

NHS Health Check Bitesize sessions:

Physical activity & NHS Health Checks

10 June 2026

Delivered by Dr Rebecca Gould – Energise Me

Introduction to Physical Activity and NHS Health Checks

The NHS Health Check programme aims to prevent cardiovascular disease, and associated conditions, through the **early assessment**, **awareness** and **management** of individual behavioural and physiological risk factors.

The programme aims to prevent conditions such as heart disease, stroke, Type 2 Diabetes, Kidney Disease and also aims to reduce the risk of developing dementia.

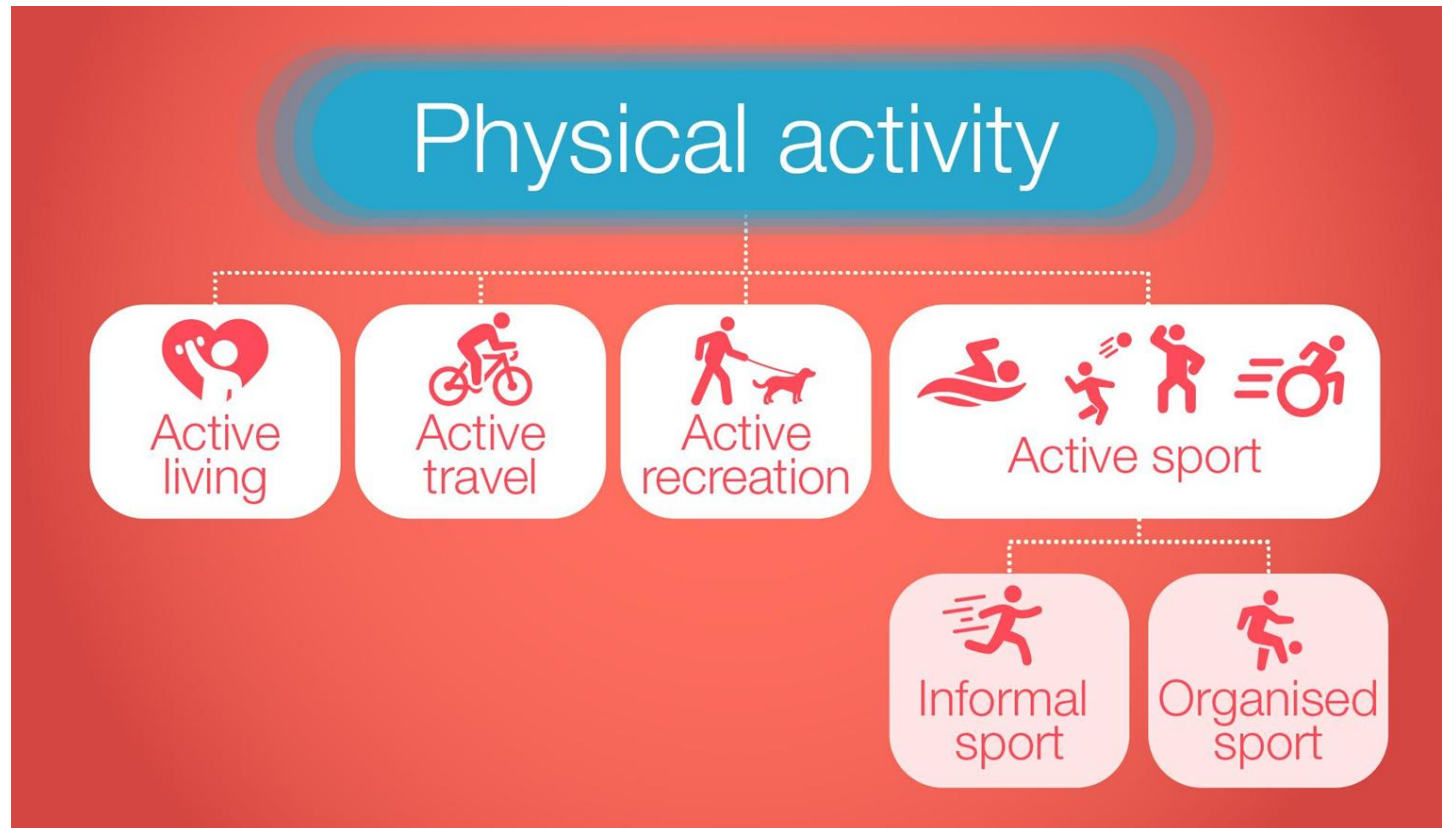
Discussing physical activity is a key element of every NHS Health Check. These conversations about physical activity during the NHS Health Check are an opportunity to support individuals to reduce their risk of cardiovascular disease through healthy lifestyle change. Your role is important!



Did you know?

Regular, moderate-to-vigorous physical activity can reduce the risk of developing cardiovascular disease by up to 35%

