



Fit-IN Rehab



Sport as a tool for successful rehabilitation of seniors

Fit-IN Rehab

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Training Workshop on Encouraging and Enabling Elderly with disabilities for Sports
Activities after Rehabilitation

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Introduction

After rehabilitation or treatment in hospitals, elderly with disabilities often could not engage in many sports due to their physical limitations related to their illness or disability. This gives rise to certain psychological problems and reduced self-esteem and self-confidence. This document enables elderly with disabilities to participate equally in sports activities, considering their health conditions.

The "Fit-IN Rehab" project encourages social inclusion and equal opportunities in sports. The parallel topic is to promote voluntary activity in sport and education in and through sport with a special focus on skills development. Two main target groups will benefit from the project results: a) elderly with disabilities and b) volunteers from sports organizations who are working with elderly with disabilities.



General principles and tips for physical activity of people with disabilities

Engaging in physical activity alongside a balanced diet is essential for promoting a healthier lifestyle among elderly with disabilities. An increasing number of evidence indicates that regular physical activity and reduced sedentary behavior can help prevent certain chronic illnesses.

Based on the available evidence, it is crucial for elderly with disabilities to incorporate challenging strength and balance-focused exercises into their routine approximately three times a week to maintain good health. This message was deemed highly significant by the elderly individuals with disabilities and their caregivers and family members involved. They collectively recognized that maintaining good strength and balance is vital for enhancing the quality of life throughout their life journey. Additionally, encouraging small

amounts of physical activity throughout the day and reducing sedentary habits are important considerations for elderly with disabilities.

General guidelines for physical activity of elderly with disabilities

Just like for children and adolescents, physical activity is vital for elderly with disabilities to maintain their health and well-being. Throughout childhood and adolescence, individuals lay the foundation for lifelong physical activity habits, which remain essential as they age. Regular physical activity for elderly with disabilities promotes health, fitness, and cognitive function.

For elderly with disabilities, incorporating moderate-to-vigorous aerobic physical activity, muscle-strengthening exercises, and bone-strengthening activities is beneficial. The aim should be maintaining at least 60 minutes of daily physical activity, such as walking, gentle aerobic exercises, resistance training, and balance exercises. Activities like weight-bearing exercises and stretching should also be included to maintain strong bones and improve bone health.

It would be very beneficial to elderly with disabilities that caregivers and health professionals support and encourage their physical activity pursuits. Providing age-appropriate and enjoyable activities helps in maintaining an active lifestyle. As individuals get older, physical activity might decline, making it even more important for caregivers and healthcare providers to facilitate suitable and engaging physical activities.

Elderly individuals with disabilities should consult with a healthcare professional or physical activity specialist to determine the appropriate types and amounts of physical activity that suit their specific needs and abilities. Even when facing limitations, elderly with disabilities need to remain as active as possible and avoid prolonged periods of inactivity.





Key Guidelines for physical activity of elderly with disabilities

- It is important to provide opportunities and encouragement for elderly with disabilities to participate in age-appropriate and enjoyable physical activities that offer variety;
- The aim should be maintaining at least 60 minutes of physical activity daily, including moderate-to-vigorous aerobic physical activities, muscle-strengthening, and bone-strengthening activities;
- Aerobic physical activity of moderate-to-vigorous intensity for most of the 60 minutes or more in a single activity session should be incorporated into the daily routine at least 3 times a week;
- Muscle-strengthening physical activity should be incorporated into the daily routine at least 3 times a week;
- Bone-strengthening physical activity should be incorporated into the daily routine at least 3 times a week;

General guidance for inactive elderly with disabilities

For inactive elderly individuals with disabilities looking to increase their physical activity, here are some general guidelines to follow:

- Use relative intensity, which means considering the level of effort relative to your fitness level when engaging in aerobic endurance or muscle-strengthening activities. This approach ensures that the activity is appropriate for your personal capabilities;
- If you are starting to exercise after prolonged inactivity, begin with easy or relatively moderate-intensity activities. Avoid starting with relatively hard or vigorous-intensity activities, as they may be too demanding initially. Instead, gradually increase the number of minutes per session and the number of days per week for the selected exercise intensity. Only after getting accustomed to this routine consider increasing the intensity if desired;
- Be mindful of the relative size of the increase in physical activity each week, as it affects the risk of injury. For example, a 20-minute increase per week is safer for someone already doing 200 minutes of physical activity weekly (a 10% increase) than someone doing 40 minutes weekly (a 50% increase);



- Follow the plan and periodization of multicomponent physical activity, as outlined in the following chapters. This will help structure your exercise routine effectively and optimize the benefits of your physical activities.



The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends the following guidelines for physical activity for adults living with disability:

- Should do at least 150–300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity, or you should do at least 75–150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity activity throughout the week;
- Should also do moderate or greater-intensity muscle-strengthening activities involving all major muscle groups on two or more days a week, as these provide additional health benefits;
- As part of the weekly plan of physical activity, older adults should do varied multicomponent physical activity that emphasizes functional balance and strength training at moderate or greater intensity on 3 or more days a week to enhance functional capacity and to prevent falls;
- For additional health benefits, older adults may increase moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity to more than 300 minutes, or do more than 150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity, or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity activity throughout the single week;
- Should limit the amount of time spent being sedentary. Replacing sedentary time with physical activity of any intensity (including light intensity) provides health benefits;



- To help reduce the detrimental effects of high levels of sedentary behavior on health, all adults and older adults should aim to do more than the recommended moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity levels;
- It is possible to avoid sedentary behavior and be physically active while sitting or lying. E.g., Upper body-led activities, inclusive and/or wheelchair-specific sports activities.

It's important to note that these recommendations are general guidelines and can be adjusted based on individual health conditions, fitness levels, and preferences. Remember, it is essential to consult with a healthcare professional or physical activity specialist to tailor these guidelines to your specific needs and abilities. Gradually increasing physical activity while considering limitations and preferences will help improve overall health and well-being.

Health benefits of physical activity for elderly with disabilities

The total amount of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity is more important than the length of each physical activity episode for promoting health benefits.

Engaging in at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity per week substantially benefits elderly individuals with disabilities: a reduced risk of all-cause mortality, coronary heart disease, stroke, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, certain cancers, anxiety, depression, Alzheimer's disease, and other dementias. Furthermore, physically active elderly individuals with disabilities experience improved sleep, enhanced cognition, and a better quality of life.



Increasing physical activity from 150 to 300 minutes per week further increases the health benefits. For instance, those who achieve 300 minutes per week enjoy an even lower risk of heart disease or type 2 diabetes than those who do 150 minutes per week.



Elderly individuals with disabilities must work with healthcare professionals or physical activity specialists to tailor their exercise routines to their abilities and health conditions. By gradually increasing the amount of physical activity and considering individual limitations, elderly with disabilities can reap the numerous health advantages of being physically active.

Multicomponent physical activity approach for elderly with disabilities

Based on previous good practice and scientific research, each elderly person with disabilities who initiates an exercise program after a long period of inactivity or following surgery and rehabilitation should prioritize the following motor abilities:

AEROBIC ENDURANCE

Improving cardiovascular fitness is a significant challenge for individuals with developmental disabilities. To see progress in cardiovascular fitness, it is essential to engage in moderate or vigorous exercise, which is determined by the heart rate during physical activity.

STRENGTH

Muscle-strengthening activities offer multiple benefits, including increased bone strength and muscular fitness. These activities can also help maintain muscle mass during weight loss. Individuals with disabilities should include muscle-strengthening exercises that target major muscle groups, such as the legs, hips, chest, back, abdomen, shoulders, and arms. A diverse range of activities is necessary to achieve balanced muscle strength since the improvements are specific to the muscles engaged during each exercise.

FLEXIBILITY

Flexibility activities enhance joint mobility, enabling better movement through the full range of motion. Stretching exercises are efficient for increasing flexibility, making it easier for individuals to perform activities requiring greater flexibility. Inactive individuals should approach flexibility training by starting with lower-intensity activities and gradually increasing the frequency and duration of their exercises ("start low and go slow").



BALANCE

Maintaining balance is crucial for the safe performance of many activities. Exercise programs incorporating low-intensity strength and balance training have been shown to improve balance and reduce fall rates by approximately 40%. Particularly for elderly individuals with existing functional and mobility limitations, balance is essential for maintaining physical function and mobility.



For elderly individuals with disabilities, it is important to tailor exercise programs to their specific needs and abilities. Consulting with healthcare professionals or physical activity specialists can provide valuable guidance to ensure a safe and effective exercise routine that addresses their unique challenges and goals.

General rules of a training organization and periodization

- Every training session longer than 30 minutes must be started with at least a 10-minute warm-up session and finished with 10 minutes of flexibility (cool-down) session;
- At least 48 hours should pass between two muscle strength-focused training sessions;
- At least 24 hours should pass between two aerobic endurance-focused training sessions;
- If possible, combine upper and lower body exercises in each muscle strength-focused training session;



- When the pause between the two training sessions with a professional trainer is more than 48h, an easy-to-moderate home exercise program should be implemented;
- During one week, there must be a minimum of two training sessions for muscle strength and aerobic endurance. Depending on goals, increase the number of sessions;
- Balance and flexibility exercises should be incorporated with one of those ability training sessions as scientifically approved exercises for fast condition improvements for people with disabilities;
- Use balance exercises in the first half of the training session and flexibility exercises in the second part;
- Sets of exercises are groups of 2 to 5 exercises that repeat one after another for a specified number of times (series). For example, in one set, we have 3 exercises, so it means that we should do exercise 1, then exercise 2, and finally exercise 3, and then repeat those exercises in the same order for 2 more times (two more series);
- Repetitions are the number of times we have done the same exercise in one series of the specified set. When it comes to aerobic endurance, the same exercise is repeated until the end of the exercise duration (30, 60, or more seconds);
- Be sure to rest for 1-3 minutes between each set of exercises in strength-focused training sessions, till in the aerobic endurance training sessions, the pause should be from 30 to 60 seconds.





Practical tips for trainers to work with elderly with disabilities

- **SET REALISTIC GOALS:** When working with elderly individuals with disabilities, it is essential to set small and achievable goals consistently. Accomplishing even minor objectives can empower them and boost their self-confidence in various aspects of life.
- **BE EMPATHETIC:** Research indicates that a significant percentage of elderly individuals with disabilities experience isolation and loneliness. As a trainer, it is crucial to recognize these emotions and approach your trainees with a positive and understanding attitude to help them overcome challenges related to depression, anxiety, and stress.
- **INVOLVE EVERYONE:** Encourage active involvement from elderly with disabilities in designing opportunities and support. Seek feedback from them and their families to make the sessions enjoyable, interactive, and beneficial.
- **ADOPT A PERSON-CENTERED APPROACH:** Gain a deep understanding of your trainees' preferences, needs, and influencers. Deliver programs and services that provide positive experiences tailored to each individual. Remember that elderly individuals with disabilities are equal community members and deserve inclusive treatment.
- **UTILIZE SOCIAL NETWORKS AND STREAMING VIDEO SITES:** Use online resources to connect with experienced trainers, clubs, and organizations. Find examples of similar participants with disabilities who can be role models for your trainees and use video exercise demonstrations to motivate and guide them during their exercises.
- **BE WELL-PREPARED:** Working with elderly with disabilities requires extra attention to health, hygiene, and safety. Create a checklist to ensure all necessary safety measures are taken. Carry essentials like water, healthy snacks, spare clothing, towels, and first aid kits. Familiarize yourself with local clinics and hospitals and ensure your mobile phone is charged with saved emergency contacts.
- **PROVIDE SUN PROTECTION FOR OUTDOOR TRAINING:** When training outdoors, be aware of the UV Index and offer sun protection cream when it reads three or higher. Encourage trainees to reapply sunscreen every two hours or more often, especially if you



both are near open water. Educate them about the importance of sun protection to prevent sun damage and skin cancer.

- **TEACH PROPER BREATHING TECHNIQUES:** For beginners or individuals in the postoperative period, breathing techniques can enhance training effectiveness by more than 40%. Help trainees improve their breathing during exercises to optimize their workout experience.
- **OFFER NUTRITION ADVICE:** Advise on a nutrition plan or refer your trainees to a nutritionist. Adequate nutrition plays a significant role in training efficiency and faster progress for elderly individuals with disabilities.
- **ENCOURAGE A DIVERSE COACHING WORKFORCE:** Recognize the importance of diversity in coaching. Encourage coaches and assistants with disabilities to join the coaching workforce, as they can act as role models and bring unique life experiences and skills that benefit all participants and clubs.

By implementing these practical tips, trainers can create a supportive and inclusive environment for elderly with disabilities, enabling them to engage in physical activity effectively and enjoy its numerous benefits.

Barriers to physical activity for people with disabilities

- Chronic fatigue, affecting 35%-95% of elderly people and often related to depression;
- Disease severity;
- Pre-existing co-morbid conditions;
- Lack of motivation;
- Cognitive and learning abilities;
- Societal and environmental factors, including program costs, transportation means, accessibility, family support, social policies, and social stigmas.



Barriers related to fitness and health facilities for people with disabilities

- Lack of disability awareness among fitness professionals;
- Overheating in warmer environments;
- Limited accessibility to toilets;
- Cold water in swimming pools, hindering rapid warming for individuals;
- Safety issues such as wet floors in changing rooms, poorly maintained equipment, and unsuitable hoists in pool areas;
- Fear of falling.

