

# Future doctors learn how to prescribe physical activity for their patients

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Credit: Lancaster University

An initiative adopted by Lancaster University to embed physical activity into the training for medical students has been showcased at a national and international level.

Lancaster Medical School was the first [school](#) in the UK to fully embed the Movement For Movement [physical activity](#) resources into the undergraduate programme and all medical schools and schools of health now have access to the resources, reaching a potential 120,000 students across the UK.

This Movement For Movement initiative, led by Ann Gates has been shared with all medical schools and visits to a sample of schools was funded by Public Health England and Sport England. Dr. Michelle Swainson, Dr. Rachel Isba and Dr. Fiona Curtis of Lancaster Medical School have recently provided a practical insight so more medical schools get on board.

Movement for Movement is recognised as a UK best practice exemplar by the 2018 WHO Europe Physical Activity Fact Sheets and the 2018 WHO Europe Physical Activity in the Health Sector report.

Physical inactivity is the 4th leading risk factor of global mortality but persuading people to take more exercise is challenging.

The Movement For Movement resources embed physical [activity](#) into the undergraduate healthcare curriculum and provides relevant resources developed by experts and endorsed by the UK Council of Deans of Health. The intention is to empower future doctors with the knowledge and skills to positively impact individual and population health.

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The Movement for Movement resources include presentations on conditions that benefit from physical activity, like obesity, diabetes and cancer. They provide a toolkit for future doctors to feel equipped to prescribe physical activity to patients.

Dr. Swainson has contributed to the 2018 update and said, "educators can be assured these resources are aligned to clinical guidance and supported by the most up-to-date evidence".

At Lancaster, Dr. Curtis now includes physical activity in exam questions and invites the Lancaster University Sports and Exercise Science team to deliver relevant lectures.

Dr. Isba, Head of Lancaster Medical School said "We have a focus on population [health](#) and have always prided ourselves on being forward thinking and innovative, so the inclusion of physical activity in our curriculum was deemed highly important and valuable to ensure we are generating excellent future doctors who can appropriately deal with the challenges of modern medicine"

**More information:** Ann Bernadette Gates et al, Movement for Movement: a practical insight into embedding physical activity into the undergraduate medical curriculum exemplified by Lancaster Medical School, *British Journal of Sports Medicine* (2018). [DOI: 10.1136/bjsports-2018-100243](#)

Provided by Lancaster University

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