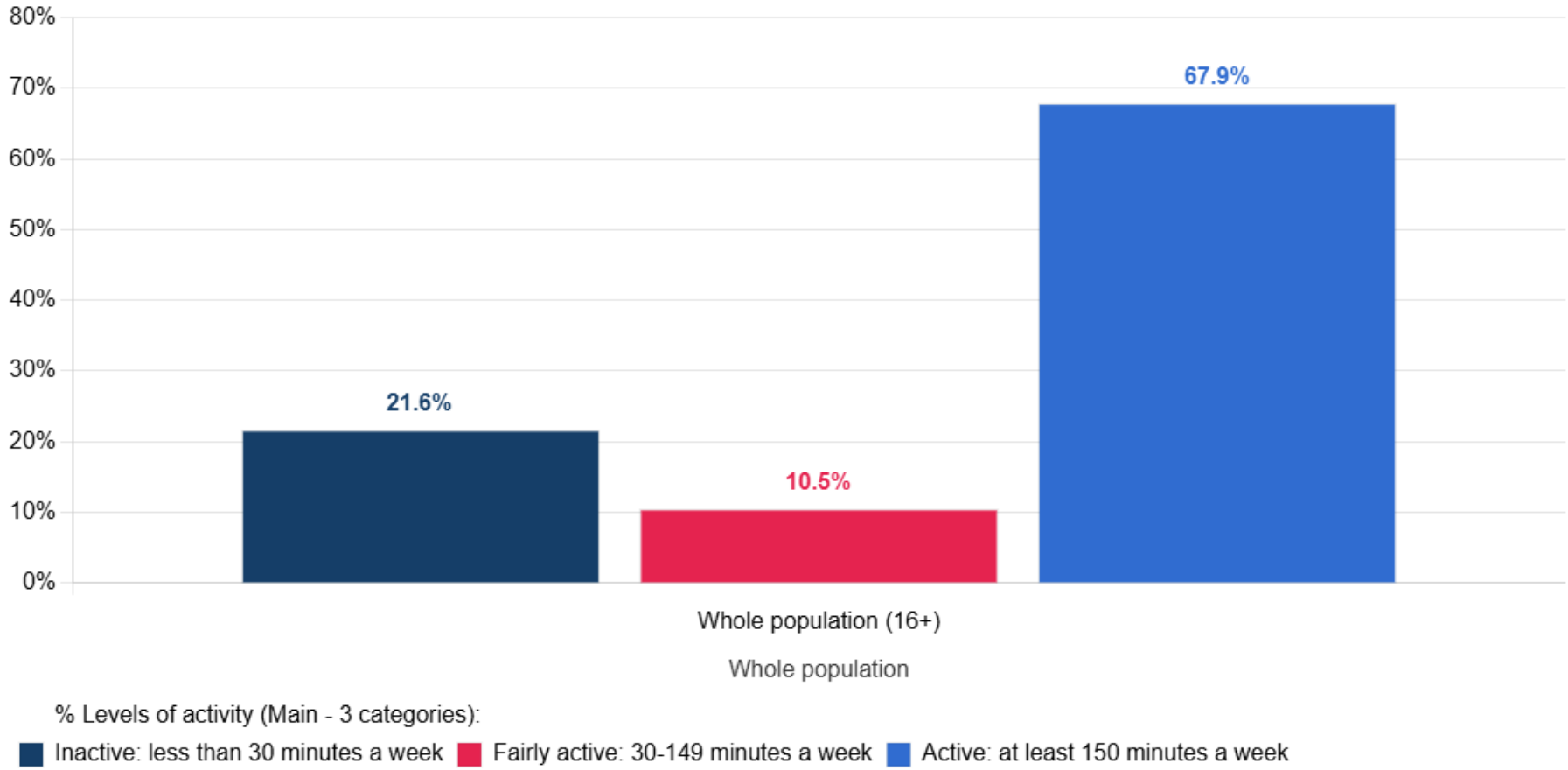
What is physical activity?



Physical activity guidelines

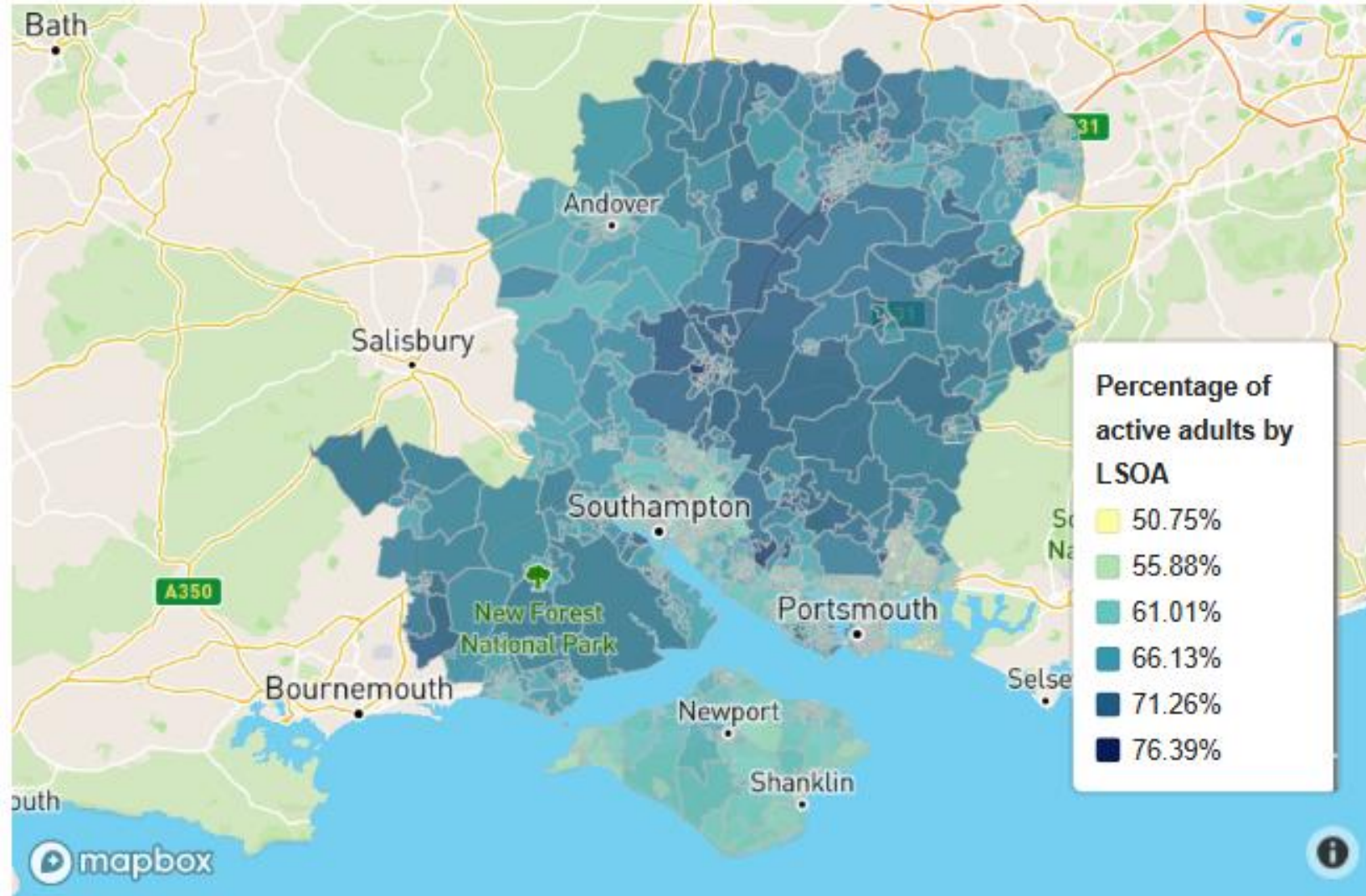


How inactive are we in Hampshire?



