



Exercise on Referral Activators in Wakefield

Project Overview

Exercise on Referral (EoR) is a scheme in which adults who currently lead a sedentary lifestyle and who have specified health risk factors and/or specific existing medical conditions can be referred by GPs and other health professionals to receive a range of physical activity options, including a 12 week programme of physical activity based exercise under the guidance of specially qualified staff. The staff support and encourage participants to increase physical activity within their lifestyle.

Wakefield Council, Sport and Active Lifestyles (SAL) delivers various physical activity interventions which can improve the health and wellbeing of referred individuals, increasing and sustaining levels of engagement and participation in regular moderate physical activity.

In Wakefield only 25.8% of adults participated in moderate physical activity for 30 minutes or more on three days of the week (Active Peoples Survey, 2008). The primary and secondary care costs attributable to physical inactivity in Wakefield have been calculated to be £9,487,980 for the year 2006/7 This has been broken down further to £2,848.354 total cost /100,000 population (Be Active Be Healthy, 2009).

EOR scheme is complimented locally by an 'Activator' scheme. The Activators support local communities to engage currently inactive people or people who have low levels of activity. Activators help people by setting up local group opportunities and signposting into mainstream services where applicable. This model currently recruits volunteer called Physical Activity Champions (PAC'S) within local areas to advocate physical activity to new referrals and to encourage inactive people to take on an active healthy lifestyle.

Project Outcome

Results from 2012/13 show 756 people were referred to EoR with 523 people completing the 12 week intervention.

Health outcomes after the 12 week intervention include;

- Physical activity increased from 1.2 bouts of 30 minutes of physical activity per week to 2.8 bouts of 30 minutes of physical activity per week. (self reported by International Physical Activity Questionnaire)
- Average weight loss of 2.3kg over 12 weeks
- Wellbeing increased 8.9% recorded measured through [EQ-5D-5L](#)
- Increase in exercise capacity of 85 metres on the 6 minutes shuttle walk test
- Long term follow up measured through the Sport and Active Lifestyles leisure management system shows 412 people are engaged in at least 1 session (1 hour) of structured physical activity delivered by Sport and Active Lifestyles.



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There were 22 dedicated sessions within leisure centres and in communities provided by Activators including low level aqua aerobics, Pilates, Nordic walking and active lifestyles circuits. 16 of these sessions are currently running at capacity and therefore some activities have been mainstreamed. Where sessions cannot be mainstreamed there are dedicated pathways for participants to progress. Overall participation in these sessions increased from 312 per week to 925 per week in 2012/13.

18 Physical Activity Champions (PACs) are recruited to advocate physical activity to local communities and support participants within current interventions. PAC's supported the marshalling when the Olympic Torch came through the district and completed Sports Makers training. Where PAC's are deployed to support interventions, results show a 40% increase in participants completing a 12 week programme.

The Activator scheme identified young mums as a priority and through joint work the Activators and PAC's have created a network of Zumba style classes. There are 8 new Zumba classes in community venues and leisure centres. Through support from small grants and mentoring by the Activators, 2 PAC's have returned to work and become Zumba instructors.

A legacy can be created by having a range of high quality physical activity options, skilled staff and using local communities as a part of the solution through recruiting volunteers, physical activity can be increased to support healthier communities.

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