

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 20-30%. ACC have committed funding to reduce the incidence and severity of falls in older adults, and 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 and Lakes regions. We work 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 this initiative is called Keep on your Feet (KOYF).

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 BOP and Lakes regions.
- 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 eight criteria as specified by ACC.
- To develop an effective referral system and link referred clients to appropriate class options.

What is an approved community strength and balance class?

An approved community strength and balance class is one that meets a set of evidence-based criteria to ensure classes are both safe and effective for older adults. Classes that meet the criteria will then be eligible to use our quality tick of approval logo.

How does my class become approved?

To get approved, the Sport BOP team will visit your class and observe to ensure that it meets the criteria set by ACC. If required, we 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?

You will be:

- Part of a national network.
- Provide with free training to support you deliver approved community strength and balance classes.
- Able to use the quality tick of approval and benefit from national promotion. (e.g. promotion of the LSFL website)
- Linked to local community health professionals (GPs, nurses, physiotherapists, pharmacists, podiatrists) and other organisations involved in preventing falls in our region.
- Benefiting from ongoing support from Sport BOP, who will provide:
 - Yearly workshops for providers to allow networking, sharing of successes, challenges and ideas.
 - Resources (class plans, circuit cards) and ideas that will help add variety, challenge and fun into your class.
 - Support in meeting health and safety requirements.
 - Support to promote your class to the wider community.

What are the benefits for older people in my community?

They will increase their strength and balance, reduce their risk of falls and related injuries (e.g. broken hips), continue to contribute to their families and communities and live independent lives. Classes can also assist with rehabilitation and enhance confidence, even in older adults who have already experienced a fall.

How will my class be promoted?

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

- **Class referrals** - Approved classes may receive referrals via our referral network with GPs, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and other community health providers.
- **Printed promotional resources and-** Sport BOP can provide personalised class poster and flyers to support local advertising in community venues. We also work with local newspapers and community publications to promote the programme and celebrate participant and class success stories.
- **Community partnerships** - Sport BOP works with a range of organisations and groups that support older adults and can help raise awareness of available classes within local communities.
- **Live Stronger for Longer** - Approved classes are listed on the national *Live Stronger for Longer* website (www.livestronger.org.nz), which provides information about community strength and balance classes, falls prevention resources, and national promotional 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 I need to meet?

There are basic health and safety requirements to meet, including hazard identification and risk assessment. Sport BOP will support you to meet the health and safety requirements.

Can I keep my existing class name?

Absolutely, there is no need to change the name. New classes can choose to be called Keep on your Feet if they like.

Who do I contact for more information?

Belinda Muller, Active Communities Team Leader. Email: belindam@sportbop.co.nz Ph: 021 816 781

Rebecca Hodgson, Keep on your Feet Advisor. Email: rebeccah@sportbop.co.nz Ph: 021841856

Jaime William, Keep on your Feet Support. Email: jaimew@sportbop.co.nz Ph: 0211718831



CRITERIA FOR APPROVED COMMUNITY STRENGTH AND BALANCE CLASSES

Criteria One: The focus for approved Community Strength and Balance classes must be to improve class participants' balance and leg strength to reduce their risk of falling.

Examples of approved class types include traditional exercise classes, yoga, tai chi, Pilates, dance-based classes, and shallow water aqua classes.

- ☐ Class must be suitable for older adults
- ☐ Class must have a focus on improving strength and balance

Criteria Two: Approved Community Strength and Balance classes are targeted at older adults aged 65 years or older (55 years or older for Māori and Pasifika) and/or people who are at increased risk of falling.

People at increased risk of falling include those who have tripped or fallen recently, are worried about falling, use their arms to rise from a chair, have long-term conditions that affect mobility, and/or have reduced bone density or osteoporosis.

- ☐ Class targets older adults and/or those at increased risk of falling
- ☐ Class accommodates people with different levels of risk and mobility and provides options for those who need more or less challenge

Criteria Three: Approved Community Strength and Balance classes must include exercises that challenge class participants' balance and help strengthen their lower limbs.

Balance exercises: challenge a participant's ability to maintain their centre of mass over their base of support, while performing different movements or tasks.

Leg strength exercises: use resistance to increase the force and power of the muscles in the lower limbs, including the hips, thighs, calves, and feet.

- ☐ Class must include exercises that target both balance and leg strength
- ☐ Strength and balance exercises are adaptable to suit a range of abilities
- ☐ Exercises allow progressive challenges to balance and strengthening of leg muscles based on participants ability
- ☐ Participants feel comfortable that they can pass up or modify exercises that are too challenging and have the support of the instructor to do so

Criteria Four: A minimum of one third of the total exercises done in an approved class must challenge a participant's balance. Balance exercises should be done standing and class participants progressed over time to reduce their base of support and/external support as appropriate.

- ☐ At least one-third of exercises focus on balance
- ☐ Balance exercises are primarily standing
- ☐ Balance exercises are progressed over time by reducing support or incorporating dual tasks
- ☐ Balance exercises have relevance to daily activities and incorporate both static and dynamic components
- ☐ Aqua classes allow feet on the ground to ensure balance can be challenged

Criteria Five: Instructors must demonstrate the ability to lead and deliver a falls prevention exercise class for older adults to the satisfaction of the Lead Agency.

- ☐ Instructors must have current first aid certificate
- ☐ Instructors have completed a training workshop with Keep on your Feet Team (includes principles and benefits of falls prevention exercise for older adults, common medications that affect older adults, explanation of the criteria)
- ☐ Instructors have been made aware of and follow minimum health and safety guidelines
- ☐ Instructors' classes must be observed, approved, and, if applicable, received feedback to improve their delivery of the group workout programme

Criteria Six: Class participants are regularly encouraged and supported to, where possible, do a minimum of 2 hours of strength and balance exercise per week.

Sport BOP will provide instructors with falls prevention education and resources to share with participants.

- ☐ Participants are encouraged to use available resources and tools (Nymbly, KOYF Home Exercises, CSB classes) to achieve the recommended 2 hours of strength and balance exercise per week

Criteria Seven: Inclusion and exclusion criteria will ensure the class is available to people at increased risk of falling as well as ensure that people unsuitable for approved classes are directed to more appropriate services or health professional advice.

Inclusion: Participants 65+ (55+ for Māori & Pasifika) or at increased fall risk.

Exclusion: Participants functional level or medical condition makes them too high risk to participate.

While criteria will be provided by Sport BOP, exclusion criteria should ultimately be at the discretion of the instructor.

- ☐ Instructors must ensure that all participants complete a screening and registration form
- ☐ Instructors must ensure participants who have high-risk factors that may make exercise harmful or affect their ability to successfully complete a class seek medical clearance from a health professional before starting. A record of this must be kept.
- ☐ Instructor must refer those not suitable for classes back to Sport BOP, who will actively promote other services or health professionals that can better meet their needs.
- ☐ Inclusion and Exclusion criteria must be held onsite by the provider for easy reference during classes

Criteria Eight: Approved Community Strength and Balance classes must have a means of periodically assessing participants' physical function.

Assessments are intended to support instructors and participants in tracking progress. There is no expectation that instructors send this information to Sport BOP. Assessments can be completed at intervals such as beginning, middle, and end of programme, or every few weeks or months.

- ☐ Classes have a method of measuring and monitoring the physical function of participants to evaluate the effectiveness of the class and track participants' progress.
- ☐ Assessments should be relevant to the goal of improving strength and balance, and they should be meaningful and appropriate for both participants and instructors
- ☐ Assessment should be simple, practical and not overly time consuming