How inactive are we in Hampshire?

Active levels amongst adults aged 16+ in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, November 2021/22

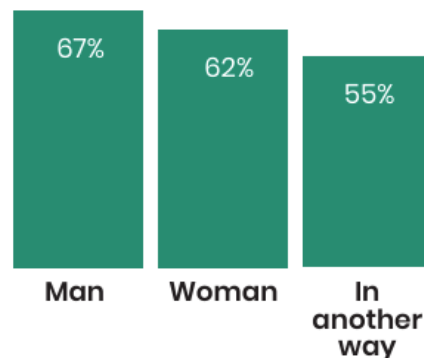


Inequalities related to physical activity

Population groups achieving 150+ minutes of activity a week in England

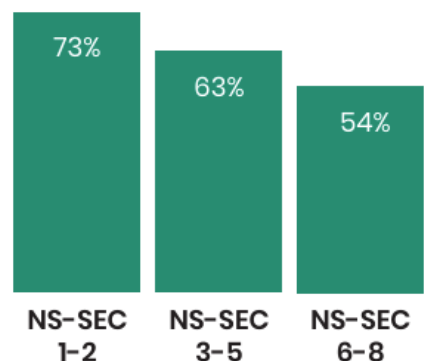
1 Gender identity

Men are more likely to be active than women and those who describe themselves in another way.



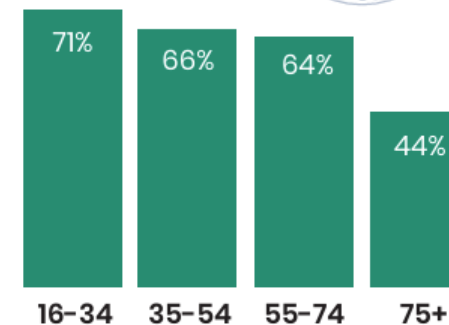
2 Socio-economic groups

Those from lower social groups (NS-SEC 6-8*) are less likely to be active.



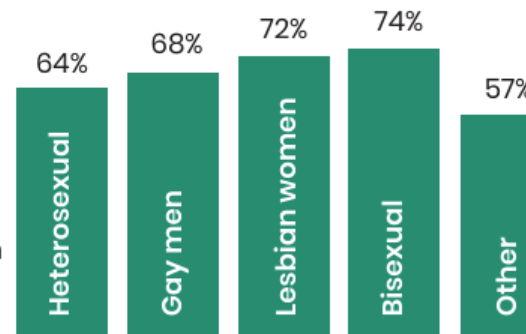
3 Age

Activity levels generally decrease with age, with the sharpest decrease coming at age 75+.



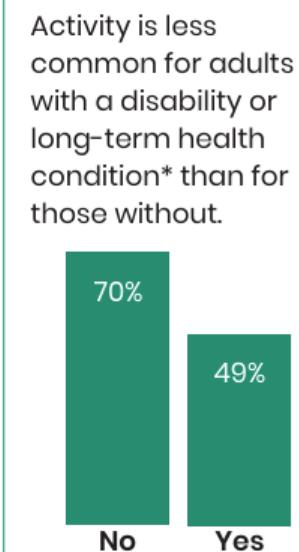
4 Sexual orientation

Gay men, lesbian women and bisexual adults are all more likely to be active than heterosexual adults.



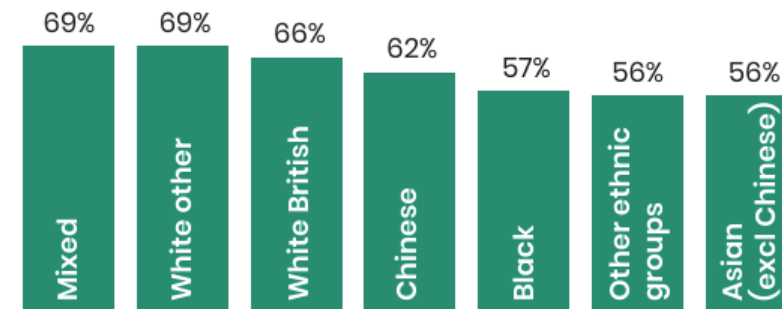
6 Disability and long-term health conditions

Activity is less common for adults with a disability or long-term health condition* than for those without.



