

SPRINTER seminar wrap-up

Research driving policy and practice to get people active



The third annual SPRINTER seminar was co-hosted by the **University of Sydney** and the **Office of Sport, NSW Government** at the Charles Perkins Centre, University of Sydney on Tuesday 28th May 2019. It showcased the impact of the innovative research partnership – SPRINTER and how the group have advanced sport, active recreation and physical activity policy through collation of world class evidence in NSW and beyond. The seminar, MCed by **Darren Simpson, CEO Sport NSW**, attracted a diverse crowd of over 100 attendees from academia, Government agencies and authorities, peak bodies in sport, physical activity and health, sporting organizations, non-government organizations, health professionals and students. The enhanced capacity, dedication and passion within the sport sector to **influence changes in population physical activity** to improve health was overflowing, as SPRINTER strides through its third year. Key themes were collaboration, action and building evidence.

The event commenced with a round-of-applause as the Office of Sport, NSW Government announced their renewed 3-year research partnership with the University, confirming SPRINTER will remain embedded within the Office of Sport through to June 2022 with increased investment in resources. The delegates were obviously delighted by this much anticipated announcement.

“The value of SPRINTER” - Dr Phil Hamdorf

Dr Lindsey Reece, Academic Lead and Director of SPRINTER opened her presentation by highlighting the disconnect between high physical activity research output and low physical activity participation in Australia. She promoted the Global Action Plan on Physical Activity, it’s technical toolkit and called the room full of influencers to action on this complex problem of physical inactivity. She communicated the importance of partnering for collective impact, putting individuals at the core of what we do and recognizing the broad outcomes that sport can deliver in groups of society that are at greater risk of inactivity.



*“Once we are aware our system and its components, we need to identify opportunities to disrupt the system. This shifts our thinking to implementation”
 - Dr Lindsey Reece*

Findings from the ‘Active Kids Program’ evaluation were presented. The pragmatic evaluation led by SPRINTER provides a rich data source with incredible new insights for the sport sector. Dr Reece presented early analysis of children’s sport and physical activity participation and detailed the importance of planning evaluation from the outset of a

program. **Dr Katherine Owen, SPRINTER Biostatistician** continued the presentation with analysis of participants BMI and program participation considering important demographic characteristics to guide future work in Year two of the program implementation.

“The Active Kids program is reaching children who are overweight and obese, indigenous and live in low socioeconomic areas”- Dr Katherine Owen

Bridget Foley, Research Officer SPRINTER, described the evaluation journey and theoretical approaches underpinning the evaluation of the Regional Sport and Active Recreation Plans in NSW. The evaluation will monitor the mechanisms which influence change in the implementation process and includes measurable objectives to understanding if the intended outcomes are achieved.

Delegates were using #ActiveNSW throughout the seminar, achieving



Over 16,500 accounts reached

73,400+ Impressions

The partnerships SPRINTER fosters are key to its impacts on implementation and delivery of research into practice. The panel session included presentation and discussion with innovators acting in the sport sector now to disrupt the system.

Kerry Turner, Office of Sport presented the [Women in Sport Strategy](#) and accompanying SPRINTER evidence review, sharing key learnings for identifying components for a holistic implementation plan to increase women and girls participation in sport and active recreation in NSW. **Phil Wishart, Office of Sport** described innovation in event research and how working with SPRINTER provides a chance to genuinely measure event legacy on health and wellbeing. He outlined opportunities to utilize physical activity data and change the way in which event owners communicate to participants from a solely commercial approach to health promotion approach.

parkrun au's Dr Scott Watkins joined the conversation returning to the importance of the person at the center of research and opportunities to learn from data which is routinely collected. parkrun is embedding evaluation into its new initiatives to understand how they are creating a healthier, happier Australia. Finally, **Craig Beed, Hockey NSW** shared how his sport's collaboration with SPRINTER allowed them to *“look at the data underneath the iceberg”* and gain detailed understanding of hockey participants churn. With locally relevant data, Hockey NSW have unleashed their volunteer army to get more people playing and keep them in the sport.

Thank you to all the delegates, presenters and SPRINTER ambassadors for making the event a success. The engaging, data driven presentations from leading experts provided insights for future directions for the sport sector. **Professor Bill Bellew** closed the event with witty reflections on the growth of SPRINTER and the changing landscape in the sport sector in NSW. To keep in touch and explore how SPRINTER can support program and policy design, intervention and evaluations, contact:

Dr Lindsey Reece Director, SPRINTER
University of Sydney
 T +61 2 8627 6222 | E lindsey.reece@sydney.edu.au @lindseyreece28

