

Physical and social activity of older adults in independent living

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Purpose

- To investigate older adults' lived experiences with transitioning into independent living and their understanding of the effect that transition has on their physical activity participation.
- To investigate perceived social support and social barriers related to physical activity participation.

Methods

- 8 residents participated in a semi structured interview.
 - 4 identified as women and 4 identified as men.
 - Ages ranged from 79-95 years.
- Inclusion criteria:
 - 65 years or older.
 - Moved into the home in the last 5 years.
 - Comfortable speaking English to complete an interview.

Influence of Adapting to the Physical and Social Environment

- Most participants agreed that independent living was a different physical and social environment.
- The opportunity to have regular social interactions was a positive aspect of independent living for some participants

Experience in independent living shapes their physical activity participation

- Many participants attended at least one of the physical activity programs at the residence
- Most participants cited walking as their primary form of physical activity
- Physical activity participation was impacted by:
 - Accessible sidewalks
 - Convenience and consistency of programs

Physical activity is an opportunity to meet people

- Physical activity programs were both a physical and social activity
- The social support during the physical activity programs was a facilitator for physical activity

Physical activity helps maintain independence

- The person-environment fit influenced older adults' transition into independent living as well as their physical activity participation
- Participants made a conscious effort to remain independent by engaging in positive health behaviours

Main Takeaways

Transitioning into independent living had a positive impact on participants' physical and social participation.

Acknowledgments:

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