ASSESSING THE EFFECT OF COVID-19 LOCKDOWN ON PERCEIVED BARRIERS AND FACILITATORS TO PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AMONG WOMEN IN SOUTHEAST ENGLAND

Problem

Women's activity levels have been disproportionately negatively affected by the COVID-19 lockdown, compared to men.

Women have experienced new and changing challenges to being active during lockdown, and postlockdown.

Aim

To assess how women in southeast England changed their activity during the pandemic and postpandemic, including how barriers and facilitators to activity have changed.

Key findings

Women who valued activity before lockdown found new ways to be active during lockdown and postlockdown.

Time continues to be a major barrier to activity for women, and many women aim to maintain new habits acquired over lockdown, such as online classes.

42% women claimed they would continue to exercise entirely from home, with 34% who would combine activity at home and at local facilities.

Conclusions

Fitness industries and governments should aim to facilitate additional at-home options and increased flexibility at gyms, such as women-only sessions and a wider variety of class times.

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