

Health boost for fitness centers

December 2 2014

Health is high on the agenda in many countries with efforts to get more people exercising in order to reduce the problems associated with obesity, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer.

Unfortunately, [risk assessment](#) is inadequate in terms of sports facilities and many fitness programs rely on the participants taking out insurance and signing legal waivers rather than their being taught [safe practices](#) and given a safe environment in which to exercise.

Writing in the *International Journal of Business Continuity and Risk Management*, Betul Sekendiz, School of Medical and Applied Sciences, Central Queensland University, Australia, highlights how [risk management](#) in the health and fitness industry is "sub-optimal" across Queensland. She suggests that inappropriately designed fitness programs and services put users at increased risk of injury and adverse health outcomes rather than providing them with the tools to build a healthy lifestyle. Conversely, the same programs expose the facility operators and employees to risk of litigation.

Millions of people die each year from problems associated with being overweight or obese. Sekendiz reports that by the year 2020, Australia will be the third fattest nation after the USA and England as obesity rates are growing 15 percent each year. This will not only account for a great deal of morbidity and mortality for Australia but will apply huge economic pressures to the health system as well as reducing productivity.

Sekendiz suggests that health and sports facilities must face up to their

responsibilities in order to avoid problems associated with irresponsible practice, such as the low but catastrophic risk of new users suffering heart failure, for instance, when given an overly vigorous workout. Facilities must have better record keeping, have pre-activity [health](#) screening procedures, have at least one accessible and functional automated external defibrillator on site and staff trained in their use. They should carry out regular inspections of equipment and facilities, have a risk-management plan and a preventative maintenance program. It seems that across Queensland these points are not widely acknowledged by fitness centers, it is likely that Queensland is not unique in this regard.

More information: Sekendiz, B. (2014) 'Implementation and perception of risk management practices in health/fitness facilities', Int. J. Business Continuity and Risk Management, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp.165-183.

Provided by Inderscience Publishers

Citation: Health boost for fitness centers (2014, December 2) retrieved 20 March 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-12-health-boost-centers.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.
