

1.3 Capacity Building

This section includes training those who 1) provide services and programs related to physical activity (Health, sport and education sectors) and those whose 2) work influences the environments for physical activity (Town planners, Transport planners)

1.3.1 Staffs who provide services and programs related to physical activity

Table below outlines the physical activity related pre-service and in-service training received by various staff categories employed in the government sector. Majority of staff categories receive in service training if physical activity promotion is directly recognised as one of their responsibilities. However, physical activity related education has rarely been identified as a component of pre service training.

Table 2: Physical activity related pre-service and in service trainings received by various staff categories employed in the government sector

Staff Category	Type of training	Availability	
		Yes	No
Medical doctors	Pre-service		✓
	In-service	✓	
Primary health care doctors/relevant specialists	Pre-service		✓
	In-service	✓	
Physiotherapists	Pre-service	✓	
	In-service	✓	
Nursing Officers	Pre-service	✓	
	In-service	✓	
Social and other health care workers	Pre-service	✓	
	In-service	✓	
Occupational health and safety officers	Pre-service	✓	
	In-service	✓	
Preschool teachers	Pre-service	✓	
	In-service	✓	
Primary school teachers	Pre-service	✓	
	In-service	✓	
Secondary/high school teachers	Pre-service	✓	
	In-service	✓	
Transport planners	Pre-service		✓
	In-service		✓
Urban / town planners	Pre-service		✓
	In-service		✓
Exercise, sport and fitness coaches and trainers	Pre-service	✓	
	In-service	✓	
	In-service	✓	

A. Training of medical doctors (undergraduate, in-service and postgraduate)

The Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo has taken an initiative to include an exercise prescription lecture into the MBBS undergraduate curriculum. However practical/clinical training is still not included.

Medical Officers already in-service in the public health sector, such as MO NCD, MOH receive in-service training on promotion of physical activity. The Directorate of NCD in collaboration with the WHO has launched an online training platform where NCD related information such as risk factor control is shared.

Post graduate training for doctors is available as Post Graduate Diploma and MD in Sports and Exercise Medicine. During postgraduate training of other disciplines physical inactivity is focussed as a risk factor for NCD (MSc Com Med, MD Com Med, MSC Nutrition, MD general Medicine, Cardiology, Endocrinology etc.).

B. In service training for primary healthcare staff

Healthcare staff who are the first point of contact for the general population, have been trained on promotion of physical activity by the Directorate of NCD in collaboration with Sri Lanka Sports Medicine Association. A Training of Trainers (TOT) module developed by the Ministry of Health in collaboration with other stakeholders on 'Promotion of Physical Activity in Primary Healthcare' provides primary care doctors practical training on exercises and behaviour change counselling among the apparently healthy general public.

The training strategy involves training of two strata of officers involved in NCD service provision. Medical Officers NCD who are district level coordinators and the link between the Directorate of NCD and primary care staff are first trained on the TOT. Secondly the trained Medical Officer NCD organized a training for the HLC staff; Medical Officer HLC and Nursing Officer HLC, Public Health Nursing Officers and the public health staff such as Medical Officers of Health, Public Health Midwives and Public Health Inspectors who are expected to do lifestyle modification counselling for the general public, in their respective districts. Training has been carried out in selected ten districts out of the 26 districts in Sri Lanka presently: Matale, Anuradhapura, Matara, Galle, Hambanthota, Gampaha, Kaluataru, Rathnapura, Kurunegala and Nuwara Eliya.

The training consists of three main components, basic knowledge on physical activity and parameters of physical fitness, interactive practical demonstration of aerobic, strengthening, flexibility and balance exercises and motivational interviewing and brief interventions for promoting physical activity. The three components were conducted by public health experts, sports and exercise medicine experts and health promotion experts respectively. All the participants undergo an assessment of their suitability to participate in the exercise component using 'Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire' and those who got through the screening participate in the exercise component. The program is evaluated qualitatively as well as quantitatively. The trained health staff conducts subnational level capacity building programs at their health institutions and the local communities.



Disease specific recommendations on physical activity for 8 identified NCDs were developed by the Directorate of NCD in collaboration with other professional colleges. It is planned to train doctors involved in NCD care at all levels on these recommendations.



A training of trainer's session for Medical Officer NCDs on promotion of physical activity in primary health care

C.Training of other healthcare staff

Other primary healthcare staff including Nursing Officers, Public Health Nursing Officers who work at Healthy Lifestyle Centers and Public Health Midwives, Public Health Nursing Sisters and Public Health Inspectors are also trained on physical activity promotion among the general public based on the A Training of Trainers (TOT) module developed by Ministry of Health in collaboration with other stakeholders on 'Promotion of Physical Activity in Primary Healthcare'.

o Training of Nurses

Diploma in nursing (basic) students in Nurses training schools and Management groups in Post basic school (Ward and Education) students participate in physical activities. Physical activity included the professionalism module in their curriculum. They have to do physical activity every other day as their first session in timetables. The coordinator of the batch is responsible for finding the resource person for conducting physical activity sessions. Sometimes, Ministry of sport, personnel from Forces or capable students conduct the sessions.

o Training of Public Health Nurses

Competency in physical activity promotion is included into the curriculum. Tutors train the student on a fixed exercise programme. The Directorate of NCD conducted a programme to the PHNO in collaboration with the SLSMA on training sessions for promotion of physical activity in primary health care.

o Training of Public Health Midwives (PHM)

