

Cambridge City Council Exercise Referral

Guidance for Health Professionals

Why physical activity?

The evidence base for physical activity in the treatment and prevention of the majority of diseases is very strong with new evidence emerging all of the time. NICE has a whole host of evidence to support physical activity amongst adults, all of which can be accessed at www.nice.org.uk.

On average, an inactive person spends more days in hospital than an active person, and has more family physician visits, requires more specialist service intervention and more nurse visits than an active individual.

Physical activity interventions have also been shown to be a highly cost-effective use of public funds in primary care, environment and workplace settings.

Why exercise referral?

Exercise referral has been operating in Cambridge City for 20 years. It offers adults who have a medical condition/s or disability the opportunity to become more active, as a way of managing or improving health or as a way of preventing additional health needs.

Exercise referral can help patients to achieve the recommended CMO's physical activity guidelines of 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week.

The scheme currently provides physical activity opportunities in:

- Tailored, individualised gym programmes,
- Long-term condition circuit based classes,
- Swimming (recreational and unsupervised),
- Cardiac and stroke rehabilitation classes.

Patients can choose to do a mixture of activities whilst on the programme for a minimum of 12 weeks.

Patients attend an initial assessment with an exercise referral specialist instructor and are offered the opportunity to attend additional appointments at 6 and 12 weeks. At these, patients receive further advice and support should it be needed and the opportunity to discuss follow on opportunities upon completing the programme.

The scheme in Cambridge City operates at:

- Abbey Leisure complex, Whitehall Road.
- Chesterton Sports Centre, Gilbert Road.
- Parkside Pool and Gym, Gonville Place.
- Trumpington Sport, Lime Avenue.
- Netherhall Sports Centre, Queen Edith's Way.
- Cherry Hinton Village Centre, Colville Road.

The scheme aims to meet best practice guidance as stated by the DoH National Quality Assurance Framework (2001) and the DoH Statement on Exercise Referral (March 2007) and the BHF Exercise Referral Toolkit. Key partners to the scheme include the Public Health team at Cambridgeshire County Council, who provide vital financial and directional support for the project.

Evaluation of the exercise referral scheme is done continually and a report containing the findings completed annually. The report includes information on the demography of referral clients, plus satisfaction and well-being scores, attendance and retention figures.

How do I decide if exercise referral is best for my patient?

This relies on your clinical judgement. Generally referrals for exercise are most suitable for patients who are insufficiently active and need help with motivation, exercise programming, need supervision/monitoring/increased assistance in selecting the most appropriate types of activity.

Please note that we do not accept referrals for "general fitness" without an accompanying medical condition and that we are not a physiotherapy service.

Use this chart to help you decide as to whether exercise referral is most appropriate for your patient:

Factor	Meets exercise referral criteria
Has a long-term medical condition	Yes
Requires activity for specific health outcomes	Yes
Requires tailored exercise programming	Yes
Needs motivational support	Yes
Is inactive or falls below national activity recommendations	Yes
Ready to give activity a go!	Yes
Medically stable	Yes
Awaiting cardiac investigation	No
Lives in Cambridge City	Preferable*
Is able to pay exercise referral costs**	Yes

* Patients living outside of the City are welcome to attend the exercise referral scheme within Cambridge City. However, patients should be encouraged to attend the exercise referral scheme most convenient to them.

**The initial consultation fee is £7.50 thereafter the cost per session is £3.00.

Target referrals for the scheme include: cardiac rehabilitation, diabetes, hypertension, mental health, obesity (BMI >30), cancer, arthritis that restricts mobility, back pain, respiratory, osteoporosis and neurological conditions. However, we welcome referrals for other conditions.

What if my patient has had a history of heart problems – can I still refer?

For patients that have diagnosed coronary heart disease, angina, have had a Myocardial Infarction or cardiac surgery, additional information about the patient is required, above and beyond the general exercise referral form. Specifically, a BACR CHD referral form needs to be completed. This is available to download via the exercise referral website.

Only the patient's GP can complete the BACR CHD form. If you are an allied health professional, wishing to refer a patient with a cardiac history, please direct the patient to their GP.

Transfers are welcomed and accepted directly from Phase III to our Phase IV community class from the cardiac rehabilitation teams at both Addenbrookes and Papworth Hospitals.

How do I become involved?

National guidance for exercise referral currently states that referrals can be accepted by the following health professionals:

- Doctors
- Nurses – including community, mental health, condition specific (such as respiratory, cardiac etc)
- Occupational Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Dietitians.

Prior to referring a patient for the first time, you must register your interest to do so and agree to the terms and conditions of the scheme. Currently, this is a joint registering process between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, so registering with one scheme will mean that you automatically register with the other. This can be done simply and quickly online via the following link:

www.cambridge.gov.uk/startup

and then scrolling to the health professional section.

Upon registering you will be sent a downloadable copy of the referral form and will be automatically added to the health professional database, where you will be sent regular updates on the scheme.

What should I do after completing a referral form?

Upon completing a referral form, please hand this to the patient. Then it is the patient's responsibility to take the next step and arrange an appointment at one of our centres.

What other opportunities are available to my patients in Cambridge city?

Should your patient not be eligible for exercise referral, the City Council provides or supports a number of other activity programmes which you may wish to recommend:

Forever Active – older adults 50+

Provides a variety of activities and sports within Cambridge, ranging from chair based (mobility classes) to exercise to music and sport specific sessions. For more information visit:

www.forever-active.org.uk

Disability Sports Project

Local sports organisations provide a variety of activity sessions for children and adults in Cambridge City. For more information visit:

www.cambridge.gov.uk/inclusive-physical-activities

Community Sports

Sports and fitness activities are provided for adults across the City for residents living in new communities, specific activities for women and girls and ethnic community groups.

www.cambridge.gov.uk/community-sports-facilities

Invigorate and Hopebridge projects

Activities provided at little or no cost to mental health and homeless service users.

www.cambridge.gov.uk/sport

Exercise referral contact information:

For more information about the service, please visit: www.cambridge.gov.uk/startup

Alternatively, contact the Active Lifestyles Team on: 01223 458613

or e-mail: startup@cambridge.gov.uk

Please DO NOT send patient information via e-mail.

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