

LETTER OF INFORMATION AND CONSENT

Title: **Nature prescriptions in musculoskeletal rehabilitation: An international modified Delphi study**

Principal Investigator

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Conflicts of Interest: There are no conflicts of interest to declare related to this study.

INTRODUCTION

With this letter we would like to invite you to participate in a research study about **nature prescriptions in musculoskeletal rehabilitation**. We are seeking a minimum of 170 participants, up to a maximum of 852 participants, to help us build consensus on the use of nature prescriptions in musculoskeletal rehabilitation. Because you are a member of the Environmental Physiotherapy Association or a physical therapist interested in nature prescriptions, you are an eligible participant.

Before you volunteer as a study participant, it is important that you first read the study's background, purpose, design, procedure, possible risks and benefits, and your right to refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time. Before providing consent and taking part in the survey, please ask the research coordinator to explain any words or concepts that you do not understand and make sure all your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. Please note that this project is a part of a PhD student's, Nicole Struthers (research coordinator) doctoral thesis.

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

Worldwide, musculoskeletal conditions are a leading cause of pain and disability, and physiotherapists commonly provide exercise and education to help manage these conditions. Population aging further increases the personal, social, economic, and environmental burdens of musculoskeletal conditions; thus, there is an urgent need to understand not only medical, but the broader societal nuances of musculoskeletal health. Physiotherapists have a unique advantage in the enhancement of people's contribution to the health of the planet through reconsidering the

relationship between biomedical, socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental factors of musculoskeletal health and overall wellbeing.

Nature-based interventions, such as nature prescriptions, are activities, strategies, or programs taking place in nature settings with the aim to improve health and wellbeing. Nature prescriptions allow diverse healthcare providers, including physiotherapists, to recommend spending time in nature to reap a myriad of health benefits. Spending time in nature may resonate more with the intrinsic motivations for exercise and physical activity of people living with musculoskeletal conditions.

Further advancement of knowledge on the personal, societal, and planetary benefits of nature prescription is required, and to do so, we are conducting an international modified Delphi study. We aim to answer two broad research questions: (1) How can the utilization of nature prescription address personal, social, environmental, and global burdens of musculoskeletal conditions? and (2) What is the direction for future research and utilization of nature prescription?

PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

Inclusion Criteria

You may participate in this study if you are a member of the Environmental Physiotherapy Association or a physical therapist interested in nature prescriptions.

Able to speak, read and write English language.

Exclusion Criteria

Anyone who is not a member of the Environmental Physiotherapy Association or is not a physical therapist interested in nature prescriptions.

Individuals who do not speak, read and write English language.

STUDY DESIGN & PROCEDURES

If you agree to participate in this research, you will be asked to answer all questions on this survey, administered one time, estimated to take about 15-25 minutes. All information you provide will be used for research purposes only.

RISKS & HARMS

Participation in this research project does not impose any risks or harms.

BENEFITS

Please note that because we are collecting personal identifiers, there is always the risk of a privacy breach.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The demographic information provided at the start of the survey will only include low risk information (e.g., country, sex, age, level of education, population size of your town/city, current profession, years in profession). Your survey responses will remain anonymous. We will not publish any of your individual data; we will only publish aggregate group data and group trends. All data collected from your survey will be reported in aggregate, meaning that your individual

responses will not be presented in isolation and will not include any identifiable information. De-identified study data may be retained on the PhD student's (Nicole Struthers) password-protected laptop and will be encrypted. All data will be collected and stored on Western University's institutional Microsoft Office 365 OneDrive and retained for a minimum of seven years in accordance with Western University policy. Representatives of Western University's Health Sciences Research Ethics Board may require access to your study-related records to monitor the conduct of this research project.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time for any reason. If you decide to withdraw from the study, you may do so at any time by exiting the survey window and not submitting your responses. Due to the anonymous nature of your data, once your survey responses have been submitted, the researchers will be unable to withdraw your data.

RIGHTS AS A PARTICIPANT

By providing consent to participate in this study, you do not give up any of your legal rights against the investigators or involved institutions and associations, nor does this form relieve the investigators or involved institutions and associations of their legal and professional responsibilities.

REIMBURSEMENT & COMPENSATION

You will not be provided reimbursement or compensation for your participation in this research study. Your participation is voluntary, and you may decide not to take part in this study.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY

If you have any questions or concerns about this research study, please contact the Principal Investigator: Aleksandra Zecevic, PhD at 1.519.661.2111 (ext. 80455) or azecevi2@uwo.ca

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact a representative from the Western University Health Sciences Research Ethics Board (HSREB) at 1-519-661-3036, 1-844-720-9816, or email at ethics@uwo.ca. The REB is a group of people who oversee the ethical conduct of research studies. The HSREB is not part of the study team. Everything that you discuss will be kept confidential.

Thank you for considering participation in this project.



Aleksandra Zecevic, PhD
Principal Investigator

THIS LETTER IS YOURS TO KEEP FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

SUBMISSION OF THE SURVEY SERVES AS CONSENT