Special Grade Public Health Nursing Tutors conduct the physical activity sessions for student PHMs during their training according to training centre timetables.

o Training of physiotherapists

Physical activity prescription and promotion is an essential part in the undergraduate training for physiotherapists done in Sri Lankan government universities (University of Colombo, Peradeniya Kothalawala Defence University). In-service training is also conducted as CPD programs. Opportunities are available for post graduate training locally and with international collaborations. Special training facilities to become Sports physiotherapists are provided by the National Institute for Sports and Exercise Medicine Ministry of Sport in collaboration with relevant universities/departments. Physiotherapists also act as resource persons for other staff training.

o **Training of Health promotion officers**

Health promotion graduates from Rajarata University receive training on physical activity promotion during their undergraduate education. The health promotion officers are not yet absorbed into the government health system but work in the community via non-government and professional organisations.

o **Sports Science graduates**

Universities of Sabaragamuwa and Sri Jayawardenapura conduct undergraduate programs and University of Peradeniya (diploma program) in sports and exercise science. They are working in the sports sector as sports scientists, coaches, trainers, instructors and in the education sector as PE teachers, instructors and lecturers.

o **Other trainings for health staff**

During a 6-month Diploma in Educational Sciences programme conducted at National Institute of Health Sciences, Public health Nursing tutors and all the other categories tutors undergo physical activity training. One of the objectives is that all the participants have to be trained as a master trainer for physical activity. After completing the diploma, they have to conduct physical activity sessions in their own schools, Medical Laboratory Technicians, Public Health Inspectors, Pharmacy, Electroencephalography and Echocardiography training schools.

D. Trainings conducted by National Institute of Sports Science (NISS), Ministry of Sports

National Institute of Sports Science (NISS) is a premier institute for sports education in Sri Lanka, established under the provisions of the sports law No. 25, 1973. They conduct sports education courses/diplomas for Sports Officers and School Sports Coaches. Directorate of NCD, Ministry of Health has developed curriculum and conducts training on gym maintenance for staff in healthcare institutions in collaboration with NISS.



E. Teachers and pre-school teachers

Childcare settings in Sri Lanka are regulated by the Ministry of Women and child affairs and trains pre-school teachers on early childhood care and development. Pre-school teachers receive various training on physical activity promotion at regional level during their service. The Ministry of Sports has supported the development of a PA module for preschool children. It is planned to implement this module with the Family Health Bureau, School Health Unit.

Physical activity related training is provided in all teacher trainee programmes conducted by the Ministry of Education, provincial and zonal education offices. However, in-service training programmes on physical activity are conducted only for the physical education teacher's national and provincial level. Physical activity promotion is included in primary teacher training programmes by the Ministry of Education into their teacher manual. In-service training programmes are conducted at regional level for primary school teachers. Training to be included to all government teachers during their pre-service training is discussed at the policy level.

F. Private sector employees

There is no recognisable formal training available for healthcare and education workforces in the private sector. Institutional level training is noted to be conducted by companies and educational institutes collaborating with experts.

G. Training of other non-health staff

Officers in Divisional Secretary offices such as Elder Rights Promotion Officers, Social Service Officers and various other officers in government service receive in-service training that facilitate their performance in job and awareness of physical activity as a risk factor for NCD. Occupational health and safety officers receive pre-service and in service training on basic concepts of physical activity. Transport planners do not receive any training on physical activity promotion through transportation. However, the Road Development Authority (RDA) has taken an initiative to promote physical activity at their workplaces. The RDA is currently focusing on developing cycling lanes and adequate foot paths in future road development activities.

1.4 Capacity building at sub national level

1.4.1 Capacity building by Medical Officer NCD and other health staff

Medical Officers NCD are trained as Master Trainers on physical activity by the Directorate of NCD. They are involved in regional level capacity building programs for health and non-health staff. Trained health staff such as Healthy Lifestyle Center staff esp. Public Health Nursing Officers conduct physical activity based training for the community.



Local training programme on exercise done by MO NCD with sports officers from Divisional Secretary Office for health staff



Exercise Training organized by a Public Health Nursing Officer

1.4.2 Capacity building through Primary Healthcare Strengthening Project (PSSP)

Among the 350 verifiable hospitals currently involved with Primary Health Care System Strengthening activities more than 50 Primary Medical Care Institutions are involved with physical health promotion activities aimed at risk communities. Those activities include physical exercise sessions facilitated by hospital staff and community volunteers, awareness activities, creating supportive hospital environments for exercising by installing outdoor exercising or indoor exercising equipment etc. Following photographs elaborate a few highlights of Training staff and community leaders at Divisional Hospital Kariyamadiththa.



GAPS IDENTIFIED

- Lack of a national communication strategy and a package to promote physical activities targeting all age groups
- Lack of human resources to plan transport facilities and towns
- Infrequent mass participation events promoting PA
 - No regular events to promote PA in public parks or public open spaces at national or sub national level
 - Non-existence of car free days, bike to school/workdays at national or sub national level.
- Inadequate training of workforce in non-health sectors on their role and services to promote and enable physical activity

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Development of a national communication strategy and a package to promote physical activities targeting all age groups and settings
- Scale up and regularly conduct the existing mass participation events aimed at encouraging participation in physical activity at national level
- Training of non-health workforce on physical activity promotion at their workplaces (government/private).
- Education of Transport planners and town planners on how to incorporate facilities to be physically active into future road and building designs

SECTION 2

ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS