

Editorial

Brendon Evans

Take care of your body. It's the only place you have to live.

–Jim Rohn¹

What you do speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say.

– Ralph Waldo Emerson²

I am a sucker for New Year's resolutions. The readership of the *Australian Journal of General Practice* – who I am sure is far more disciplined than I – might not have the pile of well-intentioned, yet now-abandoned plans and goals accumulating just three months after January's professed iron-clad resolve. Perhaps I am just a typical Australian.

Over 75% of Australians do not meet the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's physical activity guidelines (at least 2.5 hours of moderate activity per week).³ Rates of overweight and obesity in Australia are steadily increasing,⁴ and international data indicate that COVID-19 might have reduced physical activity – even following the lifting of restrictions.⁵

The benefits of physical activity are under-appreciated and under-recommended. In this *AJGP* issue, Keating et al present the strong physical, mental and mortality benefits to regular exercise.⁶ Fyffe et al likewise does so for children and adolescents.⁷ Both of these articles also provide practical advice on what to recommend and how to apply behavioural change principles to assist our patients to become more physically active.

As Australia's preventative medicine specialists, general practitioners (GPs) do much to detect and avert disease, but perhaps

amid the bowel cancer screening tests and cardiovascular risk assessments, we could more frequently discuss the 'P' in 'SNAP'.

One way to do this is by becoming a 'Parkrun Practice'.⁸ This RACGP initiative involves registering affiliation with your local parkrun organisation and promoting involvement through exercise prescribing and promotional posters. Additionally, it is powerful to make your own exercising efforts known – no matter at what stage they might be. Your patients trust and respect you, and sharing your experiences can empower and motivate.

Australians want to exercise more – their New Year's resolutions attest to this – but change can be challenging. Persistent, gentle, evidence-based support from us as GPs can help these resolutions become reality.

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