De FITS-IT tool: aanzet tot de ontwikkeling van een screeningsinstrument voor lichaamsbeweging in de huisartsenpraktijk

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Context: Physical activity is important for health and wellbeing. Modern society does not make it easy for people to exercise regularly. General practitioners might have a role in identifying patients who do not meet physical activity recommendations and help them change their habits.

Onderzoeksvraag: The objective of our study was to investigate what general practitioners need to help them identify patients who are physically inactive; as well as to develop a first short questionnaire that might be able to differentiate between patients who need further advice or not.

Methode: We performed an exploratory qualitative descriptive study on the basis of a scoping review of existing literature and two semi-structured focus group meetings with experts. In order to develop a first short questionnaire, three questions were carefully set up by means of an interactive process. In an additional part of the study, we performed a small pilot testing of the questionnaire.

Resultaten: General practitioners seem to have an important role in identifying patients who do not meet physical activity recommendations. However, they do not seem to ask patients about their physical activity behavior regularly during routine consultations. A lack of time seems to be an important complicating factor. Experts agree that we need a simple, short and valid screening tool. On the basis of these semi-structured focus group meetings we developed three questions that might help to differentiate between patients who need further advice or not: the FITS-IT tool. In a pilot testing we found that this tool might help to open the discussion about physical activity during a routine general practice consultation. The participating physicians believed the FITS-IT tool is easy to use.

Conclusie: General practitioners need a simple and valid screening tool to help them identify patients who do not meet physical activity recommendations. We developed the FITS-IT tool, three questions that might help to open the discussion about physical activity during routine consultation. The limited data collection and the design of our study do not allow us to draw generalizable conclusions. Further research needs to be done to supplement the current limited amount of literature about physical activity screening and test our tool’s validity.