

Physical activity among older adults :

Short term effects of a neighbourhood environment Internet-based intervention

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Highlights

- ✓ Intervention is composed of a 2 month access to a neighbourhood environment website and of 2 monthly tailored emails
- ✓ The intervention resulted in short term improvements of the PA stage of change by the intervention groups
- ✓ Throughout wintertime, PA level remains stable in the intervention group while PA level declined progressively in the control group
- ✓ Further research is needed to examine the long term effects of Internet-based intervention for older adults

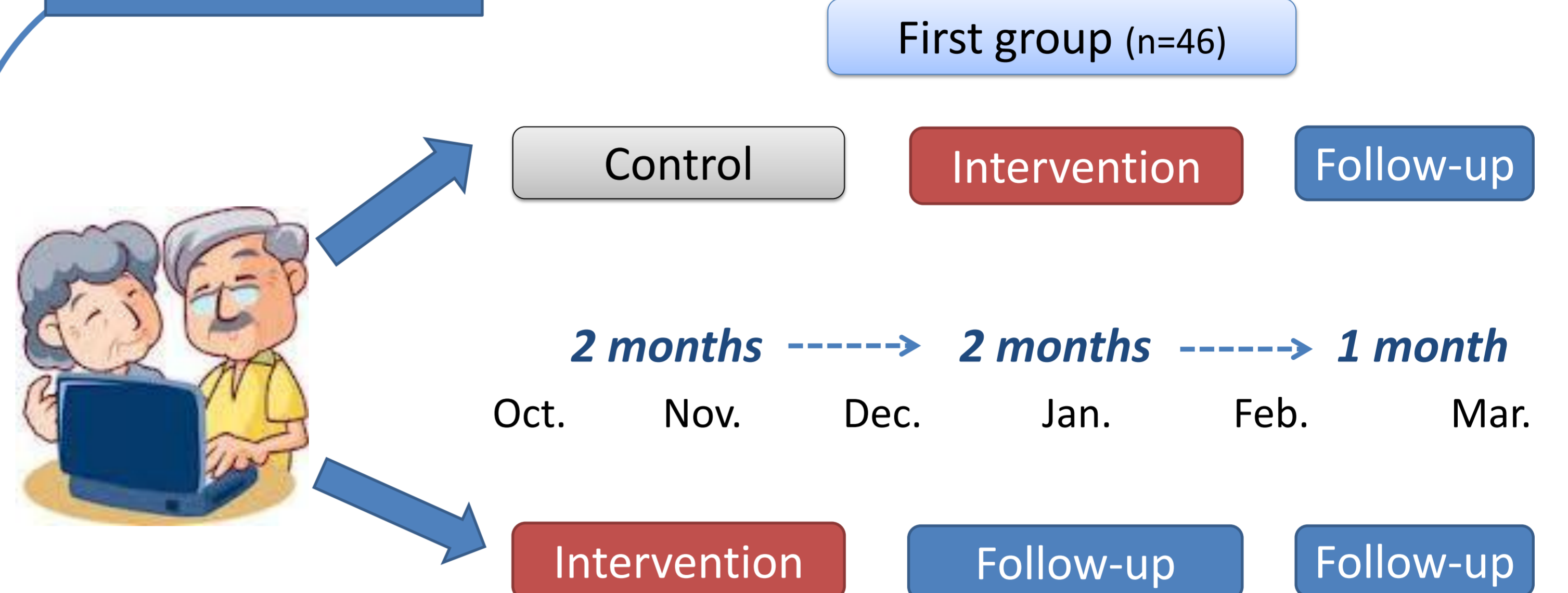
Background

- ✓ Seniors are the most growing age group and generate the highest health care costs¹
- ✓ As people age, PA offers great opportunities to increase active and independent life expectancies²⁻³
- ✓ Web-based interventions to promote PA exposed promising effects⁴, even with older adults⁵⁻⁷
- ✓ Environmentally tailored PA websites result in extra intervention effect on PA behaviors⁸
- ✓ Older adults are the fastest growing group of Internet users⁹ and use it for health-related subjects¹⁰

