

Citation: SUGGS, S., BLAKE, H., LLOYD, S. and BARDUS, M., 2009. An individualised approach: MoveM8! E-mail and SMS physical activity communication in the workplace. Journal of Sports Sciences. 27(4), S1 — S133

Title: An individualised approach – MoveM8! E-mail and SMS physical activity communication in the workplace

L. S. Suggs¹, H. Blake², S. Lloyd³, & M. Bardus¹

¹Universita` della Svizzera Italiana, Switzerland,

²University of Nottingham, UK, and ³Stockton-on-Tees Teaching Primary Care Trust, UK

Moderating inactivity through individual stimuli using information and communication technologies represents a promising approach to promoting work-place physical activity, whether locally, nationally or internationally. E-mail interventions have shown positive results in workplace health promotion and the use of short messaging service (SMS) is becoming more commonplace, but it is not yet known whether it can be effectively tailored to increase physical activity. There is a need to generate quality workplace evidence to test the proposition that (a) when employees perceives that physical activity promotional messages are tailored, (b) they become more relevant, (c) which results in employees being more likely to process these messages and (d) act on them.

MoveM8! is a 12-week physical activity interven-tion targeting individual employees through e-mails and SMS based on the theory of planned behaviour (TPB). The purpose of this study is to: (1) examine the effects of adding SMS to weekly e-mail commu-nication on perceived message relevance and physi-cal activity behaviour, and (2) examine if thinking that communication is “tailored” (“placebo tailor-ing”) influences perceived message relevance and physical activity behaviour. This study is a randomized controlled trial with four groups. A total of 840 participants are enrolled, with 210 per study group. Group 1 receives one weekly personalised e-mail; Group 2 receives one weekly

personalised e-mail, and participants are told that messages are tailored; Group 3 receives one weekly personalised e-mail plus two personalised SMS messages each week; and Group 4 receives one weekly personalised e-mail plus two SMS messages each week, and are told that messages are tailored. Outcomes are measured at baseline, 4, 8, 13 and 16 weeks. The study commences in June 2009 and will be completed at the end of August 2009. Preliminary results will be presented, including physical activity level outcomes, recruitment challenges and successes, and implications for future research and practice.