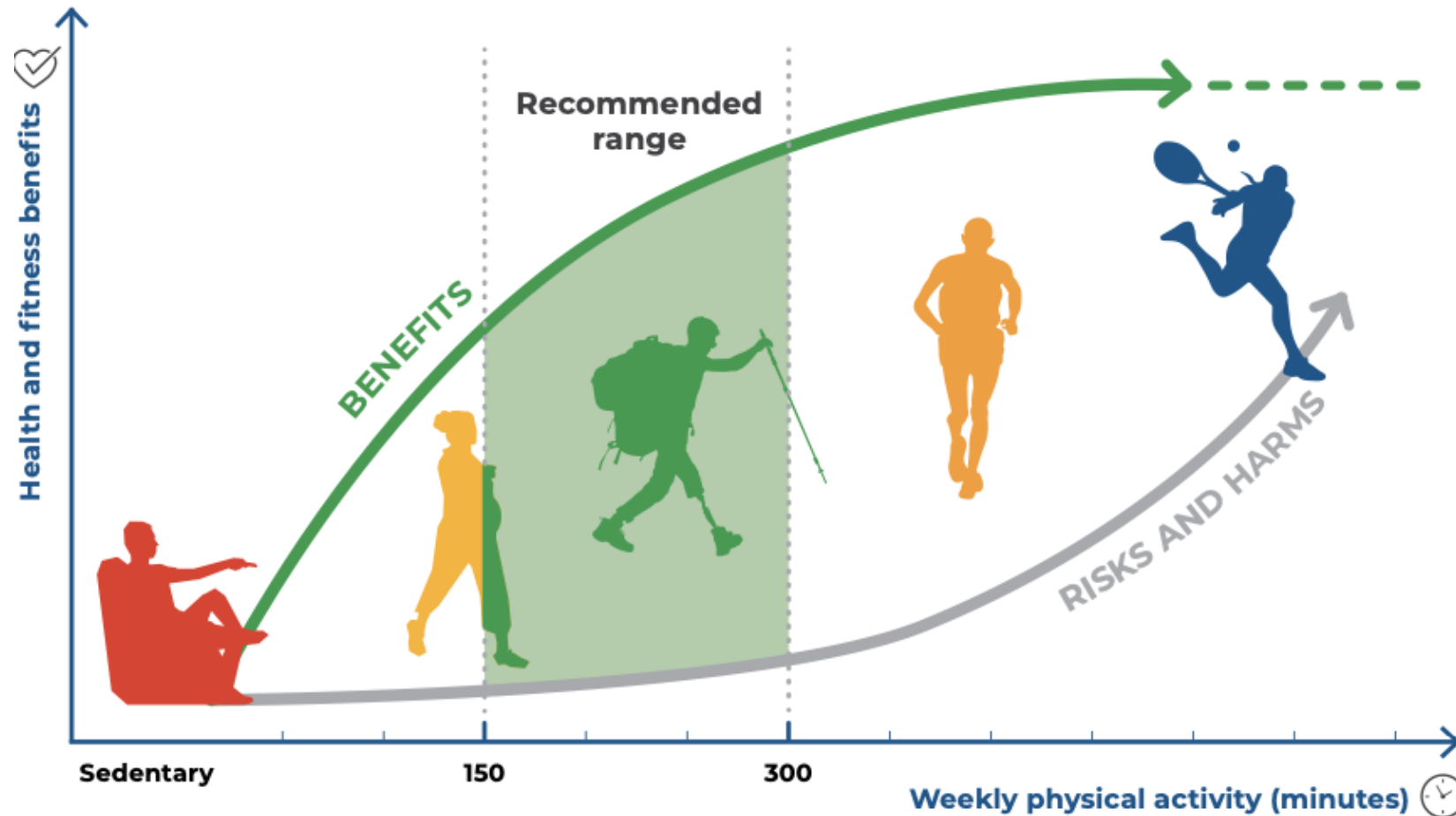
5 Ethnicity

There are differences in activity levels based on ethnic background.

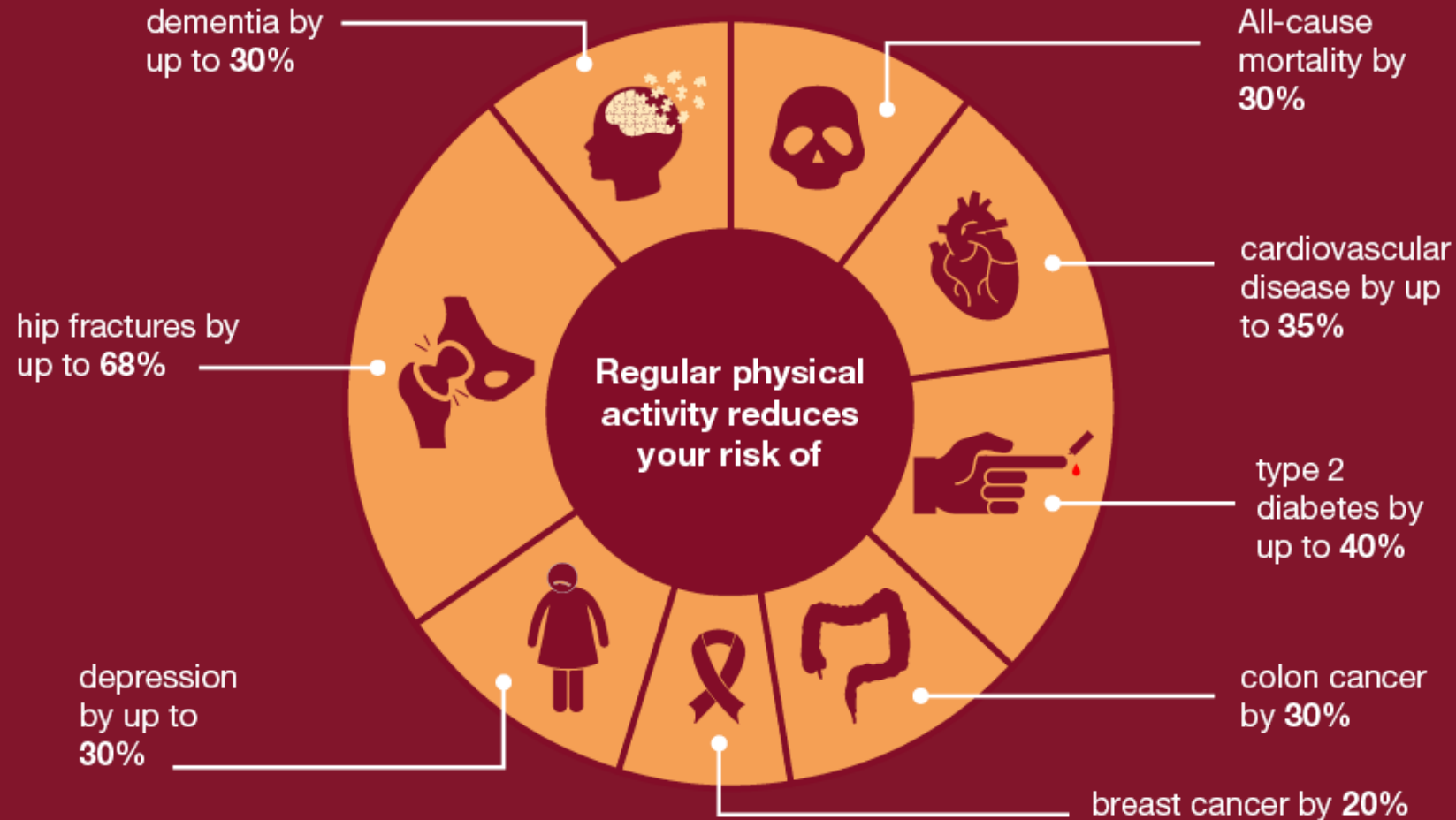


Who has the most to gain?