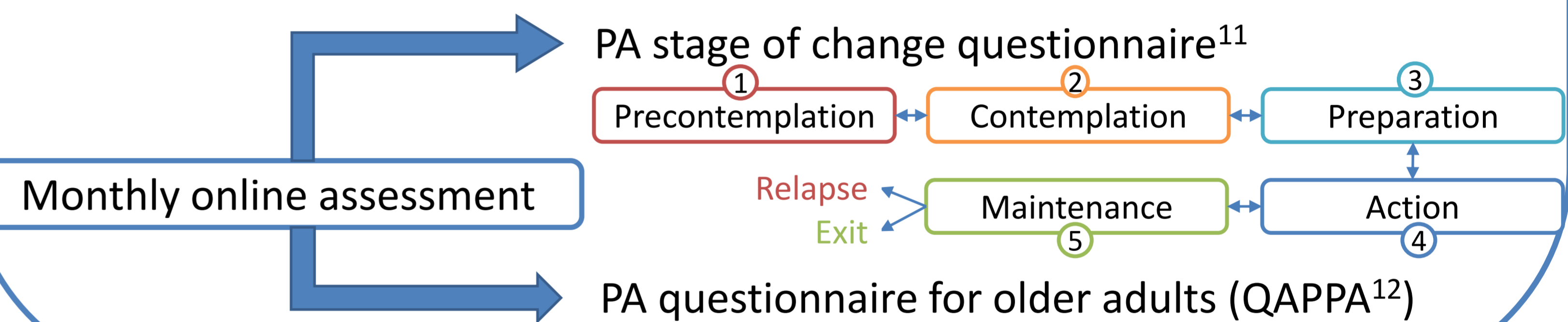
Aim

Explore the effects of a neighbourhood environment Internet-based intervention on PA behaviours of older adults

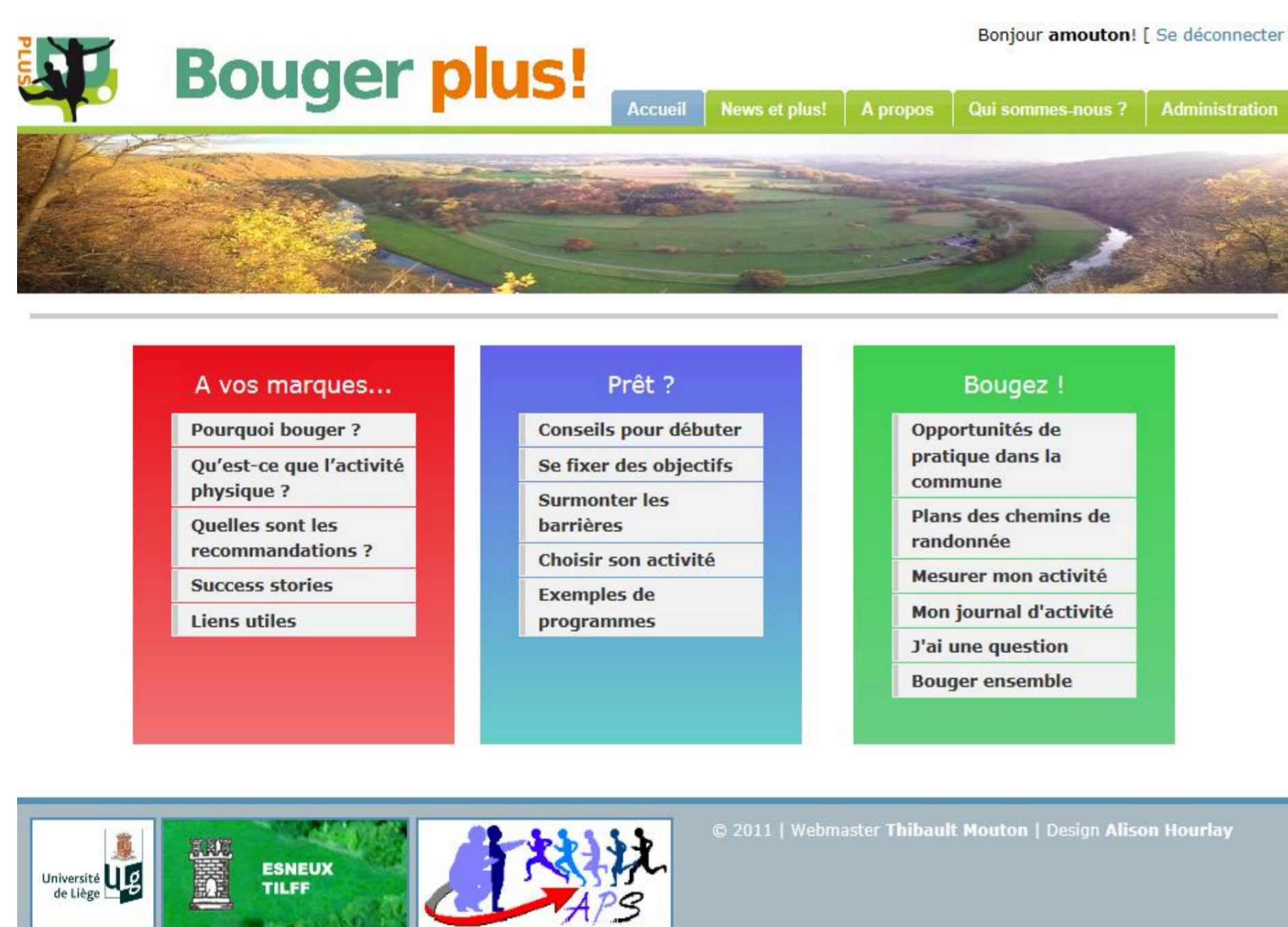
Methods



- 87 older adults (dropout : 27%)
- 60.7 ± 7.8 years
- Regular Internet access
- Inhabitants of the same municipality (semi-rural; Liege Area)

