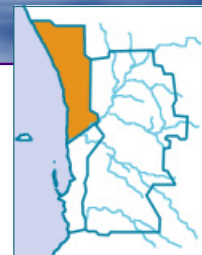




FACT SHEET NO. 7



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS OF THE NORTH METROPOLITAN HEALTH REGION

The Premier's Physical Activity Taskforce

In November 2002, the Premier's Physical Activity Taskforce (PATF) undertook a state-wide survey to measure physical activity levels of Western Australian adults. This fact sheet presents major findings from this survey about the levels of physical activity and body mass index for the North Metropolitan health region¹.

North Metropolitan Sample Demographics

The North Metropolitan health region has an estimated population of 521,981 people (in 2002). From the North Metropolitan health region, 931 participants or 29.1% of the total sample (n = 3,200) completed the physical activity survey.

Table 1: Demographic profile of respondents From the North Metropolitan Health Region

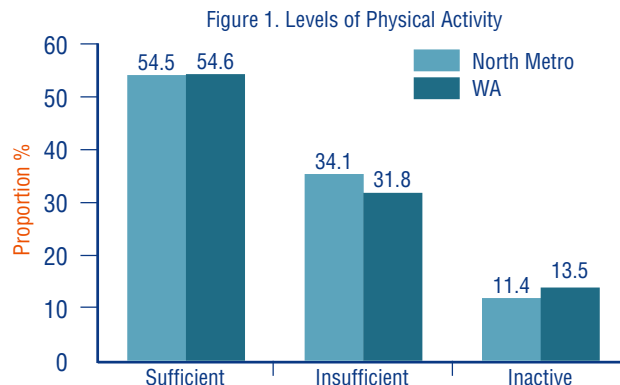
CHARACTERISTIC	%
Gender	
Male	46.0
Female	54.0
Age Group	
18 to 29 years	16.6
30 to 44 years	28.5
45 to 59 years	27.9
60 years or more	27.0
Education	
Less than TEE	30.8
TEE/diploma	40.9
University	28.3

(Note n = 931)

Levels of Sufficient Physical Activity

Figure 1 presents the proportions of adults from the North Metropolitan region who were:

- **Sufficiently active** (≥ 150 minutes of moderate activity over 5 or more days or ≥ 60 minutes of vigorous activity per week);
- **Insufficiently active** (some physical activity but less than sufficient), and;
- **Inactive** (no physical activity).



The proportion of North Metropolitan adults who were sufficiently active was similar (54.5%) to that found for Western Australian adults overall (54.6%). The proportion of North Metropolitan adults who were inactive was less (11.4%) than that found for Western Australian adults overall (13.5%).

Levels of Sufficient Physical Activity by Gender, Age, Education, and Body Mass Index

Table 2 presents the proportions of North Metropolitan adults who were insufficiently active (including those inactive) and sufficiently active by selected characteristics.

Table 2: Participation in Sufficient physical activity by age, gender, education and BMI

Characteristic	Insufficient (%)		Sufficient (%)	
	NM ¹	WA ²	NM ¹	WA ²
Gender				
Male	40.8	42.8	59.2	57.2
Female	49.9	47.8	50.1	52.2
Age Group				
18 to 29 years	34.8	32.5	65.2	67.5
30 to 44 years	49.8	48.3	50.2	51.7
45 to 59 years	47.3	48.8	52.7	51.2
60 years +	46.7	51.5	53.3	48.5
Education				
Less than TEE	52.6	51.7	47.4	48.3
TEE/diploma	44.3	43.0	55.7	57.0
University	39.7	40.3	60.3	59.7
Body mass index				
Healthy weight	40.2	39.7	59.8	60.3
Overweight	47.8	47.8	52.2	52.2
Obese	63.7	59.7	36.3	40.3