Questions a trainer should ask the trainee before starting the training programme

Before commencing the exercise, the trainer must gain insight into the trainee's current physical abilities. However, this alone cannot determine the actual state of the cardiovascular system. Therefore, it is essential for each person, especially those with disabilities (with or without a postoperative period), to undergo medical examinations by a specialist and obtain permission from a doctor to engage in physical activity. The trainer must keep a record (report) of the license for physical activity printed for each person they work with. Once these conditions are met, the trainer should ask questions directly to the trainee or their family members.

The list of questions is as follows:

1. Has your doctor ever indicated that you have a heart condition and recommended only medically supervised activity?
2. Do you experience chest pain brought on by physical activity?
3. Have you developed chest pain in the last month?
4. Do you tend to lose consciousness or experience dizziness leading to falls?
5. Do you have any bone or joint problems that the proposed physical activity could aggravate?
6. Has your doctor ever recommended medication for your blood pressure or heart condition?
7. Are you aware of (or have you been advised of) any other physical reasons why you should not exercise without medical supervision?

By thoroughly understanding the trainee's health status and potential risks, the trainer can design a safe and effective exercise program tailored to their needs and capabilities.





Practical training tips for elderly with disabilities

Being physically active is beneficial for your physical health and can positively impact managing medical conditions, reducing stress, boosting confidence, and bringing together people from diverse backgrounds. If you are not currently active, you are not alone. Many older adults with disabilities are not engaging in regular physical activity. However, with some helpful tips, you can start incorporating exercise into your daily routine and improve your overall fitness and well-being:

- **SEEK PROFESSIONAL GUIDANCE:** If you are in the post-surgery period or dealing with specific health conditions, consult healthcare professionals before starting any exercise program. They can provide advice tailored to your needs and ensure your safety during physical activity;
- **START SLOW AND BUILD UP:** Begin with gentle exercises and gradually increase intensity and duration. Avoid pushing yourself too hard too soon. Remember, consistency is more important than intensity;
- **MONITOR YOUR HEART RATE:** For safe exercise, calculate your Maximum Heart Rate (MHR) by subtracting your age from 220 (for men) or 226 (for women). Beginners can aim to exercise at 50-60% of their MHR. A heart rate monitor can help you keep track of your exertion levels during workouts;
- **ENJOY THE BENEFITS:** Regular physical activity will enhance your physical health and positively affect your mental well-being. It can boost your energy levels, improve sleep, reduce stress, and enhance your overall quality of life;
- **FIND ACTIVITIES THAT SUIT YOU:** Exercise should not be limited to the gym or competitive sports. Choose activities you enjoy and can comfortably perform at home or in the community. Focus on exercises that work on strength, flexibility, aerobic endurance, and balance;



- **KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:** Fitness providers must make their offerings accessible to people with disabilities. Don't hesitate to ask for reasonable adjustments to accommodate your needs;
- **PROTECT YOURSELF FROM UV RADIATION:** When exercising outdoors, check the UV Index daily and use sun protection when it reads 3 or higher. Apply sunscreen regularly, and consider using a sunscreen applicator or alcohol gel to avoid greasy hands;
- **WARM-UP AND COOL DOWN:** Always warm up before starting your exercise routine and cool down with stretching or flexibility exercises at the end to prevent injuries;
- **THINK ABOUT BREATHING TECHNIQUES:** Consult with your trainer or GP about proper breathing techniques during exercise to improve your workout effectiveness;
- **TARGET SMALL MUSCLE GROUPS:** Incorporate exercises that engage small muscle groups, such as hand exercises for handwriting and facial muscle exercises for jaw and voice strength;
- **LISTEN TO YOUR BODY:** Stop immediately if you experience unusual symptoms or pain during exercise. Pay attention to how your body responds to different activities and adjust accordingly.

By following these practical tips, you can embark on a safe and enjoyable journey towards an active lifestyle, improving your health and well-being as an elderly person with disabilities.

Props and aids for training elderly with disabilities

For elderly individuals with disabilities, easily accessible and suitable props and aids can enhance their physical activity and exercise experience. Here are some specific props and aids that can be used:



BALLS

Balls of different sizes, from tennis to volleyball, can be utilized in exercises for elderly individuals with disabilities. For visually impaired individuals, brightly colored balls or those with high-contrast colors should be used. Similarly, when working with older adults with mental disabilities or autism, avoid colors that may trigger strong emotional reactions. Familiarity with the balls or introducing them gradually at home before incorporating them into activities outside can also be beneficial.



MEDICINE BALLS

Medicine balls can be used in later phases of training for individuals who have achieved a certain level of fitness, particularly concerning muscle strength. Smaller and lighter medicine balls (2 to 4 kg) are recommended for older adults with disabilities.

