



## **The Built Environment and Physical Activity: In Search of Causality**

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### **Message from the Guest Editors**

The built environment likely plays an important role in shaping physical activity and sedentary behaviours. Most common among these are urban design elements (encompassing walkability); traffic safety; the presence of walking and cycling infrastructure; the aesthetics of the neighbourhood; the availability of recreational facilities; and access to, and quality of, parks and public open spaces. Unlike other health promotion efforts, creating an environment that is supportive of active behaviours has an enduring impact. By-and-large, however, the evidence is from cross-sectional studies that show, for example, that a particular characteristic of the built environment is associated with a particular physical activity behaviour. Longitudinal studies, in particular those that capitalise on changes to the neighbourhood environment, either through modification or relocation, are less common. They are, however, critical to shaping our understanding of the causal relationship between the environment and physical activity.

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## Message from the Editor-in-Chief

Addressing the environmental and public health challenges requires engagement and collaboration among clinicians and public health researchers. Discovery and advances in this research field play a critical role in providing a scientific basis for decision-making toward control and prevention of human diseases, especially the illnesses that are induced from environmental exposure to health hazards. *IJERPH* provides a forum for discussion of discoveries and knowledge in these multidisciplinary fields. Please consider publishing your research in this high quality, peer-reviewed, open access journal.

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