¹North Metropolitan; ² Western Australia

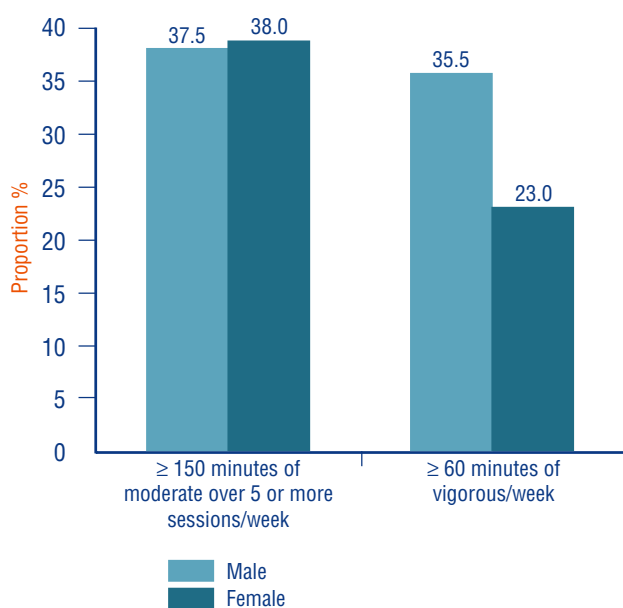


For the North Metropolitan health region the proportion of adults participating in sufficient levels of physical activity for most characteristics was similar to that observed for Western Australian adults overall.

Participation in Sufficient Moderate and Vigorous-Intensity Physical Activity by Gender

Figure 2 presents the proportions of North Metropolitan adults participating in sufficient moderate (≥ 150 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity over 5 or more days per week) and vigorous (≥ 60 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity per week) physical activity.

Figure 2. Levels of Sufficient Moderate and Vigorous Physical Activity



A higher proportion of North Metropolitan males (37.5%) and a similar proportion of females (38%) participated in sufficient levels of moderate-intensity physical activity compared to Western Australian adult males (35.4%) and females (37.7%) overall. A lower proportion of North Metropolitan males (35.5%) and females (23%) participated in sufficient levels of vigorous-intensity physical activity compared to Western Australian adult males (37%) and females (25.8%) overall.

Other Physical Activity Facts for the North Metropolitan (WA results in brackets)

- 59.3% (62%) walked for recreation or exercise, 25.3% (28%) walked for transport, and 6.6% (8%) cycled for recreation in the week before the survey.
- 59% (57%) used the streets or footpaths, and 22% (17%) used a public park or oval for physical activity in the week before the survey.
- 48.5% (49%) reported “not having enough time” as a barrier to being more active and 35.5% (34%) reported “to improve fitness” as a major reason for participating in physical activity.
- 72.2% (74%) were aware of the Department of Health’s “Find thirty, it’s not a big exercise” message.

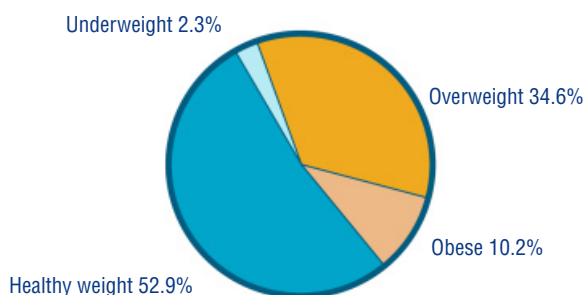
Overweight and Obesity

Self-reported height and weight data were used to determine the Body Mass Index (BMI) for each survey participant (weight in kilograms divided by height in metres squared). The following BMI categories were used to define weight¹:

- < 18.50 (underweight)
- 18.50-24.99 (healthy weight)
- 25.00-29.99 (overweight)
- ≥ 30.00 (obese)

The prevalence for each of these BMI categories in the North Metropolitan health region is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Levels of BMI



A higher proportion of North Metropolitan adults were of a healthy weight (52.9%), a similar proportion were overweight (34.6%), and a lower proportion were obese (10.2%) compared to the overall Western Australian adult population (healthy weight 49.8%, overweight 34.7%, and obese 13%).

Recommendations

Recommendations for increasing levels of sufficient physical activity in Western Australia, as well as key findings can be found in the recently published report, Physical Activity Levels of Western Australian Adults 2002². This report and other useful resources can be obtained from the following website (www.patf.dpc.wa.gov.au) or by contacting the PATF Secretariat on 9382 5980.

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¹ As defined by the Department of Health, WA

² World Health Organisation (2001). *Obesity: Preventing and Managing the Global Epidemic*. WHO Technical Series: No. 894. Geneva: WHO; 2000.

³ McCormack, G., Milligan, R., Giles-Corti, B., & Clarkson, G. (2003). *Physical Activity Levels of Western Australian Adults 2002. Results from the Adult Physical Activity Survey and Pedometer Study*. Perth, Western Australia: Western Australian Government.