

The motivators and barriers to physical activity in primary prevention of chronic disease



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1. Background

Regular physical activity is protective against many chronic diseases. Despite this, 39% of adults in the UK are insufficiently active with an increased risk of chronic disease. Moving Medicine is an online resource developed by the FSEM to facilitate clinician-led conversations to reduce the risk of chronic disease through increased physical activity.

2. Aim

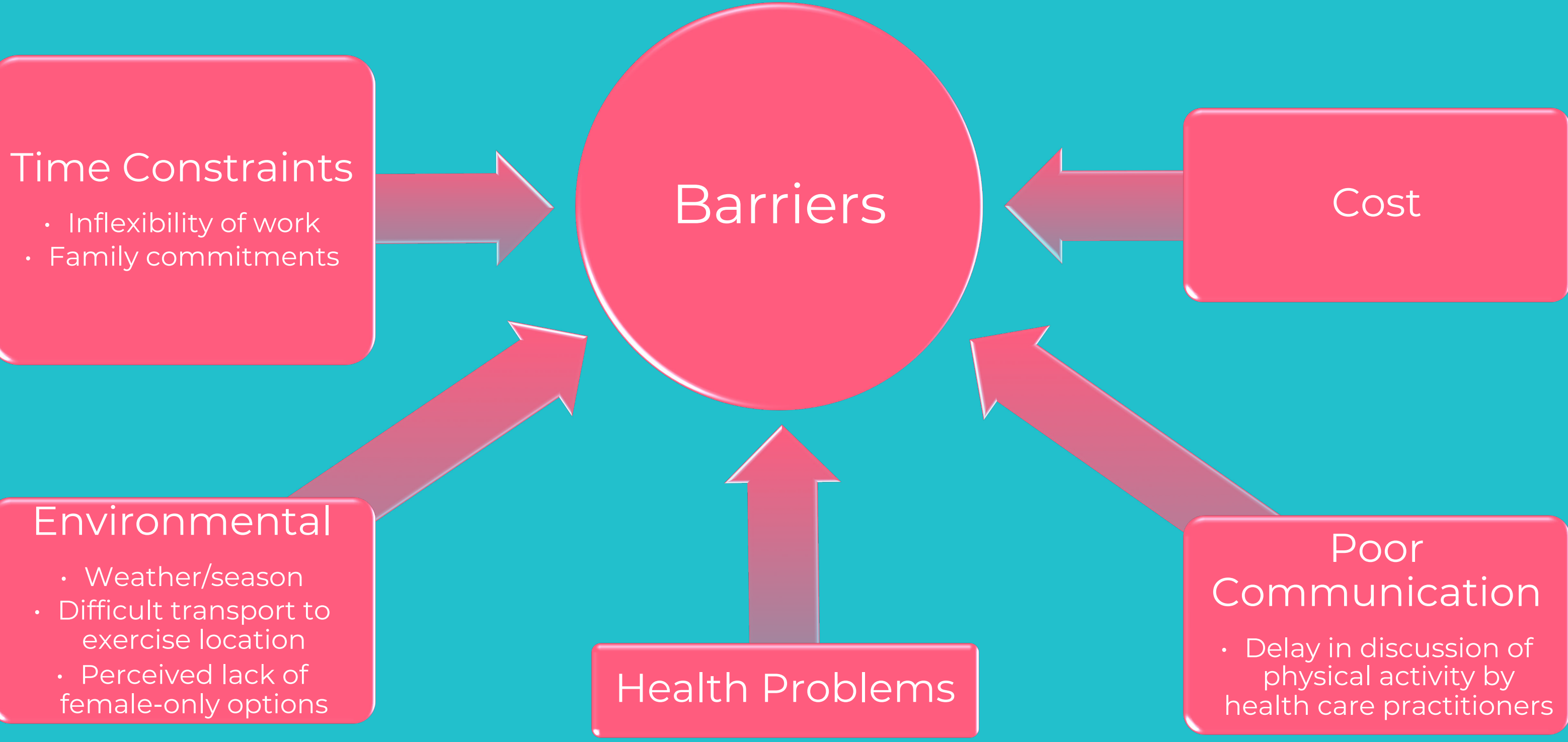
This is the first review to categorise and understand the principle motivators for and barriers against physical activity, for the primary prevention of chronic disease. It has informed the development of a national Moving Medicine resource.

3. Methods

A structured search of MEDLINE and OpenGrey, augmented by hand-searching of reference lists and contents of key journals. Qualitative evidence was then synthesised thematically.

4. Results

13 papers were selected as being of good quality (structured interviews and focus groups rather than questionnaires) and relevant to the aims of this review. Motivators identified were grouped into: anticipated positive effects, support/encouragement, social aspects, environmental aspects, goal-setting, and the use of feedback. Barriers to physical activity were grouped into: time constraints, physical health problems, environmental aspects, cost and poor communication.



"To be able to keep up with my family, to do things with them"

"I think the goal thing was brilliant for me. Obviously I work better when I am aiming towards something."

"When I go walking, and come back, I have a better night's sleep, and all aches and pain disappear"

"It was encouraging really, because you think, well I'll try to do a little more"

5. Building results into the resource

The results of this review were presented to an expert panel of SEM doctors, GPs, nurses, physiotherapists, and patients. This multidisciplinary team then helped shape the primary prevention resource on the Moving Medicine website. See examples from the resource below.

The 0 minutes consultation

The 2 minute consultation

The more minutes consultation

Patient information

Ask

Explore Benefits

Explore Concerns

Build Readiness

Agree a plan

Arrange Support

How can physical activity improve symptoms of day-to-day living?

Improves Mental Health

Improves Cognitive Function

Improves Mood

Maintains health weight

Manages stress

Live Longer

Reduces Chance of Falls

Improves quality of life

Improves Sleep

Ask

Explore Benefits

Explore Concerns

Build Readiness

Agree a plan

Arrange Support

6. Conclusion

Good quality conversations on physical activity in healthcare require an understanding of the key motivators and barriers reported by patients.

Combining this qualitative review with the knowledge, skills and the experience of a multidisciplinary expert panel has enabled the development of a unique patient-centred primary prevention resource.

Delivering this information through MovingMedicine.ac.uk is a vital step in using these important findings to inform routine clinical practice across the NHS.

This should facilitate an increase in the proportion of adults meeting recommended physical activity levels and therefore reduce the rates of chronic disease.

7. References

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