Preventing Falls and Frailty in the Community with Quality Assured Exercise Groups

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What would a successful falls prevention physiotherapy service look like for the older adult?

- A Sustainable Service
- Evidenced Based Programme
- Ability to respond to the changing needs to the service user
Implementing Change

- **Sustainable**
  - Interagency Working Group
  - A Physiotherapy Working Group

- **Governance**
  - Training
  - Memorandum of Understanding

- **Integration**
  - A continuum of classes
  - Exit strategies
Training of Otago Exercise Programme (OEP) Leaders

Later life training UK:
Accredited, quality assured: Blend of online learning, assignments, MCQ’s & face to face training
Teaching manuals, safety checks, behaviour change strategies, assessments, written feedback.
Ongoing networks & learning, social media (twitter and facebook), study days, conferences

Cascade trainers: 5 days (including OEP leader training and assessment)

OEP Leaders:
3 days for Fitness Instructors - 2 day training + 1 day practical exams
2 days for Physiotherapists - 1 day training + 1 day practical exams
Otago – Progressive leg strength & balance exercises

Blend of Home programme x 2 weekly and Group x 1 weekly

Back knee strengthening: helps with stair climbing, getting in/out of chairs/cars and getting up and down from the floor

Toe raises: helps with stepping backwards and on/off pavements

Heel toe walking: improves balance and walking in narrow spaces, stepping sideways to avoid objects or when on uneven surfaces.
26 week Otago exercise programmes
Targeting frailer older adults
Started May/June 2019

Total No=17
Ave age = 80 years
Ave Rockwood Score = 4

Results from first 6 weeks
(26 week re-evaluation pending)

Group 1: Ave attendance = 81%
Group 2: Ave attendance = 60%
Group 3: Ave attendance = 75%

Drop outs: Illness, fell and fractured wrist after 1st week, difficulties accessing venue.
Client feedback:
I feel a lot steadier....I took the bus into town for the 1st time in 2 years.
The pace of this group suits me......
I feel listened to.....
I like the small numbers

Otago Instructor feedback:
‘I love this because it’s got evidence and I feel supported by the physios’
The training was a lot more work than I thought, but I like the structure and progressions
It’s great to see the group motivate each other along
I’m surprised how much they like it..It definitely seems to be working
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<tr>
<th>Risk/challenges</th>
<th>Rewards of Otago programme</th>
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<tr>
<td>Frailer population with complex co-morbidities</td>
<td>Tailored specifically for frailer older people</td>
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<td>Needs extra time/expertise across services</td>
<td>Consistent approach across agencies</td>
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<td>Need buy in from clients, Otago leaders and funders.  ‘Not a quick fix’</td>
<td>Instructor and peer support over 26 week group helps motivation/adherence</td>
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<td>Change of practice– additional governance</td>
<td>Fidelity to dosage and duration achieved</td>
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<td>Time needed to set up, implement, evaluate.</td>
<td>Recommended ratio Instructor: Client 1:8</td>
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<td>Funding for instructors, venues and weights</td>
<td>Proven return on investment-Skelton 2018</td>
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<td>Otago not for everyone (need continuum of exercise choices and exit strategies)</td>
<td>Still much to learn!</td>
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‘Exercise is a journey not a destination. We do not stop exercising because we grow old, we grow old because we stop exercising’

Kenneth H Cooper