

Newsletter

January 2023

In this issue:

- What is the UcanACT project about?
- Meet the partners of the project
- What has been done so far?
- What are the next steps?

OPENING WORDS AND INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the Europe region World Physiotherapy, welcome to the first newsletter of the UcanACT project.

I am delighted that we are leading on this major initiative alongside a committed and energetic group of partners who will combine their efforts to propose practical and innovative solutions towards existing health issues.

At the heart of this project is inclusivity as seven organisations from five countries across Europe come together to work towards applying physical activity as a tool for preventing cancer diseases among adult and senior citizens within public urban green spaces.

I hope this first newsletter will give you a flavour of the Project and of what we are trying to achieve. Subsequent newsletters will keep you informed of the progress being made.

Esther-Mary D'Arcy Chairman, Europe region World Physiotherapy

What is the UcanACT project about?

UcanACT - *Urban ACTION for cancer prevention: adult and senior citizens practice physical activity within public urban green spaces to prevent cancer diseases* - is an intersectoral project funded by the European Union, and joining together physiotherapists, local authorities, non-profit organisations, higher education and research institutions.

The overall objective of the project is **to engage adult and senior citizens to practice physical activity as a tool for cancer prevention within public urban green spaces**. In this regard, the interdisciplinary project team will develop a set of actions, tools and recommendations to empower adult and senior citizens to take active attitudes towards their health. The partners will also implement cancer-preventive physical activity actions within open nature environments in three pilot territories: Bologna (Italy), Kilkenny (Ireland), and Munich (Germany). Cancer-preventive actions – which will contain different modalities of the physical activity exercises, adapted to people’s needs & abilities and facilities of public urban green spaces - will embrace three levels of cancer prevention and be designed for:

- 50 years of age living who never have suffered from this disease (primary prevention)
- 50 years of age living who were diagnosed with cancer (secondary prevention)
- 50 years of age living in recovery from cancer or had a previous diagnosis of cancer in the past

Besides this primary target group, UcanACT will also benefit physiotherapists and other health professionals, scientific community working in the field of cancer-prevention through physical activity, family, friends, caregivers, local/regional administrations, as well as the general public.

The UcanACT project kicked off in July 2022 and will last for three years. During this period, the consortium, coordinated by the European Foundation for Physiotherapy and Physical Activity (E.F.P.P.A.), will work on the development of 4 main objectives:

- 1) To develop and deliver a **Practical Intervention Methodology (PIM)** with guidelines and recommendations for physiotherapists and health professionals for implementation of cancer-preventive physical activity sessions for adult and senior citizens.
- 2) To develop and roll up **Citizens Engagement Strategy (CES)** for implementation of cancer-preventive physical activity sessions within public urban green spaces. Under the project CES, partners will propose methodology and tools for encouraging the project target groups to actively take part in the cancer-preventive actions.
- 3) To develop an **App** to support adult and senior citizens willing to practice cancer-preventive physical activity within public urban green spaces by providing them and other users (physiotherapists, health professionals, family members and caregivers) exercises.
- 4) To develop a short-term **Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)** for physiotherapists and health professionals on how to deliver the Practical Intervention Methodology and ensure the quality of its implementation.

For achieving the project results, the consortium has proposed a methodology based on a coherent and realistic combination of activities. They have been classified under 5 different Work Packages, each coordinated by particular project partner in charge of supervising the correct implementation and good quality of the activities:

- Work Package 1 - Project Management

- Work Package 2 - Research Activities
- Work Package 3 - Design of Pilot Programme Methodology & Tools
- Work Package 4 - Implementation & Evaluation of Pilot programme
- Work Package 5 - Communication and Dissemination

We look forward to telling you more about each of these work packages.

Meet the partners of the project

The Consortium is composed of 7 partners from 5 different countries, which gives a multicultural approach to the project. Within these 7 partners, there are 3 associations of physiotherapists, 2 academic partners, one County Council, and one non-profit organisation. They all will bring their expertise and knowledge to the successful development of UcanACT.

- The European Foundation for physiotherapy and physical activity (Belgium),
- Outdoor Against Cancer (Germany),
- University of Sevilla (Spain),
- University of Bologna (Italy),
- Italian Association of physiotherapists (Italy),
- Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists (Ireland),
- Kilkenny County Council (Ireland).



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITA DI BOLOGNA



Co-funded by
the European Union

To learn more about the UcanACT consortium and their role in the project, do not hesitate to click [here](#).

What has been done so far?

On 8 and 9 September, UcanACT partners gathered for the first time in person in Brussels to officially launch the project. The consortium agreed on the calendar and roles of each partner, and discussed the general philosophy and methodology of UcanACT.



UcanACT Consortium

Since then, several coordination meetings have been held between the partners to organise and develop a set of preparatory activities and knowledge. This preparation phase is part of the second and third Work Package, and will lead to design of some of the core objectives of UcanACT, namely the Practical Intervention Methodology and Citizen Engagement Strategy documents.

So far, UcanACT partners have been working on the first two tasks of the Work Package 2. They have been carrying out the Desk Research on recent scientific evidence of physical activity for cancer prevention for adult and senior citizens which aims to gather the main conclusions on positive benefits of physical activity for cancer prevention. This study gives several recommendations for the Practical Intervention Methodology document.

At the same time, partners have been working on the Desk Research on good practices in organising cancer-preventive sessions for adult and senior citizens within public urban green spaces. This task consists of describing efficient measures for the target groups engagement to practice physical activity and important aspects on safety that should be taken into consideration.

What are the next steps?

One of the next steps to come – and the last task to be implemented within the Work Package 2 - is the development of the Target groups' Needs Analysis. This task consists of exploring any existing issues, barriers, motivators and opportunities that can influence participation in physical activity in green spaces within the three pilot territories of the project through two stages: the questionnaire and the focus group.

Partners already start to share the questionnaire within the pilot territories of the project. It captures information about health status, medical history, physical activity behaviours which influence or prohibit participation in physical activity. By mid-January, the factors highlighted will be explored in person during a two-days focus groups in Bologna, Kilkenny and Munich, with participants that completed the questionnaire.

These three essential tasks listed above will be used for the completion of the third Work Package, starting in January 2023. It will mainly develop and deliver the Practical Intervention Methodology and the Citizen Engagement Strategy thanks to the knowledge and results produced within the previous Work Package.

We are looking forward to meeting the first participants of the project, and receive their feedback on the barriers for adult and senior citizens to practice physical activity. It will give us the necessary tools to understand how to increase their participation in such activities, and to move forward properly in the running of the project.

Stay tuned for more information to come!

Want to know more?



Join us on Twitter



Like us on Facebook



Follow us on Instagram

