ACTIVE: Evaluation of government-funded cycling and walking infrastructure, and implications for Auckland

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The Activating Communities To Improve Vitality and Equality (ACTIVE) study

• The Model Communities programme led to considerable investment in two New Zealand cities
• $ 1.5 million for publicity and awareness campaigns and $ 7.3 million for infrastructure, funding period 2010-2012
• This was supplemented by local funds, energy and commitment by the local authorities
• We report on the first stage of this evaluation – change in active travel behaviour relative to control areas
• A quasi-experimental community study
• Led by Otago in collaboration with Victoria, Auckland and Massey Universities
The question: did the ACTIVE package of interventions cause a change in walking and cycling?
Methods

Treatment group

New Plymouth

Control group

Whanganui

Hastings

Masterton
The intervention - Hastings

- Safe cycling spaces on four key arterial roads
- On-road cycle improvements on key collector routes
- Shared pathway projects
- Footpath renewal, connectivity and lighting
- A network of information signs, bike stands and seats
- Comprehensive education programme
Data

- NZ Household Travel Survey interviews 2010/11, 2011/2012, 2012/2013

Treatment and control cities were reasonably well-matched on baseline measures
Crude results: % trips active

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th></th>
<th>Control</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>Post</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ACTIVE study</strong></td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NZ Travel Survey</strong></td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
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Adjusted survey-specific and meta-analysis results: pre-intervention to post-intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variations</th>
<th>Odds</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACTIVE</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>(1.00-1.82)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel Survey</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>(0.95-2.05)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>(1.08-1.73)</td>
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Variables included in the model – treatment/control, age, sex, year, time of year.
Summary – results of ACTIVE study

• Active travel diminished over the study period, but this occurred more rapidly in the control cities than the treatment cities

• The intervention was associated with a 37% increase in the odds of active travel mode choice, with a 95% confidence interval of 8% to 73%
Some remaining questions

• How did the programme have an effect on active travel?
• Did the economic benefits outweigh the costs?
• Will these (relative) gains in active travel be sustained? Will they increase?
Is this relevant to Auckland?

Auckland has had the highest injury rates in the country and the lowest proportion of active travel.

Tin Tin et al. ANZJPH 2011;35:357-63
Estimated number of Aucklanders who would cycle for everyday trips if the conditions were right – 258,000 (AT surveys)

WHY AUCKLANDERS DON’T CYCLE

43% said that current lack of separation between cars and bikes puts them off riding.

50% of the research group said that safety was the reason they wouldn’t swap their car for a bike.
Investment - $200 million 2015-2018
Te Ara Mua - Future Streets
Early indications – build it and they will come

Northwestern Cycleway radical improvements

Tamaki Drive – piecemeal changes
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