

Investing in Active travel for Health



Physical inactivity and health

- Physical inactivity is responsible for **1 in 6 deaths** in the UK and costs the UK £7.4bn annually, including £0.9bn to the NHS alone.
- Levels of population physical activity are declining and currently 1/3 adults and 56% children in London do not achieve minimum Chief Medical Officer's (CMO) physical activity guidelines.

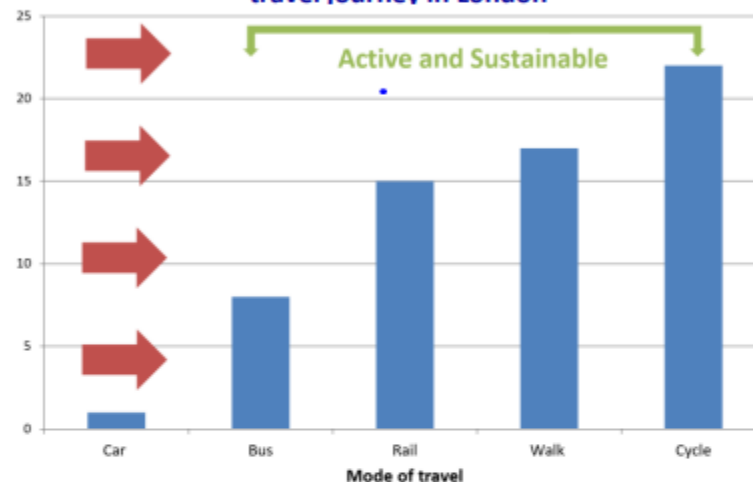
Physical inactivity is known as a **risk factor** for:

- Overweight and obesity:** 45% of London's 11-year old [children](#) are overweight or obese
- Mental health:** [In London](#), around 1 in 6 (16%) adults experienced some form of depression in Summer 2021
- Type 2 Diabetes:** In London, there are nearly 600,000 [people](#) diagnosed with diabetes— 6.7% of the population
- Cardiovascular disease:** [In London](#), nearly 22% of all the deaths in 2020, had a circulatory disease as the underlying cause of death.
- Dementia:** physical activity is a known protective factor of all-cause of [dementia and Alzheimer's disease](#).
- Cancer:** physical activity is associated with reduced risk & improved survival for [several cancers](#)

Opportunity: Promoting active travel, including public transport, increases physical activity. [TfL analysis](#) shows 71% of private vehicle trips could feasibly be made by walking, cycling or public transport

Policy context: [NHS Green Plans](#): key priority to increase levels of active travel and public transport
[London Health Inequalities Strategy Implementation Plan](#): three key Mayoral commitments directly relate to active travel

Minutes spent being physically active during an average travel journey in London



Inclusive

Encouraging active travel will help create a fairer London as active travel represents an affordable and accessible way to travel.

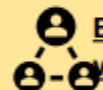
Healthy

Encouraging active travel will help tackle: physical inactivity, poor air quality, noise, death and injury from collisions with cars and poor mental health.



Focus on health inequalities

- [In London](#) in 2020/21, 72% of people in the least deprived category achieved CMO guidelines, whilst for the most deprived it is just 47%.
- People from the Asian and Black ethnic groups are less likely than average to be physically active.
- This contributes to health inequalities in preventable chronic disease outcomes including: Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease and obesity.
- [Differences in rates of unhealthy weight](#) in children between neighbourhoods in London are strongly associated with deprivation: the poorer the neighbourhood, the more likely children are to be affected by unhealthy weight.
- [London](#) has the highest inequality in unhealthy weight among 4-5 and 10-11 year olds age groups of any region of England.



Encouraging active travel requires a whole systems approach

- The built environment influences our physical activity levels. This is why TfL has adopted the [Healthy Streets Approach](#) to encourage more active travel in London by making active modes more appealing. This will provide an attractive and accessible environment in which people are able to walk or cycle for shorter journeys and use public transport for longer ones.
- Data from [an evaluation of a large scale Healthy Streets initiative in outer London](#) demonstrated that changing streets design in combination with behaviour change initiatives increased the likelihood of local residents meeting physical activity targets.



What can healthcare staff do to help?

- As part of the whole systems approach, healthcare staff are uniquely placed to encourage active travel by patients and colleagues.
- One in four people say they would be more active if it was recommended by a healthcare professional.
- An evaluation of TfL's '[20 Minute Challenge](#)' with Londoners who were assessed as 'inactive' showed:
 - Exercise was perceived as something people had to make time for (such as going to the gym).
 - Participants found active travel an accessible & enjoyable way to achieve physical activity recommendations.
- The Mayor and TfL produced [a toolkit](#) to help healthcare staff encourage patients to travel actively.



Economical

Encouraging active travel boosts spending in local high streets, helps tackle congestion, which costs London's economy £5.1 billion/ year, and helps to create a healthier and therefore more productive workforce.

Sustainable

Encouraging active travel will help tackle climate change as 28% of CO2 emissions in London come [from road transport](#).