The **least** active people have the **most** to gain from increasing their activity levels



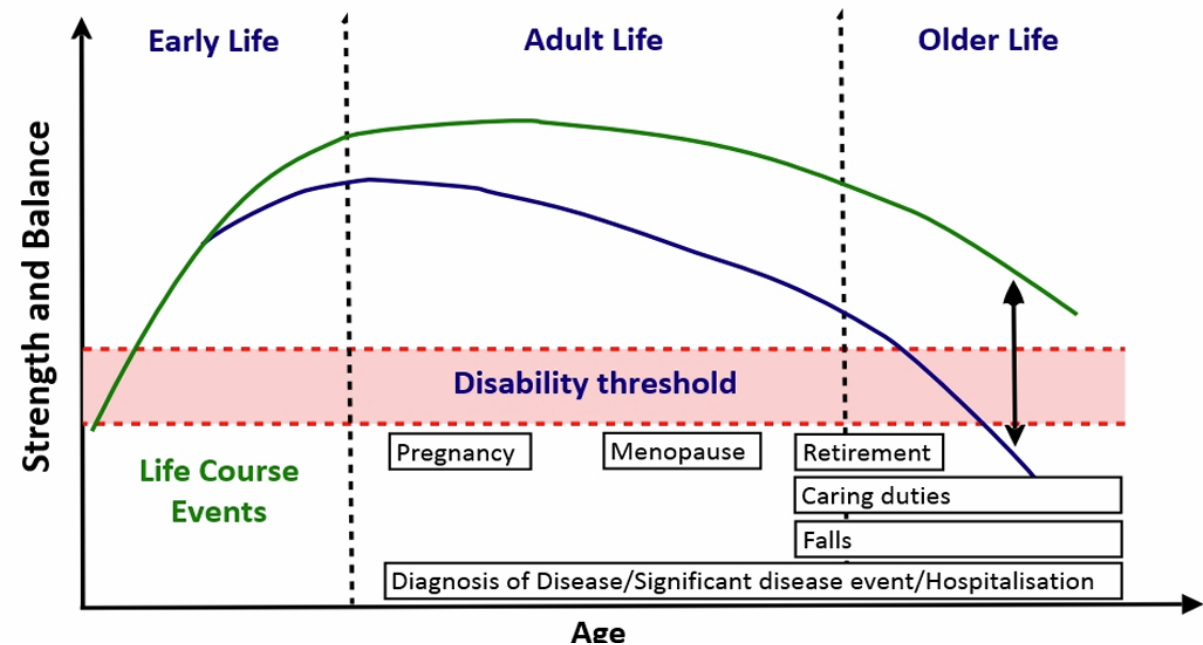
What are the health benefits of physical activity?



Maintaining Independence

The value to older adults of activities which improve strength, balance and flexibility cannot be overstated.

- Maintain physical function
- Reduce the risk of falls
- Improved bone health



Benefits of Physical Activity in Adults

Reasons for Being Physically Active

78% said it improves their mental health and wellbeing

75% said it improves their overall confidence

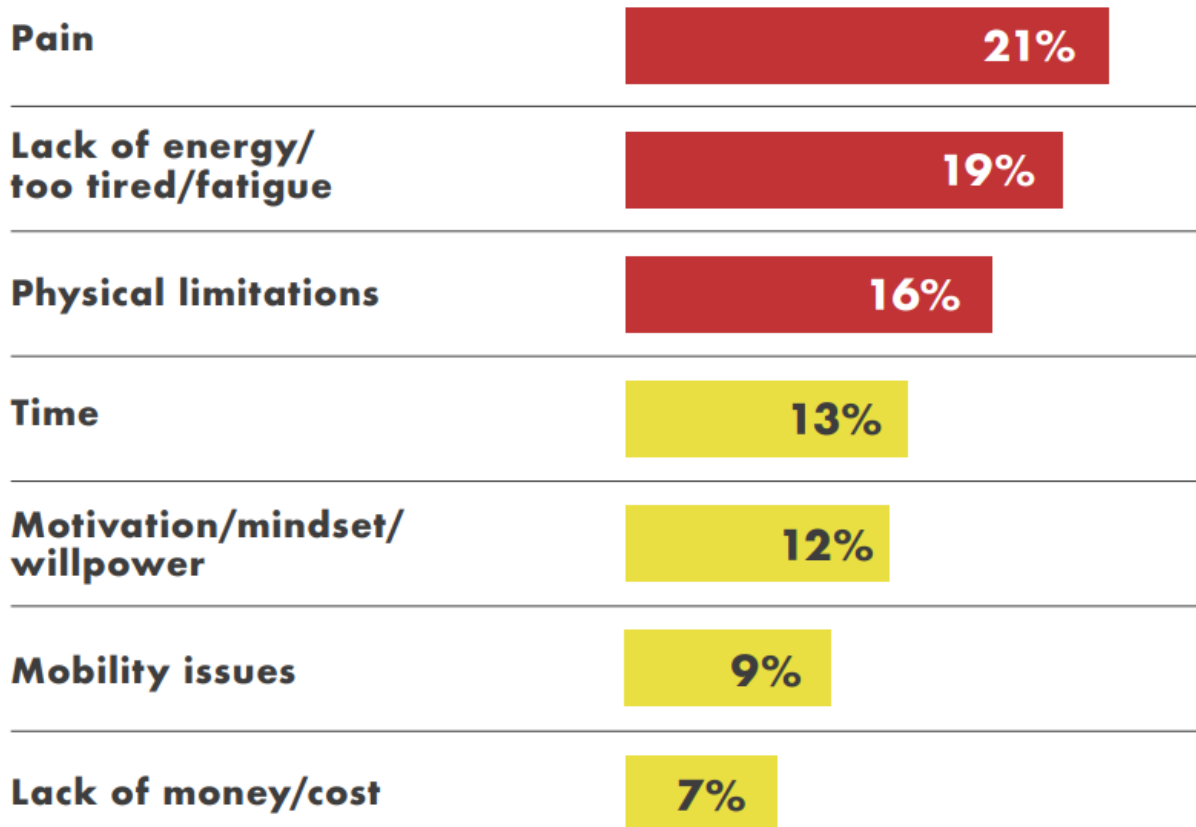
66% said it improves their sleep

55% said it helps them manage a short- or long-term health condition

43% said it helps them make new friends

Patient Barriers to Physical Activity

People with LTHCs are most likely to cite pain and low energy as barriers to physical activity.



