

MEDIA RELEASE
Sports Science Institute of South Africa
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UCT PROFESSOR and SENIOR LECTURER CO-AUTHOR in GROUND-BREAKING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY and HEALTH LANCET SERIES

When the eyes of the world turn to Rio de Janeiro for the 2016 Summer Olympics, *The Lancet* will launch a second major series on Physical Activity and Health. This new physical activity series will present an update of the field over the last 4 years since the publication of the first series in 2012 (<http://www.thelancet.com/series/physical-activity>).

The University of Cape Town is honoured to have been involved in both series, as part of the initial conceptualisation and the writing team on specific papers. The co-authors are Professor Vicki Lambert, who heads up the Division of Exercise Science and Sports Medicine, in the Department of Human Biology at UCT and Dr. Tracy Kolbe-Alexander, a former senior lecturer at UCT and now an honorary senior lecturer. Professor Lambert explains how the series have evolved: "Whilst the 2012 series set the scene for Physical Activity and Public Health and called inactivity a global "pandemic" with a strong call to action - the 2016 series focuses on progress in physical activity and health in the intervening 4 years at several levels, including epidemiological research, global surveillance, intervention strategies and policy actions.

"I have been very fortunate to be a co-author on the final paper in both series, the current one which concerns "*scaling up of successful, sustainable physical activity interventions*", which has particular relevance to low-resource settings, population-based strategies, interventions implemented at scale, and the need for evaluation" enthuses Professor Lambert.

With the new series having a strong focus on low and middle income countries, Professor Lambert believes there is much to be learned from colleagues in South America, concerning subsidised physical activity classes in public spaces and taking back the streets to facilitate pedestrian transport. She also highlights some excellent examples of physical activity prescription embedded in the health care system of various countries and cites the series as an extremely important contribution to the translation of physical activity to public health.

Interestingly enough, in our crises ridden world, there is a particular emphasis on mental health and well-being. The first global estimate of the economic burden of physical inactivity is also highlighted and there is an evidence-based paper showing that, in fact, sufficient physical activity may be able to overcome the adverse effects of "too much" sitting.

The official launch of the Lancet series is scheduled for July 28 at 09h30 UK time at the Lancet offices in London. There will be a symposium of the four papers presented by the lead authors followed by a discussion led by Dr Richard Horton, Editor-in-Chief of *The Lancet*. The event will be live streamed by the Lancet from the following link <http://www.thelancet.com/series/physical-activity-2016>

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