

10,000 Steps Case Report 34

Brisbane 10,000 Steps Project



Background:

The Brisbane 10,000 Steps Pilot Project aimed to build on the framework developed in Rockhampton to determine if this regional community physical activity project could be translated to a metropolitan region of Brisbane. The aim of the Brisbane 10,000 Steps Pilot Project was to raise awareness of the importance of regular physical activity for health benefits and motivate individuals 45 years and over residing in the pilot area in Brisbane North to increase walking. Unpublished data from the 2001 Queensland Health Omnibus Survey indicated that 40-50% of Brisbane residents were insufficiently active, with 12% of men and 12% of women identified as sedentary.

In 2004/5, Brisbane City Council, the University of Queensland and Queensland Health were unsuccessful in an application for Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grant and NHMRC funding for a Brisbane wide project. However, continued partner support allowed for the implementation of a pilot 10,000 Steps project within the Brisbane area.

Partners Involved:

Led by Queensland Health and Brisbane City Council, the project involved a number of stakeholders: Brisbane City Council, Queensland Cancer Fund, Queensland Health, Heart Foundation Queensland, RSPCA, Arthritis Queensland, Sports Medicine Australia Queensland, University of Queensland, Brisbane North Division of General Practice and Diabetes Australia Queensland.

Objectives:

The aim of the Brisbane 10,000 Steps Pilot Project (February to April 2006) was to raise awareness of the importance of regular physical activity for health benefits and motivate individuals residing in the target area in Brisbane North and particularly those born in the baby boomer era (now aged 45-64 years) and older, to increase walking. The objectives of the Pilot Project were to:

1. Increase the target group's awareness and knowledge of the benefits of regular physical activity, including the key messages of 10,000 Steps, with a view to increasing the target group's physical activity levels;
2. Establish a network of organisations and links with existing infrastructure, networks and physical activity services to encourage increased physical activity of the target group in the pilot area; and
3. Evaluate the strategies and determine the effectiveness of delivering similar strategies on a broader scale within Brisbane.

Implementation Strategies:

Five strategies were developed for the Brisbane 10,000 Steps Pilot Project. These included a:

- **Pedometer Library Loan Scheme:** to raise awareness and increase motivation; to increase pedometer access; and to reach an identified population group.
- **Dog Walking Strategy:** to raise awareness of health benefits for dogs and owners; to encourage participation; to reach an identified population group; and to promote responsible

dog ownership. Additionally, this strategy involved engaging with veterinarians, developing a Just Walk Me brochure, conducting a survey and holding a 4 Paws Fun Day.

- **Healthy Ageing Strategy:** to develop a network of community organisations/agencies to strengthen partnerships and increase capacity; to embed physical activity into their core business; to raise awareness; to reach an identified population group; and to identify gaps.
- **Community Organisation Workshops:** to deliver educational and informative workshops to community organisations; increase awareness and knowledge; and to develop a network of community organisations.
- **Marketing Strategy:** to raise awareness; and engage partners and community.

Outcomes:

Ongoing evaluation and a pre- and post- CATI surveys were used to evaluate the project.

- **Pedometer Library Loan Scheme:** increased access to pedometers; increased steps made; and increased motivation. The library tracking system confirmed a significant increase in pedometer borrowings within the pilot site during the pilot period for people aged 18 years and over.
- **Dog Walking Strategy:** Engagement with veterinarians was limited. Survey results did not adequately capture the impact of this strategy, though it provided valuable information about Brisbane City Council facilities such as dog off leash areas, parks and open space, as well as street lighting. The 4 Paws Fun Day captured the attention of 3000 people and promoted key messages.
- **Healthy Ageing Strategy:** Meeting the objectives of the strategy was difficult due to the limited timeframe of the project. There was limited success with this intervention.
- **Community Organisation Workshop:** Workshop content was well received and rated as appropriate by participants. There was limited engagement with the target organisations.
- **Marketing Strategy:** Key messages of the pilot were consistent with the National Physical Activity Guidelines and further enhanced by including both the mode (walking) and volume (10,000 Steps) of activity to be achieved for the target audience. The media launch was successful and there were 16 media hits over the three months.

