

July 2nd, 2014

LETTER OF INFORMATION

A Study about Physical Activity in Greater Toronto and Hamilton

Principal Investigator: Dr. Jim Dunn
Associate Professor, McMaster University
Department of Health, Aging & Society
McMaster University
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
(905) 525-9140 ext. 23243
jim.dunn@mcmaster.ca

Research Sponsor: MOHLTC (Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care)

Purpose of the Study

This study will collect data about an individual's physical activity participation as he or she moves residence. The study is longitudinal in nature, meaning that we will be interested in looking at an individual's physical activity before a move and then again, one year later (i.e., after the move). The data collected will be used to learn about the relationship between the built environment (e.g., sidewalks, parks, etc.) and physical activity participation, including both physical activity for recreation and transportation. Physical activity is important to study as the inactivity of the general public is frequently blamed for many of the health problems that plague today's society, including diabetes, obesity, and heart disease.

You are invited to take part in this study on physical activity participation. We are hoping to learn what factors encourage people to participate in daily physical activity, including such actions as walking instead of driving to complete errands and how you commute from and to work or school each day. By examining the relationship between the built environment and physical activity or walking behaviours, we can provide a further evidence base for such fields as public health, urban planning, and transportation engineering.

Procedures involved in the Research

This study involves a two-stage data collection project. First, you will be asked to complete a diary tracking where you go and how you get there for an average week. Next you will be asked to complete a telephone interview (about 45 minutes in length), asking questions related to your neighbourhood and why you chose to live there, as well as reviewing your activity diary. For our project we are interested in finding out some information about you (like when you were born, your level of education, and your height and weight), information about your physical activity participation, your perceptions about the neighbourhood in which you live, and your thoughts around your ability to find balance between all of the demands in your life. This two-stage process will be conducted prior to your move, as well as approximately 1-year later.

We may have the opportunity to continue this research over a longer time frame, so we may also want to contact you again in the future to ask if you would be interested in additional follow-up. You will have the opportunity to let us know whether it would be alright for us to contact you in the future, and how best to reach you.

Potential Harms, Risks or Discomforts:

The only minor discomfort you may have as you complete this study is that you may feel as if you are giving up your privacy by writing down every activity that you participate in during the travel diary portion of data collection. This is minimized by allowing you to generalize your activities, such as not caring what you are doing on the computer, only caring that you are using a computer. Another example is that the more personal activities can just be called miscellaneous in-home or out-of-home activities instead of being more specific.

Some of the questions we ask you may cause you to reflect on issues that you worry about. You can skip any question you would prefer not to answer.

You are able to withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty.

Potential Benefits

This project does not benefit participants directly, but the self-evaluation process might influence your daily routines to increase daily physical activity.

Overall, the study may benefit society as we are looking at the problem of physical inactivity and the built environment as both a supporter and barrier to physical activity. By learning more about this relationship it may be possible increase physical activity participation, which may lead to a healthier population.

Payment or Reimbursement

You will be asked to complete the activity diary and telephone interview twice throughout the course of the study – once before you move and once about one year after you move. As a thank you for participating in this study you will receive \$40.00 each time you complete both the diary and the telephone survey.

Confidentiality

You are participating in this study confidentially. I will not use your name or any information that would allow you to be identified. Only members of the research team will know whether you participated unless you choose to tell them. Every effort will be made to protect your confidentiality and privacy. I will not use your name or any information that would allow you to be identified. However, we are often identifiable through the stories we tell.

The information/data you provide will be kept in a locked desk/cabinet where only the research team will have access to it. Information kept on a computer will be protected by a password. Once the study has been completed, an archive of the data, without identifying information, will be kept for future work.

Participation and Withdrawal

Your participation in this study is voluntary and it is your choice to be part of the study or not. If you decide to be part of the study, you can decide to stop (withdraw), at any time, even after signing the consent form or part-way through the study. If you decide to withdraw, there will be no consequences to you. In cases of withdrawal, any data you have provided will be destroyed unless you indicate otherwise. If you do not want to answer some of the questions you do not have to, but you can still be in the study. If you choose to withdrawal from the study you will still receive at least the first \$40.00 gift.

Information about the Study Results

A summary of the results will be posted at crunch.mcmaster.ca. If you would like to receive the summary personally, please let me know how you would like me to send it to you. The first set of results should be ready around January 2015.

Questions about the Study

If you have questions or require more information about the study itself, please contact me.

This study has been reviewed by the McMaster University Research Ethics Board and received ethics clearance. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is conducted, please contact:

McMaster Research Ethics Secretariat
Telephone: (905) 525-9140 ext. 23142
c/o Office of Research Services
E-mail: ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca
