Notice of the Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of Master of Science

of

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BSFL (Camosun College, 2012)

“Working Out with F.I.D.O. (Frequency, Intensity, Duration, & Outcomes) – A Feasibility Randomized Controlled Trial”

School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education

Monday, July 31, 2017
3:00 p.m.
McKinnon Building
Room 155

Supervisory Committee:
Dr. Ryan E. Rhodes, School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education, University of Victoria (Supervisor)
Dr. Joan Wharf Higgins, School of Exercise Science, Physical and Health Education, UVic (Member)

External Examiner:
Dr. Holly Tuokko, Department of Psychology, UVic

Chair of Oral Examination:
Dr. Fraser Hof, Department of Chemistry, UVic

Dr. David Capson, Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Abstract

Objective: Dog owners have been shown to walk more per week compared to non-dog owners; however 60% of dog owners are still not walking their dogs at intensities sufficient to reap optimal health benefits. The aim of this study was to evaluate the feasibility, acceptability, and efficacy of a 9-week feasibility randomized controlled trial involving a program of six weekly scheduled instructor-led group dog walks supplemented with theory-based strategies to encourage increased dog walking among dog owners in Greater Victoria, BC. Methods: This study was based on the multi-process action control (M-PAC) framework and utilized an open parallel randomized controlled trial design involving experimental and waitlist-control group participants. Quantitative data was collected using pedometers and self-report measures. A program evaluation survey was administered upon the completion of the study. Primary outcomes examined the feasibility and acceptability of the program; secondary outcomes analyzed pedometry and self-report MVPA data; and tertiary outcomes observed changes in participants’ perceptions of M-PAC constructs. Percentage calculations were used to obtain primary outcomes, and ANCOVA was performed to examine secondary and tertiary outcomes. Eligibility: Male and female adults aged 18+ living in Greater Victoria BC who owned at least one healthy and friendly dog aged six months and above, who were not meeting a minimum of 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA) per week, and who were medically cleared to participate. Results: Feasibility outcomes included 74 interested responses, 23% recruitment rate (n=17), 94% retention rate (n=16), and 94% adherence rate (n=15). Program participants were overall satisfied/very satisfied with the program. Total weekly and average daily step counts, and MVPA dog walking and MVPA with dog increased at the end of the program and at follow-up, resulting in large effect sizes. Positive changes across time were observed for dog responsibility and M-PAC constructs of planning, identity, habit, opportunity, and enjoyment. Conclusions: This six-week group dog walking program is overall feasible, acceptable, and efficacious in encouraging increased dog walking and MVPA among dog owners. The use of M-PAC construct worksheets instructed dog owners on how to make detailed plans, identify daily cues as opportunities to dog walk, and assisted them in the establishment/reaffirmation of a dog walking exercise identity. This resulted in the adoption and maintenance of positive behavioral changes at the end of the program and at follow-up. Program participants reported enjoying the program and being (very) satisfied with it. It is recommended for future studies to refine/modify initial recruitment strategies and eligibility criteria, and consider providing medical/veterinarian reimbursement costs to reduce cost-related barriers to participation, offer a variety of options for program delivery (e.g., different locations/schedules, online programs) to accommodate more participants, and apply the M-PAC framework to a larger sample.