

Sustainable prevention of obesity through integrated strategies



SPOTLIGHT

Periodic Project Report II

for the SPOTLIGHT project

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SPOTLIGHT: Sustainable prevention of obesity through integrated strategies

Seventh Framework Programme – Health Theme

Collaborative Project

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Publishable Summary

Project context and objectives

The prevalence of overweight and obesity in Europe is high and contributes to the burden of many chronic diseases. Obesity is largely determined by modifiable lifestyle behaviours such as low physical activity, sedentary behaviour and high caloric intake. There is growing evidence that influences on individuals and their lifestyle should not only be addressed in single-level interventions that focus on a distinct individual, social or environmental aspect, but rather in community-based approaches that integrate individual, community, organisational, and societal levels. SPOTLIGHT focuses on integrated health promotion strategies for sustainable behaviour change contributing to prevention of overweight and obesity. For this project, researchers from thirteen organisations in eight European countries join forces, supported by a team of external advisors.

SPOTLIGHT aims to increase the knowledge base on obesogenic determinants in order to obtain a comprehensive overview of the factors necessary for establishing effective and sustainable lifestyle behavioural change interventions. The project also aims to identify community-based intervention approaches that are strong in terms of their reach, effectiveness, implementation and sustainability. The project outcomes will be widely disseminated to various stakeholders.

Work performed and main results achieved so far

The work carried out within each relevant WP during the first 36 months is described below:

Individual-level determinants of successful behaviour change in obesity interventions in adults have been identified through a systematic review in work package (WP) 2. The findings have been translated into a scientific paper which has just been published. The results were also presented in an oral presentation during the annual meeting of the European Congress on Obesity (ECO) in Liverpool, in 2013, and in at the annual meeting of the International Society of Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity (ISBNPA).

WP 3 has had several outputs, among which:

- Three systematic literature reviews. Two of them have already been published in international scientific journals, the third is currently under review.
- A SPOTLIGHT Virtual Audit Tool has been developed and validated to assess potential obesogenic characteristics of neighbourhoods

- A virtual audit using this new tool has been performed in 60 neighbourhoods from large cities or urban zones in 5 European countries
- A survey on lifestyle behaviours, socio-demographics and many other individual-level characteristics potentially related to weight-status has been performed in more than 6,000 adult residents of audited neighbourhoods in 5 European countries
- Objectively measured physical activity levels are assessed in a subsample and used to validate parts of the online survey (i.e. items on physical activity and sedentary behaviour).

A systematic literature review was carried out within WP4 to evaluate the *reach effectiveness adoption implementation and maintenance* (RE-AIM) of published studies on obesity prevention interventions that target individual-level *and* environmental-level factors. The findings indicated that integrated interventions have the potential to reach a large amount of people, including those who can benefit most. Moreover, it seems that multi-level interventions are more likely to be broadly adopted and to be sustained than single-level interventions. The largest public health impact can be achieved if: 1) there is a focus on all levels, from potential program participants to organizational sponsors, at the beginning of the planning process, 2) the diffusion theory is applied to guide the implementation process, and 3) a website to disseminate the intervention is used

Within WP5 a Europe-wide survey was carried out to provide an overview of community-based multi-level approaches to prevent adult obesity through improving diet and physical activity. The results of this survey have been translated by the World Obesity Federation into an interactive web atlas detailing initiatives being taken in 24 countries in the European region.

WP6: In-depth interviews were carried out in three country case studies (communities with high prevalence of low socio-economic groups in Denmark, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom), with interventionists including the project team, project partners, and stakeholders. Standardised data collection tools were developed, piloted, and used in each of the case studies. This was important to enable comparisons of enabling and hindering factors between these studies to be carried out. The results indicate that in delivering complex community-based interventions there are very real tensions between delivering and maintaining a project. There are conflicts in the success factors for 'doing' a good quality and effective project in a short period of time and success factors for truly engaging the community and its leaders, organisations and political leaders and slowly but surely developing a community initiative which in time can become embedded and continue to contribute to the health of the community in the long-term. Factors which differentiated consistently between success and failure across all three countries have emerged in this study, despite the extent and power of the variables between case studies and countries which militated against them.

Expected final results and potential impact

At the end of the project we will be able to:

- Provide additional multi-level entry points for community-based intervention approaches aimed at changing obesogenic behaviours;
- Provide the Reach, Efficacy, Adoption, Implementation and Maintenance (RE-AIM) of examples of multi-level intervention approaches across European Member states, and the RE-AIM of such interventions that are described in the scientific literature;
- Provide factors associated with success-and failure with regard to the implementation of multi-level intervention approaches;
- Provide an evidence-based model for effective multi-level intervention approaches in health promotion practice applicable across European regions, and disseminate the findings to European Member State stakeholders.

Project website

www.spotlight-project.eu

List of partners involved in SPOTLIGHT

Partner No.	Name	Country
1 (Coordinator)	VU University Medical Center	The Netherlands
3	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine	United Kingdom
4	The European Association for the Study of Obesity (EASO)	United Kingdom
5	The University of Bergen	Norway
6	The University of Oxford	United Kingdom
7	Ghent University	Belgium
8	Maastricht University	The Netherlands
9	Metropolitan University College Copenhagen	Denmark
10	International Obesity Task Force/ International Association for the Study of Obesity	United Kingdom
11	The Nutrition Epidemiology Unit	France
12	Blox Group	The Netherlands
13	University of Debrecen	Hungary
14	Technical University of Lisbon	Portugal

