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PUBLIC SERVICE REVIEW: EUROPEAN UNION - ISSUE 24

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PROFILE- REPOPA...

28 September 2012

There is strong research evidence – as well as common understanding – that physical activity is good for health. Research evidence also shows that in addition to individual motivation and other factors, environmental facilitators are essential for sustainable physical activity. This means that societal sectors such as educational and occupational settings, environmental and technical planning as well as social and health sectors are key stakeholders and also responsible for health.

Real world decision-making happens in the intersect of research evidence, characteristics of the population and setting, values, resources and priorities of practice and political actors. Health in All Policies (HiAP) is a concept supported by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the EU since the Finnish presidency in 2006. The basic notion of HiAP is that all policies have an impact on health either directly or indirectly; thus health considerations should be incorporated into all policies and actions of the societies.

REPOPA – an example of HiAP

The REsearch into POlicy to enhance Physical Activity (REPOPA) project and consortium (www.repopa.eu), is a recent example of the HiAP approach in the area of physical activity. REPOPA, coordinated by the Unit for Health Promotion Research, University of Southern Denmark, and Professor Arja R Aro, is a five year, EC-funded, seven country research project, which aims to support evidence-informed policymaking. REPOPA integrates research knowledge, expert know-how and real world physical activity policymaking by respecting the views of all stakeholders.

REPOPA is currently finalising its first phase, which is to analyse physical activity policy documents of seven partner countries to find out if and how research evidence and other kind of evidence has been used in developing policies.

REPOPA is one of the international research projects of the unit, which is internally organised along three research lines (www.sdu.dk/healthpromotion); REPOPA being closely related to the research line HiAP, led by Associate Professor Gabriel Gulis. The previous projects were: Health Impact Assessment in New Member states and Accession Countries (HIA-NMAC, www.sdu.dk/HIANMAC) and Risk Assessment from Policy to Impact Dimension (RAPID, www.sdu.dk/rapid). HIA is a combination of procedures, methods and tools by which a policy, programme or project may be judged as to its potential effects on the health of a population and the distribution of those effects within the population (WHO 1999). The unit has developed national HIA guidelines (The Danish National Board of Health 2008) and participated on a HIA effectiveness study in collaboration with the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies (http://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_information/documents/health_in_all_policies.pdf; www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/98283/E90794.pdf).

We offer

The unit offers research collaboration, consultancy, HIA tools as well as tailored training of policymakers in evidence-informed HiAP on local, national and international levels. REPOPA project specifically offers a forum for exchange and collaboration in knowledge to action in physical activity policy development.

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