Feasibility and acceptability of a 'buddy' physical activity intervention for postnatal women

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Abstract

Introduction: Physical activity (PA) during the postnatal period is beneficial for physical and mental health, yet its prevalence is low in this population. Buddy Up is a PA intervention that pairs two new mothers as buddies who attend three PA counselling sessions (PACS) based on motivational interviewing principles, supplemented by a booklet. This study aims to assess the feasibility and acceptability of Buddy Up.

Methods: Participants were matched with a buddy by nominating an existing friend or by researchers. We calculated participant adherence rates to assess feasibility and post-intervention questionnaires and telephone interviews to assess acceptability.

Results: 44 participants (existing friends (n=22); new match (n=22)) were recruited and 21 eligible participants remained unmatched. 59/66 (89.4%) PACs were delivered (non-delivery; participant withdrawal (n=5); rescheduling difficulties (n=2)). Of these, 40/59 (67.8%) PACs were delivered as arranged and 19/59 (32.2%) were rearranged (illness (n=8); other commitments (n=10); other (n=1)). Participants participated in PA with their buddy on 0.97 days (SD=1.81) in the past week and provided support by sending encouraging messages (81.8%), sharing PA ideas/information (69.7%) and doing PA together (57.5%). Early findings from the post-intervention interviews suggest good acceptability of the PACs and supplementary booklet, minimal usage of the booklet and stark differences in acceptability of the buddy element among participants.

Discussion: A buddy-based face-to-face intervention with postnatal women is feasible, but requires a flexible approach due to the high number of rescheduled sessions. Further analysis of the post-intervention interviews will examine the differences in acceptability of the buddy element.

Patient and Public Involvement (PPI)

PPI was used during the intervention development process, which has been presented at previous SPCR Events