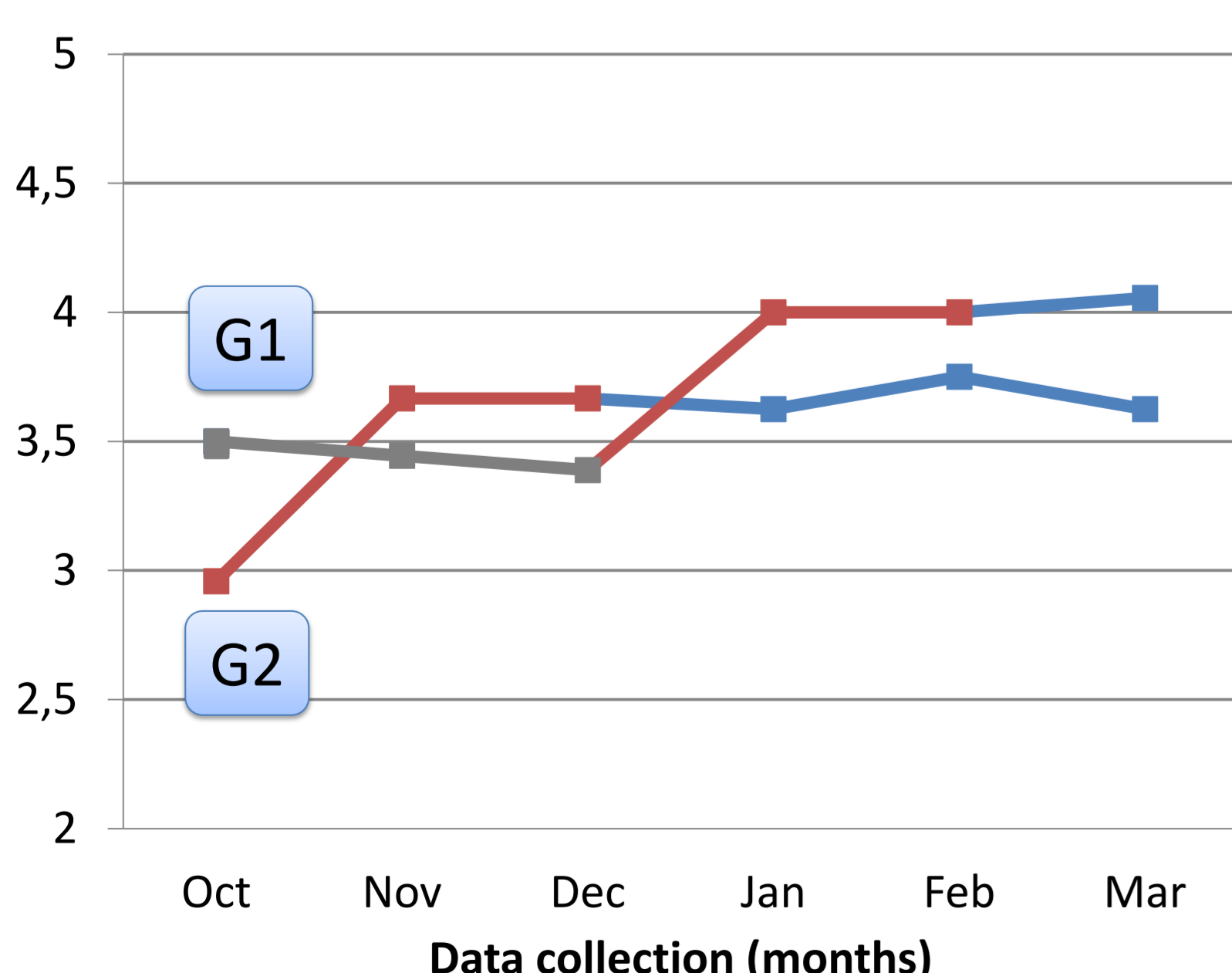


Intervention : Environmentally PA website + tailored emails



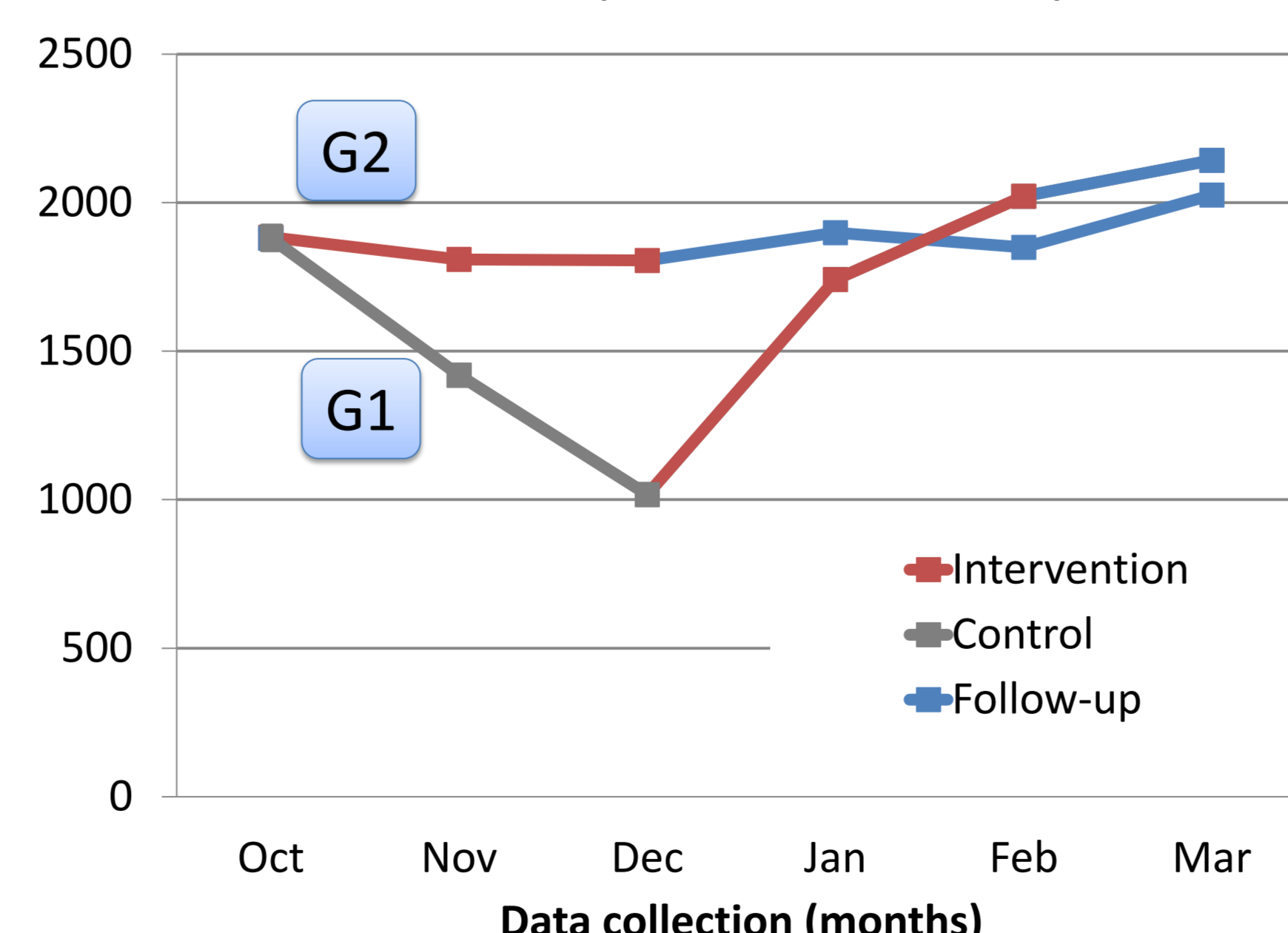
Results

PA stage of change



- ✓ Significant increase during intervention in both groups ($p=0.003$ & $p=0.0025$)
- ✓ Improvements remains significant after 1 month follow-up in both groups ($p=0.012$ & $p=0.039$)

PA level (MET-min/week)



- ✓ Significant increase during intervention in group 1 ($p=0.004$)
- ✓ PA level remains stable during intervention while it drops in control condition ($p=0.027$)

Conclusions

- ✓ A neighbourhood environment Internet-based intervention can, at short-term, improve physical activity behaviors of older adults
- ✓ Targeting environmental determinants seems a promising approach to inform older adults about their local opportunities for PA
- ✓ An Internet-based intervention could help seniors to stay sufficiently physically active during wintertime¹³
- ✓ Further research is needed to examine the long term effects of Internet-based intervention for older adults
- ✓ Incorporate more social support (e.g., find a sport mate) could help seniors to stay active in a long-term perspective