Where to from here:

Next steps for the 10,000 Steps Brisbane Project include extending the project to all of Brisbane. This will include the following strategies:

- Pedometer Loan Scheme - extending the pedometer loan scheme to all Brisbane City Council libraries.
- Social marketing campaign - including radio and print media, and bus advertising.
- Dog walking strategy.
- Walkway signage.

A visioning workshop will be held with all project stakeholders to further scope these and other strategies.

Lessons Learnt:

General

1. Ensure the focus of the pilot best meets the needs of the target group, stakeholders, funding bodies and organisational environment.
2. Clarify roles and responsibilities of the key people/organisations involved (stakeholders).
3. Clarify the resources available and whether these are sufficient for the scale and scope of the pilot.
4. Ensure the strategies are realistic, achievable and acceptable in the current organisational context and time available for the pilot.
5. Ensure that evaluations are more rigorous to gain a more full and complete picture about the effectiveness of the strategies and overall pilot project.
6. Future trials may benefit by taking a wider geographical area to enable marketing and promotional opportunities to access mainstream media to improve the reach of the target group.

7. Future trials may benefit by being longer than 3-months duration so that the target group can achieve a sufficient dose of the pilot's strategies and promotional and marketing activities.

Pedometer Library Loan Scheme

1. Advertise and promote the pedometer library loan scheme over a longer period of time so library members achieve a greater dose about the availability of the resource.
2. Supply of pedometers in libraries should be offered on a 1:1000 ratio of population, as utilised in the Rockhampton 10,000 Steps Project, to reduce the amount of processing for librarians.
3. Empty VHS casings should be displayed to increase visibility.
4. Explore and develop greater synergies in cross promotion with both the Gone Walking and Just Walk It Programs.

Dog Walking Strategy

1. Engage the Brisbane Branch of the Australian Veterinary Association and local veterinarians in the planning stages of the project so that they might identify how best to contribute to the strategy.
2. Review the survey instrument and its effectiveness.
3. Investigate the possibility of merging the 4 Paws Fun Day with the Brisbane City Council's existing K9 Capers event.
4. Utilise the current Brisbane City Council's Department of Regulatory Services to promote messages at dog off leash areas and in Council dog publications and online features.
5. Utilise pilot partner's networks and other promotional avenues including newsletters and online links.

Healthy Ageing Strategy

1. The target populations in which organisations/networks engage with, should be used as a screening process to determine their appropriateness in contributing to future projects.
2. Once selected, they should be included in the planning stages of the project to provide advice and feedback, identify their needs and where they might best contribute to the project.
3. Increased time for project consultation and development, implementation and evaluation is required to ensure project focus and effectiveness.
4. Engage established networks for general distribution and promotion of project material where appropriate.

Community Workshops

1. Through the activities of the healthy ageing strategy, organisations/networks selected should be consulted as to the best way in which they might be engaged to achieve workshop outcomes.
2. To achieve a wider health promotion reach, future workshops need to engage representatives from more community organisations rather than individuals.
3. A more realistic timeframe is required to organise, market and promote future workshops.
4. Expertise within the Pilot Stakeholder Group should be utilised to deliver workshops.
5. Links with the Pilot Stakeholder Group to develop a professional package of workshop materials would be beneficial for future presentations.
6. Keep workshops short and to the point.

Marketing Strategy

1. Strategies need to be clear about what they aim to achieve and have consistent branding for ease of promotion.
2. An improved coordinated approach between each of the strategies would be beneficial so that links are made and capitalised upon by media.
3. Future projects should be longer than 3 months in duration for consumers to achieve a greater dose of the project strategies through marketing opportunities.
4. Future projects need to take in a wider geographical area so that the maximum amount and reach of marketing is realized.
5. Multiple delivery channels and sources should continue to be utilized.
6. Future promotion to include key messages that is 'Physical Activity - Every Step Counts' in addition to 10,000 Steps.

Total Project Costs:

- Total project cost for the three month pilot project was \$140,000. Queensland Health provided \$70,000 for project evaluation and Brisbane City Council provided \$70,000 for the development and implementation of the project.

Timeframes:

- The project was conducted over 3 months from February to April 2006.

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