitator collaboration

- “But having [personal trainer] there with [anonymised years of sobriety]. Such an inspiration. Thinking of what we could eventually be like (Participant 5).”
- “Yeah, I think [psychologist]’s strength was getting people to really think on a deeper level (Participant 10).”
- “[personal trainer] has a very unique way of connecting with residents here at [treatment facility] and was able to encourage and challenge people to a more of a degree than [psychologist] (Participant 8).”

...so in conclusion

- Participants perceived the motivational intervention to be feasible, acceptable, and effective in increasing their autonomous PA motivation
- Future research in this field should leverage the strength of this intervention – such as self-monitoring, the integration of Self-Determination Theory need-supportive techniques, behaviour change techniques, and Motivational Interviewing methods
- **Integrating a lived-experience co-facilitator alongside a health professional demonstrated notably positive outcomes and warrants wider implementation**

Cheers!



Feasibility interviews

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Co-design study



Study protocol

