

Relationships between rural place and obesity



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Introduction

- Living with obesity in rural areas.
- Rural factors that interact with weight and obesity.
- Rural dwellers understandings of the relationship between place and obesity.

- Association between obesity and deprivation – how is this experienced rurally?
- Obesity and aging populations – rural populations are older.
- Links with food access in rural areas?
- Links with physical activity facilities access?



Access to food



- Access to fresh fruit and vegetables seen as lower.
- In general, food prices higher in rural areas (10-30%) and a higher proportion of income being spent on food.
- Fewer shopping options.
- Further to travel to get to any shop.
- Greater need to use paid for transport.
- Discourse of the experience of lower income and greater effort required to obtain food being 'harder' in rural areas.
- Income significant predictor of obesity in rural England (stronger correlation than in urban).
- Worried about running out of food (Forth Valley, Shetland).



Physical Activity Opportunities

- Higher proportions of income spent on food, fuel and transport.
- Fewer recreational facilities, further away.
- Weather conditions compound problems of outdoor exercise.
- Absence of footpaths, pavements and vehicle free cycle spaces.
- Outdoor spaces are difficult to access or negotiate (expert).
- Perception that activities are for tourists or incomers.
- Rural Scottish children have approximately 3 days less sedentary time per year than urban children.

Socio-Cultural



- Dietary habits, traditions and seasonality.
- Decreased physical activity associated with work and lifestyle.
- Physical activity in the outdoors is not for me.
- Community interventions.
- Visibility and help-seeking behaviours.





Future focus for rural?

- Access to food.
- Access to physical activity.
 - Infrastructure.
 - Social acceptability
- Socio-economic inequality and deprivation.
- Community-based, preventative initiatives.
- Weight management support that is suited to rural context.

Including data from [neighbourhood built] environment with comprehensive interventions that address barriers to healthy eating, physical activity and behaviour change hold the most promise for the future. Beverly (2023)



THANK YOU



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