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Background and goals of the study

1° PA & health

- Physical activity (PA) has multiple positive effects on health (Hardman & Stensel, 2003)
- Inactivity is hazardous to the health (Rippe, 2010)

4° Objectives

- To understand physiotherapists' awareness about their PA promoting role
- To analyse actions undertaken by physiotherapists to promote PA

2° PA promotion & Primary Care

- PA should have a stronger role in primary prevention. Primary care professionals should offer counselling and advice on PA and should be well trained to do so (Cavill & al., 2006)



3° Physiotherapist as PA promotor

- Physical therapists are ideally placed to promote health and well being through PA and exercise prescription. They should promote safe and healthy PA (Verhagen & Engbers, 2008). Seldom studies are focusing on their real involvement

Methods

Study sample: 185 physiotherapists

Variables	N	Mean ± SD or %
Age (years)	185	40 ± 12
Seniority (years)	185	16 ± 12
Gender	M	55.1
	F	44.9
Principal Workplace	Private practice	51.3
	Hospital	37.3
	Nursing home	11.4

« Snowball method »

Pen-and-Paper questionnaire (n = 22)

Online questionnaire (n = 163)
(SurveyMonkey®)

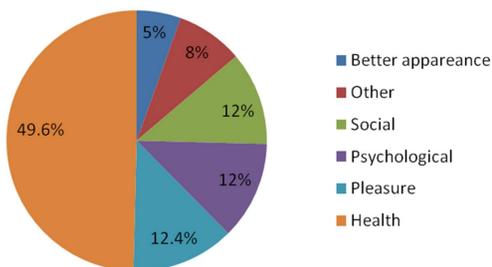


- ✓ 25 open-ended, multiple choice or Likert scale questions
- ✓ Reliability : 84% → inter-analyst
90% → intra-analyst
- ✓ Data processing by Statistica®

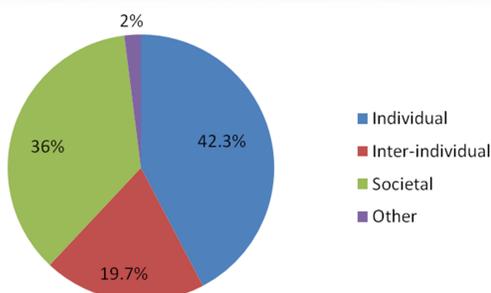
Results

Determinants of physical activity

- ✓ 49.6 % of the physiotherapists mentioned « health enhancement » as a reason to practice PA :



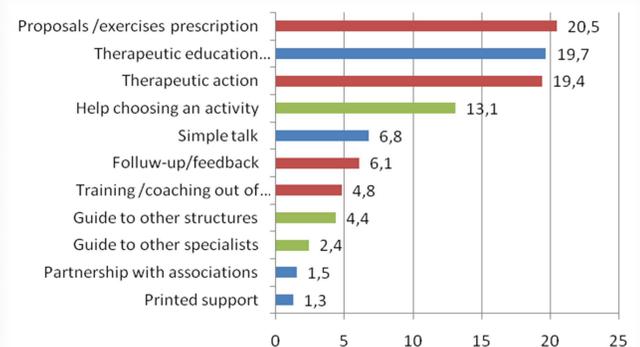
- ✓ Individual-level variables are mainly proposed as non practice reasons (42.3%) :



Physiotherapist as a physical activity promotor

- ✓ 99 % of physiotherapists agree with their potential role in PA promotion
- ✓ Actions undertaken by physiotherapists to promote PA are gathered in 3 categories :

Category	Sub-category	N	Combined N	%
Information	Printed supports	6	127	27,8
	Therapeutic education (recommendations)	90		
	Simple talk	31		
Orientation	Help choosing an activity	60	91	19,9
	Guide to other specialists	11		
	Guide to other structures	20		
Action	Follow-up/feedback	28	240	52,3
	Proposals /exercises prescription	94		
	Therapeutic action	89		
	Training /coaching out of physiotherapy occupation	22		
	Partnership with associations	7		



To promote "home exercising", I developed a booklet explaining physical activity recommendations and strengthening exercises to patients with chronic low back pain



I am a partner in a sports club for disabled. I explain to those patients that they can be active despite their disabilities

Discussion and further work

✓ PA determinants identified by physiotherapists were similar to the findings proposed by the "Eurobarometer study" (Sjöström, 2006). Their intervention must be adapted to these motivational variables in order to mobilize appropriate promoting strategies at each level of action (OMS, 2006).

✓ Physiotherapists are aware of their crucial role in PA promotion. Nevertheless, this responsibility is implicit and so far little used and implemented in the field. The establishment of specific trainings, dealing with physical activity promotion aiming at informing physiotherapists, might be an interesting step which should be easily organized.

✓ Actions undertaken by physiotherapists are mostly isolated without connections with other actors of PA promotion. As mentioned by Verhagen & Engbers (2008), to date, their role has been minimal in multidisciplinary approaches. This dialogue should be emphasized in order to respect the principles of an ecological approach.

✓ Most of the promoting actions of the physiotherapists are "curative". Prevention and detection of sedentary behaviours, considered as resources to avoid further disease outbreaks, should therefore be increased, particularly through practice of physical activity incentives.