



Bsport+

GUIDE LINE

For HEPA monitor

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Guideline for HEPA monitor ¹**Bsport+**

¹ * This guideline was inspired by 'Guidelines for Health-Enhancing Physical Activity Promotion Programmes' (Charlie Foster, University of Oxford), produced with financial support from the European Commission, and other valuable resources published in the official website of [World Health Organization](#) / [HEPA Europe](#).

This short guideline is addressed to promoters and practitioners engaged in different areas of health enhancing physical activity (HEPA) programme or similar initiatives at local, national and European levels. Additionally, this guideline aims at supporting the development, design, implementation and monitoring of HEPA programmes in partner country organisations within their targeted communities

What is health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA)?

Health Enhancing Physical Activity (HEPA) is any form of physical activity that boosts health and functional capacity without harm or risk. On average, 30 minutes a day of moderate-intensity physical activity would be enough to benefit health, and these activities can be any of following: brisk walking, cycling, swimming, dancing, gardening, walking the dog, washing windows or a car, walking to work or shops, etc. This is by no means an exhaustive list of health exercises, but it gives an indication of the many different daily activities that can benefit people's health and wellbeing.

Promoting physical activity at community level is a challenging enterprise, requiring comprehensive national policies and strategies and a high commitment from multiple stakeholders (such as civil society, schools, policy makers, health experts, nutritionist, etc). and sectors (such as sport, health, education, environment and transport). Physical education at school for instance can be used as a very effective tool for rising awareness of the importance of physical activity (and HEPA programme), and these institutions can be among the targeted actors to implement actions in this regard.

It is important that HEPA promotion strategies incorporate targeted interventions designed to increase physical activity among the most inactive and at-risk communities. Yet, being active across the life course are paramount to prevent multiple health-conditions (including cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes, mental health and cognitive processes, etc.) and is recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) as being important for all age groups.

Why is Physical Activity Important?

Physical activity is one of the best ways to keep our bodies healthy. There is a wide agreement on principles established by the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommendations for physical activity and the benefits of staying active on improving and preventing multiple health conditions. Mental health for instance is positively correlated to the physical activity and regular exercising can help in relieving stress, anxiety, depression and anger and on the other hand it



helps having a healthier state of mind. Most people notice they feel better over time as physical activity becomes a regular part of their lives. Without regular activity, body slowly loses its strength, stamina and ability to function properly. It is important for all age groups, but it has particular relevance for children, the working population and the elderly.

How can HEPA support in tackling inactivity across Europe?

Physical inactivity has been identified as a leading risk factor for premature mortality and disease in many countries world-wide. Physical inactivity and sedentary lifestyles have long been established as risk factors for noncommunicable diseases and health outcomes. There have been stepped up efforts to promote health-enhancing physical activity by public authorities across Europe as an effort to combat the low physical activity and invite population to engage in more active lifestyles.

WHO estimates that there will be approximately 1.9 million premature deaths annually due to inactive lifestyle. If people would engage more on physical activity and achieve general health targets, this expectation can be lowered up to 70%. HEPA is a comprehensive framework that can be easily integrated and adopted at different country and community contexts and help in addressing the inactivity across Europe.

How to prepare a HEPA Programme?

The first and foremost indicator of a successful HEPA Programme that will ensure a wide acceptance and impact is the clear identification of the the concerned stakeholders and channels of collaboration. Clear mapping of stakeholders and their level commitment will guarantee programme recognition at both political and social levels. Each country has its specific health engagement indicators, statistics, policies, available budget and funding, cultural support/barriers, etc. therefore tailored-made specific HEPA programs must be designed considering multiple factors.

Step 1: Stakeholders identification & mapping.

Step 2: Justify convincingly the health, economic & social benefits of HEPA for each identified targeted stakeholder.

Step 3: Use the identified evidences of benefits of HEPA to receive political action & financial support.

Step 4: Place HEPA & its contribution within existing national strategies and plans.

How to develop a HEPA Programme?

The identification of key stakeholders and their specific benefits on HEPA is followed by the design of a pertinent HEPA Programme that will fit to the country context and community needs.

Step 1: Explore the relationship between HEPA promotion and two key stakeholders: sport and health professionals.

Step 2: Approach other relevant organizations and practitioners that can support HEPA promotion at national and community levels (such as exercise and fitness professionals, sports teachers and coaches, medical personnel in public health, health promotion staff, etc.).

Step 3: Identify or create and use any relevant pilot HEPA promotion programme.

Step 4: Local, national and international networking aiming at exchanging knowledge, experiences, and best practices on HEPA promotion programmes.

Step 5: Design the visual identity (including name and logo) of the HEPA promotion programme.

How to design a HEPA Programme?

After the mapping process of all the concerned stakeholders and the assessment of the country context and community needs, the design of the HEPA Programme may follow several steps commonly found across countries and HEPA communities.

Step 1: Organize workshops, seminars, round tables and other discussion events with experts, stakeholders, policy makers and other practitioners to collect relevant inputs on designing the HEPA Programme.

Step 2: Design and develop a comprehensive sustainability plan for the HEPA Programme.

Step 3: Design the context-specific theoretical framework for the HEPA Programme (models or approaches, intervention methods, engagement and participation, etc.).

Step 4: Clearly define the HEPA programme aims, objectives and indicators

Step 5: Design the HEPA message

Implementing a HEPA Programme?

After the establishment of the theoretical grounds of the HEPA Programme, next step is to translate these plans into action.

Step 1: Design the organisational (activity-interdependency) structure of the HEPA programme

Step 2: Design the organigram of the HEPA Programme and allocate responsibilities / ownerships among involved stakeholders.

Step 3: Establish and continuously nurture the HEPA Programme network of collaborators.

Step 4: Coordinate and monitor implementation activities at national and community-levels.

Step 5: Nurture continuous feedbacking on the implementation progress and adjust the HEPA Programme accordingly (addressing specific geographical and demographic needs of different communities).

How to evaluate and monitor a HEPA Programme?

Monitoring the progress on the implementation of the HEPA Programme and continuous evaluation is a vital process in the successful deployment of these initiatives.

Step 1: Recognize the importance of the continuous programme monitoring and evaluation.

Step 2: Design a monitoring and evaluation plan for the HEPA Programme.

Step 3: Use existing monitoring and evaluation methods and structures for the HEPA Programme.

Step 4: Appoint an independent quality assessment mechanism for the HEPA Programme.

Step 5: Encourage local/regional self-evaluation practices.

Step 6: Learned from poor performance and encourage continuous improvements.

Step 7: Design a dissemination and exploitation plan for the results of the programme evaluation.

Impact and Value: Promoting HEPA at your communities

The WHO Regional Office for Europe has compiled country factsheets for all union members to support the exchange of experiences, policy development and action in the area of physical activity. One of the key recommendations is to use health care providers as intermediaries to facilitate awareness rising campaigns and access to physical activity initiatives. Other important issues concern the inclusion of the socio-economic disadvantages groups and increase their access to recreational or exercise facilities. Implementation of the guidelines are developed by HEPA Europe. Thus far significant achievements have been recorded across Europe thanks to the implementation of HEPA programme and similar initiatives. More can be achieved by deploying these practices at specific targeted communities.

Find out more about HEPA Europe here:

<https://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/disease-prevention/physical-activity/activities/hepa-europe>

Find out more about B-SPORT+ Project here:

<https://www.bsportplus.eu/>

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