Benefits outweigh the risks: a consensus statement on the risks of physical activity for people living with long-term conditions

Hamish Reid ^{1,2} Ashley Jane Ridout ³ Simone Annabella Tomaz ⁴
Paul Kelly ⁵ Natasha Jones^{1,3} on behalf of the Physical Activity Risk Consensus group

1. The benefits outweigh the risks

Physical activity is safe, even for people living with symptoms from multiple medical conditions.



Reid H, Ridout AJ, Tomaz SA on behalf of the Physical Activity Risk Consensus group, et al
Benefits outweigh the risks: a consensus statement on the risks of physical activity for people living with long-term conditions
British Journal of Sports Medicine 2022;56:427-438.

2. The risk of adverse events is very low but that's not how people feel

Well informed conversations with healthcare professionals can reassure people who are fearful of their condition worsening, and further reduce this risk.



3. It's not as easy as just telling someone to move more

Be aware of the concerns of individuals and their carers to help build confidence



4. Everyone has their own starting point.

Help people identify their own starting point, begin there and build up gradually.



5. Stop and seek medical review if...

You notice a dramatic increase in breathlessness, new or worsening chest pain and/or increasing GTN requirement, a sudden onset of rapid palpitations or irregular heartbeat, dizziness, a reduction in exercise capacity or sudden change in vision.

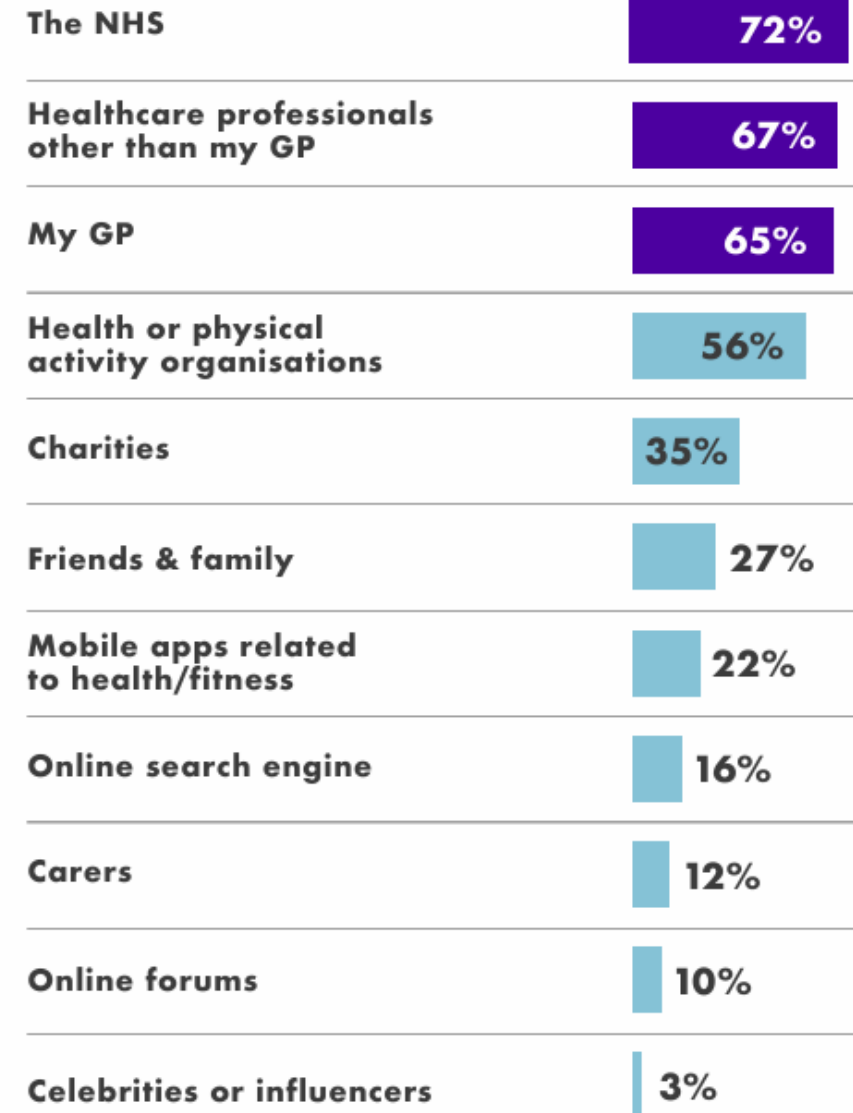


Healthcare has the opportunity to make a big difference

Source: We are Undefeatable: Bridging the Gap: [The 'Bridging the Gap' Report](#)

THE STARTING POINT FOR TRUSTED ADVICE IS THE NHS

Most trusted sources of physical activity advice/information:



Stages of Behaviour Change

Changing behaviour is crucial in helping inactive people to become active.

There are three key ingredients to creating behaviour change:

- The person's capability to change
- The person being given an opportunity to change
- The person having the motivation to change

Diagram 1: The Sport England three behavioural challenges and their alignment to the Transtheoretical model of behaviour change



Motivational Interviewing

Motivational interviewing involves having conversations with people which support them to make changes in their behaviour.

