



Overview for Class Instructors

Background:

Older adults with muscle weakness, balance or gait deficits are 3-5 times more likely to fall in any one year than those without these problems. There is evidence that community group strength and balance training that meets evidence-based criteria can reduce falls by 29%. Through until June 2024, ACC have committed funding to reduce the incidence and severity of falls in older adults. A key part of this work includes funding 'lead agencies' from around New Zealand to create and grow access to approved community strength and balance classes.

Sport Bay of Plenty (Sport BOP) has been chosen as the lead agency for the Bay of Plenty District Health Board (BOPDHB) region which includes the Eastern and Western BOP. We are now looking at working with individuals and organisations who are interested in setting up new or modifying current class(es) to focus on strength and balance.

In the Bay of Plenty we are calling this ACC initiative Keep on your Feet.

What is Sport Bay of Plenty's aim for this programme?

- To ensure community strength and balance classes are available and accessible to older adults across the BOPDHB region.
- To ensure that all community strength and balance classes are effective at reducing falls.
- To support providers of strength and balance classes to deliver safe, fun and effective classes that meet the nine criteria as specified by ACC.
- To develop an effective referral system and link referred clients to appropriate class options.

What type of class can be part of this programme?

- Classes that have a significant focus on improving leg strength, core strength and balance. See below for additional information about the criteria that ACC have set with regards to becoming an 'approved' community strength and balance class.

How do you become an approved strength and balance class?

- Sport BOP will need to observe your class to ensure that it meets the criteria set by ACC. If need be, Sport BOP can provide support to help you modify your class to meet the criteria as appropriate.



What are the benefits of becoming an approved strength and balance class?

- Be part of a national initiative that aims to decrease the incidence and severity of falls in older adults which will ultimately help older adults to stay independent and well at home.
- Be part of a wider network of instructors and organisations that are focusing on improving older adults' strength and balance.
- Your class will be recognised through the "quality tick" logo and benefit from national promotion.
- Approved classes will be part of a referral pathway so doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and other health professionals can refer older adults to the programme. This will potentially lead to new members for your class.

- FREE training, support and ideas on how to set up or modify your class so it has a strength and balance focus.
- Ongoing support from Sport BOP including:
 - Twice yearly workshops for all providers of strength and balance classes.
 - Resources (class plans, circuit cards) and ideas that will help add variety, challenge and fun to your class.
 - Support and information around making sure your class meets health and safety requirements.
 - Support and help to promote your class to the wider community.

How will the classes be promoted?

As well as being promoted through your own networks, Sport BOP will help promote the classes through:

- Current Sport BOP networks
- Posters - Sport BOP will provide you with posters that can be displayed in shop windows, community centres, libraries etc.
- Fliers - Sport BOP will develop fliers that promote the programme and that encourage people to go to our website or to contact us for further information about classes.
- Sport BOP has a referral pathway so doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and other health professionals can refer older adults to the programme.
- General promotion about the programme will happen throughout the year via social media, local newspapers, community groups etc.
- ACC's website (www.livestronger.org.nz) lists all classes, and also develop national promotional resources and campaigns.

Do participants have to be referred to the programme?

- No, people can just turn up and join in with a class.
- If there are any concerns about a participant's health in relation to participating in a class, a request for medical clearance before exercising should be made.

Do I have to be a qualified instructor?

- While instructors will need to be trained in the delivery of strength and balance exercises, no formal qualifications are needed and instructors don't need to be clinically trained. As Sport BOP will provide ongoing support and supervision this allows for volunteer peer leaders to take classes.
- All instructors will need to have a current first aid certificate.

Are there any health & safety requirements to run a class?

- Every provider will need to have procedures and processes around health and safety.
- If any incidents were to happen during a class, an incident form will need to be completed.
- Sport BOP can provide templates and support around any health and safety requirements.

Will I have to change the name of my class?

- Existing classes can keep their original name but you might like to include the "quality tick" logo on any promotional material. New classes can choose to be called Keep on your Feet – community strength and balance class.

Who else is involved in this initiative?

Sport BOP is working closely with the BOP Local Falls Working Group that is made up of representatives from the BOPDHB (specialist nurses, planning and funding and physiotherapy), GP Practice, Primary Health Organisations, and ACC.

Who do I contact for more information?

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