Levels and predictors of exercise referral scheme uptake and adherence: a systematic review


Abstract

Background: The effectiveness of exercise referral schemes (ERS) is influenced by uptake and adherence to the scheme. The identification of factors influencing low uptake and adherence could lead to the refinement of schemes to optimise investment. Objectives: To quantify the levels of ERS uptake and adherence and to identify factors predictive of uptake and adherence. Methods: A systematic review and meta-analysis was undertaken. MEDLINE, EMBASE, PsycINFO, Cochrane Library, ISI WOS, SPORTDiscus and ongoing trial registries were searched (to October 2009) and included study references were checked. Included studies were required to report at least one of the following: (1) a numerical measure of ERS uptake or adherence and (2) an estimate of the statistical association between participant demographic or psychosocial factors (eg, level of motivation, self-efficacy) or programme factors and uptake or adherence to ERS. Results: Twenty studies met the inclusion criteria, six randomised controlled trials (RCTs) and 14 observational studies. The pooled level of uptake in ERS was 66% (95% CI 57% to 75%) across the observational studies and 81% (95% CI 68% to 94%) across the RCTs. The pooled level of ERS adherence was 49% (95% CI 40% to 59%) across the observational studies and 43% (95% CI 32% to 54%) across the RCTs. Few studies considered anything other than gender and age. Women were more likely to begin an ERS but were less likely to adhere to it than men. Older people were more likely to begin and adhere to an ERS. Limitations: Substantial heterogeneity was evident across the ERS studies. Without standardised definitions, the heterogeneity may have been reflective of differences in methods of defining uptake and adherence across studies. Conclusions: To enhance our understanding of the variation in uptake and adherence across ERS and how these variations might affect physical activity outcomes, future trials need to use quantitative and qualitative methods.

Indexing Status
Subject indexing assigned by NLM

MeSH
Attitude to Health; Exercise; Female; Humans; Male; Motivation; Patient Compliance; Program Evaluation; Qualitative Research; Referral and Consultation /economics; Self Efficacy; Sex Factors

AccessionNumber
12012045511

Date bibliographic record published
14/02/2013

Date abstract record published
02/05/2013