The National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity (NCPAA) is a diverse blend of associations, health organizations, and private corporations advocating for policies that encourage Americans of all ages to be physically active. Our mission is to unite the strengths of public, private, and industry efforts into collaborative partnerships that inspire and empower all Americans to lead more physically active lifestyles. NCPAA supports the efforts of the World Health Organization to create a Global Action Plan for Physical Activity and we look forward to supporting the final plan. NCPAA greatly appreciates your leadership and welcomes the opportunity to provide comments for the draft Global Action Plan to Promote Physical Activity.

Being physically active is one of the most important things people of all ages and abilities can do to improve health and well-being. Regular physical activity is associated with a healthier, longer life, lower risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, and some cancers. Physical activity is also associated with improved quality of life, emotional well-being and positive mental health.

Today two-thirds of adults and nearly one-third of children in the United States are overweight and/or obese. People are increasingly sedentary throughout their day, with most not getting enough, if any physical activity.

Physical Inactivity is considered a global public health issue and early evidence suggests it may be as dangerous to health as smoking. In addition, inactivity continues to impose and enormous burden on the health and well-being of the American people.

Structure of the Plan

The United States has a National Physical Activity Plan based on a vision that one day, all Americans will be physically active, and they will live, work and play in environments that encourage and support regular physical activity. This aligns with the proposed Global Physical Activity Plan. We envision a place providing the enabling environments and opportunities for all citizens to be physically active. The Physical Activity framework we currently support has a goal to get 25 million Americans more active. If we can get 25 million Americans more active than we know a worldwide goal of 100 million is achievable.

Guiding Principles:

NCPAA commends the Plan for including health equity as a guiding principle. We hope the Plan will make recommendations with a health equity lens across all work. All efforts to create an active society should aim to address disparities and reduce inequalities to ensure that everyone can attain their highest level of health. How do we reach certain populations with health promotion? Are guidelines consistent for all or are there special considerations for vulnerable populations?
NCPPA commends the Plan for its focus on policy and the need for increased investment in changes to policies, systems and environments to make physical activity more accessible, safer and more a part of daily life.

NCPPA commends the plan for recognizing evidence-based practice as a guiding principle. Policy actions should be made based on the best evidence and research available. An evidence-based practice approach forces providers and organizations to think in terms of constantly seeking out new information and analyzing their pre-existing assumptions. U.S. governmental agencies have numerous requirements for funding that often require the collection of evidence and demonstrations of how that evidence is being used to improve program quality, if for no other reason than continued funding.

NCPPA also commends the plan for its emphasis on cross-sectoral engagement. For a global physical activity plan to be effective, it must be a comprehensive plan that requires a joint effort to include partnerships in and across all sectors at all levels.

**Recommendations for the Plan**

NCPPA recommends the Plan include more specifics on how to reach this 2030 goal of 100 million more active. NCPPA hopes a Global Physical Activity Plan can further answer the following questions:

- How will the Plan measure success? (PA 12, 50, 105, 107, 141)
- How will the Plan track progress towards the Goal? (PA 12, 158)
- How do you get leaders to prioritize physical activity? As stated (PA 40) in the Plan, there has been a failure to identify physical activity as a policy priority. There is a greater need for physical activity advocacy through all sectors including health, business, community, media and government. We need leaders in government at all levels as well as leaders to commit to this issue and Plan. NCPPA is specifically interested in strategies to promote physical activity in the workplace. (PA 40, 90, 104, 125, 130, 132, 141)
- Once you have a commitment, how do you guarantee robust funding needed to implement the plan? (PA 152, 163, 165)
- Does the Plan include investment into disease prevention? NCPPA believes the Plan should include strategies for a greater investment into disease prevention. (PA 4, 6, 40, 41, 47g, 47h, 67)
- What strategies will be used to hold partners and member states accountable to the Plan? (PA 50, 141, 143, 161)
- What strategies work best for targeting low income populations? We also ask the Plan to include more research and strategies targeting low income populations.

We also recommend the plan include more background on:

- The benefits of physical activity for preventing and managing noncommunicable (chronic diseases). Regular physical activity reduces risk for development of many NCDs such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, cancer, obesity, asthma, back pain, and arthritis. Physical activity can also help manage these conditions.
• The dangers of physical inactivity, a sedentary lifestyle and how to target these populations.
Sedentary behavior is a major public health issue and evidence suggest that inactivity may be as
dangerous to health as smoking. We ask that the Plan evaluate the latest research on sedentary
behavior/inactivity and present evidence-based strategies to get this population moving.

• The role physical activity plays in weight management and obesity. What role does physical
activity play in maintaining a healthy body weight? How does physical activity affect obesity?
What types of physical activity interventions are most effective in weight management?

• Physical Activity as a mechanism to improve mental and brain health. Regular physical activity is
one of the most effective ways to improve your mental health. Regular exercise can have a
profoundly positive impact on depression, anxiety, ADHD, and more. It also relieves stress,
improves memory, helps you sleep better, and boosts overall mood and wellbeing.

• Physical activity through the lifespan. The Plan should address the importance of physical
activity to growth and development and provide strategies for active aging and keeping people
moving at all stages of life. Physical activity guidelines should be provided for children,
adolescents, adults including pregnancy and older adults.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. If there is any additional information we can
provide, please do not hesitate to contact Ayanna McKnight at ayanna@ncppa.org or (202)785-7941.
We look forward to working with you to inspire and empower all populations to lead more physically
active lifestyles.