OARS

Open questions—

encourage people to share their story and perspectives

Affirmations—

recognise strengths, values, and achievements

Reflections—

actively listen and mirror what the person says to deepen understanding

Summaries—

draw together key points, especially signs of readiness to change

GPPAQ

1. Please tell us the type and amount of physical activity involved in your work.

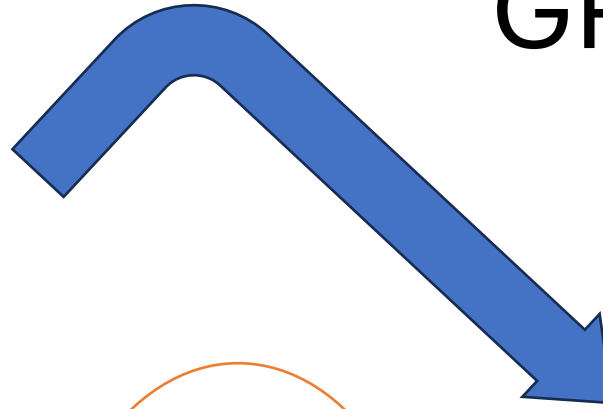
		Please mark one box only
a	I am not in employment (e.g. retired, retired for health reasons, unemployed, full-time carer etc.)	
b	I spend most of my time at work sitting (such as in an office)	
c	I spend most of my time at work standing or walking. However, my work does not require much intense physical effort (e.g. shop assistant, hairdresser, security guard, childminder, etc.)	
d	My work involves definite physical effort including handling of heavy objects and use of tools (e.g. plumber, electrician, carpenter, cleaner, hospital nurse, gardener, postal delivery workers etc.)	
e	My work involves vigorous physical activity including handling of very heavy objects (e.g. scaffolder, construction worker, refuse collector, etc.)	

2. During the last week, how many hours did you spend on each of the following activities?
Please answer whether you are in employment or not

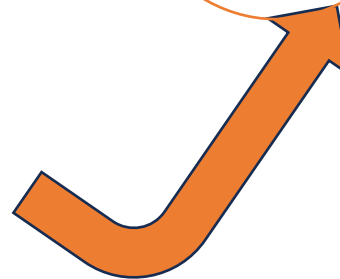
		Please mark one box only on each row			
		None	Some but less than 1 hour	1 hour but less than 3 hours	3 hours or more
a	Physical exercise such as swimming, jogging, aerobics, football, tennis, gym workout etc.				
b	Cycling, including cycling to work and during leisure time				
c	Walking, including walking to work, shopping, for pleasure etc.				
d	Housework/Childcare				
e	Gardening/DIY				

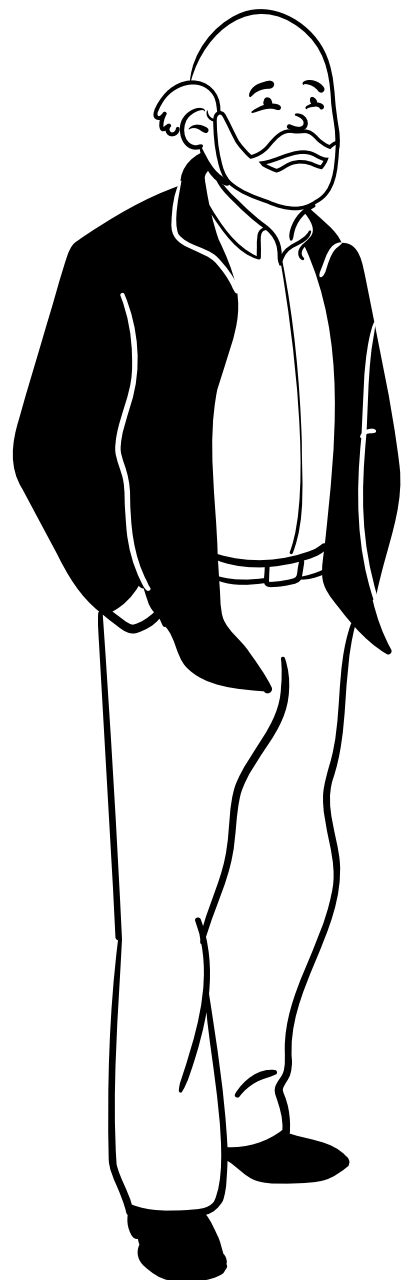
3. How would you describe your usual walking pace? Please mark one box only.

Slow pace (i.e. less than 3 mph)		Steady average pace	
Brisk pace		Fast pace (i.e. over 4mph)	



Physical exercise and / or cycling (hr/wk)	Occupation			
	Sedentary	Standing	Physical	Heavy Manual
0	Inactive	Moderately Inactive	Moderately Active	Active
Some but < 1	Moderately Inactive	Moderately Active	Active	Active
1-2.9	Moderately Active	Active	Active	Active
≥ 3	Active	Active	Active	Active





Bob 60 years old GPPAQ 'inactive'

What do you think about this result/
your physical activity levels

Would you be interested in talking a little more about how
physical activity might help with your health and wellbeing?

What do you know about the benefits of physical activity [ask] –
can I share some other things people find beneficial [share]- what
do you make of what I have just said [ask]

How has [your condition] affected your physical activity
levels and the things you enjoy?

Moving Medicine



Prescribing Movement

Our award-winning, step-by-step guide to physical activity conversations in clinical practice.

[Consultation Guides](#)



Active Hospitals

The ultimate toolkit to help you change the physical activity culture within your hospital.

[Active Hospitals Toolkit](#)



Evidence

Our resources are based on evidence, and you can read and find out more in this section.

[Evidence Finder](#)



Active Conversations

Find out more about our online physical activity training course, which is accredited with 16 CPD points from the FSEM (UK).

[Online course](#)





Active Practice Charter

Join the network of surgeries nationwide who have committed to five steps to get more active.



