IS THE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE SUFFICIENT FOR MORE PRAGMATIC HEPA ACTIONS?

Matsudo Victor

(Is the scientific evidence sufficient for more pragmatic HEPA actions?, Brazil)

Physical activity (PA) is a phenomenon easier to be defined, to talk about, or to do research on, than to promote, particularly in general population. Although almost 9000 papers (8940) were published analyzing the relationship of PA and cardio-vascular health/disease, mostly of them (5284) in the previous 5 years, and about 500 in the last year (511); a paradox happens: sedentarism has been increased around the world during the last decades. Then, it seems clear that is not a matter of lack of evidences; there is no doubt that is time for action, in other words, the question is not what, but how! It is clear that knowledge, although essential, is not enough to produce the appropriate changes in the desirable behaviour. For the author, knowledge management becomes crucial to face this situation. One of the main reasons to explain this situation is the fact that professionals involved in research in this area in general has no or limited experience in promoting PA. In the other hand, those involved in promotion usually do not dominate the tools for an adequate evaluation of the intervention process and outcomes. Moreover, there is the financial problem, where the traditional restrictions in public health budget may restrict the promotion, the evaluation, or both components of the program. It will be presenting the experience of Agita São Paulo (www.agitasp.org.br) in promoting PA in small, large, and metropolitan cities using the Mobile Management of the ecological model (Sal- lis and Owen, 1997) recently proposed (Matsudo, V, 2004, Matsudo S, 2004). This approach represents a pragmatic attempt to match scientific evidences to pragmatic actions dealing with the many items of this world of diversity (Mat- sudo S and Matsudo V, 2006). It will be also presenting how it has been inspiring programs at national and international level, and the strategic role of continental (Physical Activity Network of Americas – RAFA/PANA) and world (Agita Mundo) networks. Based on those experiences and considering that: a- randomized control interventions involving large populations are extremely difficult and expensive to be organized in the developing as in the developed world, b- the sedentary epidemic is growing, despite the exponential increase number of scientific publications; c- mostly of papers published was based on very short interventions (academic agenda), although sustainable changes requires a long term programs (real life agenda); d- the world diversity prevents a direct application of the research findings in other cultures and realities; e- recent evidences from World Bank concluding that multi-level interventions based upon on Agita Sao Paulo model are cost-effective and even cost-saving; we may conclude that we are reaching a promising phase of new design interventions; where efficacy is maximizing by using in a synergetic way: scientific translation; knowledge management; multi-level approach; clear, inclusive and tailored messages, emphasiz-