The sport and recreation domain and physical activity

Key messages
Everyone can benefit from moderate-to-vigorous physical activity during sport. To increase participation in sport in Australia, there needs to be:
- A paradigm shift towards a ‘sport for all’ model – the idea that sport is not just about elite performance
- A repositioning of the sports system away from organised competitive sport and more towards social formats, targeting people across the life course.

Why is it important to address the sport and recreation domain?
Sport has significant potential to contribute towards the well-established health benefits of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity. Ambitious participation targets have been set at the national level with Sport 2030 – National Sport Plan and consequently by many national sporting organisations.
However, sports clubs are not necessarily the main choice for sport or physical activity participation in Australia. People’s preferences have also shifted towards less structured, more social formats. While more people are engaging in physical activity, participation in sport has remained steady. There is a challenge for sporting organisations to find ways to boost participation in social sport.

What are potential interventions?

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<th>Sector-wide approaches</th>
<th>Sports settings</th>
<th>Use the complete sporting continuum</th>
<th>Major events</th>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
<th>Volunteers</th>
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<td>Paradigm shift beyond sport club participation</td>
<td>Social sport products for new audiences</td>
<td>Ranging across: Elite athletes (role models) Sport for Development Grass roots participation</td>
<td>Partnerships and pre-event planning to enable sustained investment and legacy</td>
<td>Design guidelines for new facilities</td>
<td>Increase capacity and scope</td>
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<td>Consistent terminology Standardised targets</td>
<td>Build a skilled workforce and harness volunteers</td>
<td>Community sports settings and stadia as environments for health promotion</td>
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<td>Focus on community programs</td>
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Summary: The sport and recreation domain and physical activity
What are the recommendations for investment and action?

**Multisectoral approach and new or adapted offerings**
- Apply multisectoral (cross-agency) approaches to support sport and recreation’s delivery of physical activity programs
- Paradigm shift to develop and deliver new, modified and/or more flexible offerings for less active groups while maintaining engagement of existing participants throughout their life course

**Standardised and sustained surveillance**
- Develop a standardised and sustained surveillance of sport and active recreation in all Australian states and territories and at the federal level

**Strategic principles and priority policy options**
- Consider the recommendations from the Active and Inactive Young Australians review which are applicable across the life course. The strategic principles from this review are: (i) Human movement continuum (ii) Intersectoral approach (iii) Life course approach (iv) Whole-of-society benefit (v) Whole-of-systems approach

What are examples of strategies that intersect with this domain?

**Communication and public education**
- Can help reshape community perceptions about sport and develop inclusive campaigns
- Sports stadia could be used to broadcast and enhance reach of these messages

**Education**
- Schools and other institutions provide key settings for delivery of physical literacy programs and facilities for community sport and recreation

**Urban design and infrastructure**
- The sport domain can influence the design and delivery of these programs to promote physical activity among less active groups
- This domain is relevant for the development and improvement of sporting facilities, infrastructure and their accessibility to support inclusive participation

**Community-wide programs**

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**Getting Australia Active III (GAA III)** is an Australian guide for policy makers to support the implementation of a whole-of-systems approach to increasing population physical activity. This policy brief summarises key points from Chapter 3.8 of this guide. For more detailed guidance and supporting evidence, you can access the full report at: preventioncentre.org.au

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