

## **Case study/project title:**

### **How to Get Off The Floor Safely**

**Leisure Trust:** Be Well, Wigan Council

**Department:** Active Ageing

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#### **Introduction**

Active Ageing aims to help people maintain their independence through keeping active in later life. Along with the health benefits of becoming more active, our participants enjoy getting out of the house and meeting like-minded people. We work closely with NHS professionals, the Primary Care Networks, Adult Social Care and other local organisations as part of a wider offer and support network for residents across the Wigan borough. We are a part of the local Falls Strategy and Pathway.

Our team of qualified and experienced instructors support participants to improve their wellbeing, mobility, strength and balance with a flexible programme that can be adapted to meet their aspirations and interests.

Activities are held in a variety of settings across the borough to meet demand and to focus on areas of most need. Home exercise is also provided for people unable to attend sessions in the community. This could be a result of their health conditions, confidence, or access to transport. This helps us to focus support with people in lower socio-economic groups where these barriers maybe more prevalent. We are currently exploring integrated support with Reablement which will further strengthen our aim to reduce health inequalities and support hospital discharge.

#### **Detail the challenge and/or opportunity**

In Wigan, hospital admissions of the over 65s due to a fall are amongst the highest in Greater Manchester, while GM is above the England average. Deaths following from falling is also on the rise. The proportion of over 75s in Wigan is high compared to other areas of Greater Manchester and projections show that this population is rapidly increasing.

Be Well (Wigan Council) is committed to taking a life course approach to reducing the risk of falls providing a range of opportunities to help people improve their balance, increase muscle strength and promote bone health.

As part of the offer the team delivers over 20 evidence-based strength and balance sessions a week that help to reduce falls risk. During the sessions we work with participants, so they know how to get off the floor safely if they fall, put strategies in place to support them getting up and advice of what to do if they are unable to do so.

This is practiced in sessions and techniques demonstrated to support this. We have had many examples over the years of where this has been successful, and participants have been able to help themselves. Before accessing our activities, they needed to call for help, sometimes from emergency services or where they have had a long lie increasing the risk of complications.

Recently we have started to explore how we can help our residents who do not access our services to age well by increasing awareness about the importance of strength and balance, as well providing resources to help people move more, including the Super 6 Exercises, Winter Wise booklet and home exercise videos.

For Falls Awareness Week in 2022 we took this further, and the team produced a film to demonstrate what to do if you fall following the advice we provide in our sessions. This was made available on our website and shared with partner organisations. In December 2022 ahead of the paramedic strikes when this message was more important than ever, we re-released the film on Wigan Council's social media channels. We were aware that it may not be seen by our target audience, but the aim was to provide friends and family with the information to help their loved ones.

## **The Results/next steps**

The analytics from Facebook showed that the post reached 6,528 people, the content was displayed 6,528 times, engaged with by 357 people and shared 28 times. We also shared the video with our partners, so it was available to people that they support.

We have been gathering feedback from our participants to see how they have been getting on:

Strength and Balance Participant, Howe Bridge Leisure Centre:

A participant who attends a session with her husband said that he fell at home over Christmas. She assisted her husband following the backward chaining process to get back up. Their granddaughter was there who is a nurse, and she couldn't believe that he managed to get up using backward chaining steps as shown in the group session.

Strength and Balance Participant, St Annes Church, Shevington:

A participant was out for a meal with his wife. He had gone to the toilet to find another gentleman had fallen in the toilets. Using the backward chaining process that he has learnt in the group sessions he managed to help the gentleman in the toilet get back up to standing (with support from another member of the public). Without knowing these steps this gentleman would've required an ambulance callout to get him back up to standing.

Strength and Balance Participant, Home Exercise and St Wilfred's, Standish:

Unfortunately, during December Peter fell whilst at home, thankfully there was no injury and other people were around at home. But using the techniques from the class, more specifically Backward Chaining Peter was able to get back his feet without help.

Peter felt the education part of the session was hugely beneficial for him as it helped him when he really needed it. Although Peter is under no illusions that he may fall again, and that it may be more serious in future, he is happy that this information is there for him to use.

Peter has since had another fall while out shopping. He completed backward chaining and managed to get himself back up again.

This was beneficial for the people that were able to stand up on their own, particularly with the current pressures on the ambulance service. As well as this it can really affect someone's confidence to go out and do things, which can then have long-term consequences on someone's health.

Every time we help our residents to stay balanced, avoid an injurious fall or get back on their feet without support we reduce costs in the wider system. Figures from the Falls Tool correct as of 2016 show that:

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Unit Cost</b>
GP visit	£36.00
A&E visit – admission	£100.53
A&E visit - no admission	£90.29
Ambulance call-out to hospital	£236
Non-hip fracture - hospital inpatient stay	£7,949
Hip fracture - hospital inpatient stay	£8,955
Hip fracture - 1st year follow-up costs	£527
Hip fracture - 2nd year costs	£2,212
Geriatric long-stay	£14,659

## **Testimonials/client quotes**

“It makes common sense as we get old, being taught the correct way to get up if we have a fall. Becoming more stable by doing the exercises helps too and shows that we can get up without assistance. If I hadn't been shown how to get up then I would previously shouted for Pat to help. Something she finds hard work”

Pat and Harold

“This is inspiring work by Be Well, the focus on self-management, including how to get off the floor is brilliant. We need to provide awareness and support to the public on how they can prevent falls and promote good bone health. Well done.”

Dr Christina Heaton Consultant Nurse Falls Wroughtington, Wigan & Leigh Hospital NHS trust.

## **Spread the word**

We would like to spread the word further and welcome you sharing this film with your own residents.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6cHwmQz\\_qs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6cHwmQz_qs)

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