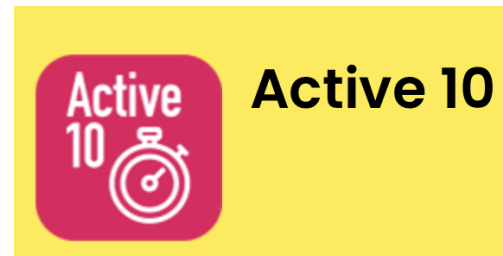
Physical Activity Hub

Physical Activity Modules

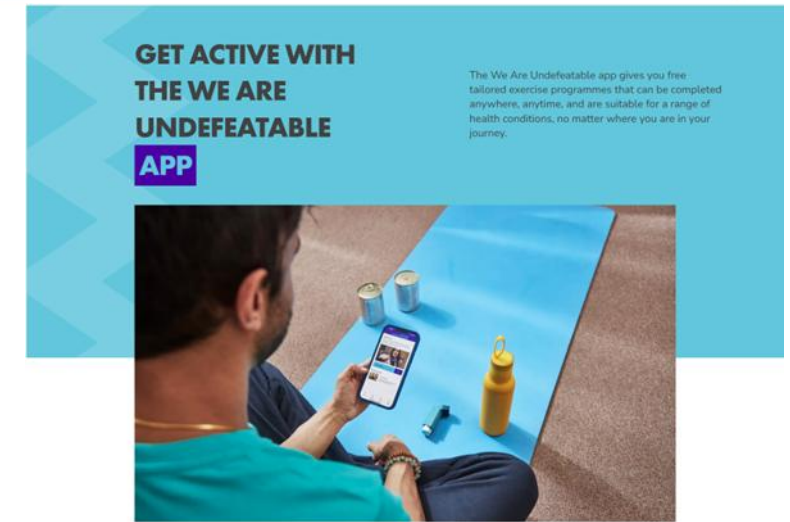


Helpful resources and links

National campaigns



WE ARE
UNDEFEATABLE



Helpful resources and links

Local opportunities



43 Active Partnerships across England, using the power of sport and physical activity to transform lives.



'Swim England's Poolfinder tool makes it easier for people to find the right swimming pool for them, using live timetable data, details on learning to swim and a wider range of accessibility features.'



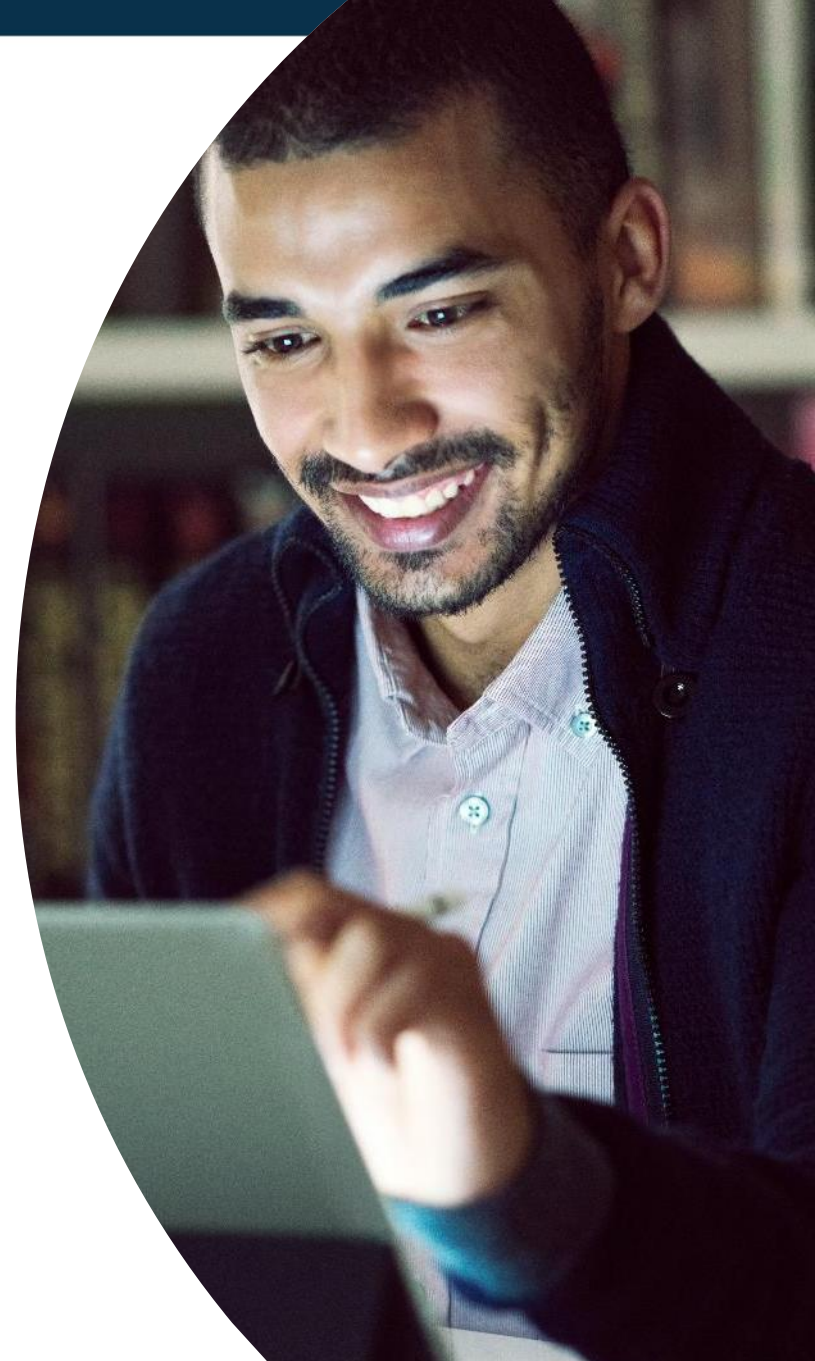
parkrun organise free, weekly, 5km timed runs around the world. They are open to everyone, free, and are safe and easy to take part in.



GP practices can sign up to become an Active Practice. They must demonstrate evidence of boosting physical activity for patients and staff, and of partnering with local physical activity providers.



Walking for Health is England's largest network of health walks with over 360 active walking schemes



Energise locally

Person centred approach to finding the right active choice

Active with Support

- Leisure providers
- Exercise on referral
- including condition specific classes
- Sports clubs- tennis, bowls

Active Outdoors

- Gardening clubs
- Green gyms
- Walking for health
- Short leisure Cycling
- Park yoga
- Park Run /junior park run

Active in the community

- Local community centres
 - Churches
- offering social and active options
 - Men's shed
 - Swimming
-

BeActive HAMPSHIRE

Be Active Hampshire – Hampshire
(excl. Southampton and Portsmouth)
<https://beactivehampshire.org.uk/>



gloji | Hampshire

Gloji Exercise Support– Hampshire (excl.
Southampton and Portsmouth)

<https://hampshire.gloji.org.uk/exercise-support/>

Live Longer Better– Hampshire (excl.
Southampton and Portsmouth)

www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/publichealth/livelongerbetter/beactive



We tackle the things that prevent active lifestyles,
across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight

www.energiseme.org/health-care/physical-activity-signposting-tools