HOOPS AND RINGS

Hoops and rings of various colors, diameters, and thicknesses are versatile tools for elderly individuals with disabilities. They can be used for activities like moving through them, going around them, or wearing them around body parts. Additionally, they can be used as targets for throwing exercises, enhancing precision and coordination.

CONES, CAPS, AND MARKINGS

Placing cones, caps, and markings of different materials on the ground allows for various movements that aid in developing aerobic endurance and other abilities. These props are particularly useful for older adults with hearing problems, those in wheelchairs, and elderly individuals with various types of disabilities.



BARS, RODS, AND OTHER LONG OBJECTS

Bars, rods, or similar solid objects can provide support for elderly individuals with certain physical limitations or those who require assistance during specific exercises. They can also be used as props to practice balance, coordination, and imitation of certain movements.

ELASTIC RESISTANCE BANDS AND RUBBERS

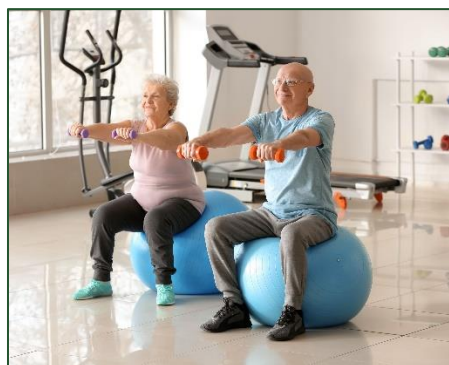
Elastic bands or rubbers can be utilized to increase the difficulty of exercises by adding resistance. They can be held between hands, arms, legs, and feet in different ways. Caution should be taken not to stretch them to the limit to prevent injuries. Working with resistance bands is recommended under the supervision of experts or experienced individuals.

WEIGHTS, DUMBBELLS, HEAVY OBJECTS

Weights, dumbbells, or heavy objects can add intensity to exercises for elderly individuals with disabilities. Everyday objects like water bottles, cans, or bags filled with appropriate weights can be used as improvised weights.

PILATES BALLS

Pilates balls are beneficial for balance exercises and can be utilized for sitting, lying down, or leaning exercises. They provide stability and support during various movements.





MATS AND SOFT PADS

Using soft surfaces like yoga mats when performing exercises on the ground or while barefoot can make the exercise experience more enjoyable and comfortable for elderly individuals with disabilities.

PILLOWS, ROLLERS, TOWELS

Various pillows, rollers, and towels can create comfortable positions for sitting, standing, kneeling, or lying down to ensure comfort and support during exercises. These requisites are particularly helpful for elderly individuals in postoperative recovery or those who have experienced injuries.

By incorporating these props and aids, elderly individuals with disabilities can engage in safe, enjoyable, and adequate physical activity and exercise routines.

The intensity of physical activity for elderly individuals with disabilities

Based on available evidence, engaging in moderate to vigorous-intensity activity will likely yield improved health outcomes for elderly individuals with disabilities. If an elderly person is in the postoperative period, achieving this intensity should be a goal after a 6 to 8-week training program. However, for elderly individuals with disabilities who are not training for elite sports as highly dedicated athletes, focusing solely on intensity may not motivate them to get or stay active. Instead, it is essential to consider their preferences and daily realities when encouraging physical activity.

When working with elderly individuals with disabilities, discussing their comfort level and enjoyment of physical activity is recommended. Some may already engage in moderate-to-vigorous activity, while others prefer less intense activities. Emphasizing gradual progress and finding enjoyable activities can be more encouraging and meaningful for them.

The key messages that trainers should transfer to elderly trainees with disabilities are as follows:

Message 1: 'Build up slowly when starting.'

This practical approach ensures a safe and sensible start to an active lifestyle, particularly for those beginning or dealing with health conditions.



Message 2: 'Ask: Can you do this today?'

This dual message encourages elderly individuals with disabilities to self-assess their physical activity needs as experts in their bodies. It allows for adjustments based on their current condition. At the same time, it reminds professionals to ask and tailor advice to each individual, recognizing that their abilities can vary from day to day.

While these messages are considered helpful and relevant, seeking advice from medical professionals is crucial, especially if there are concerns about potential risks associated with physical activity. This applies to elderly individuals with disabilities, including those with chronic fatigue syndrome, ME, or long COVID. Proper guidance and personalized approaches can ensure a safe and enjoyable physical activity experience for elderly individuals with disabilities.





Training Workshop on Encouraging and Enabling Elderly with disabilities for Sports Activities after Rehabilitation

Throughout this workshop, we will delve into various aspects of supporting and empowering elderly with disabilities to engage in sports activities after rehabilitation. We aim to equip you with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to become effective facilitators in promoting their physical and mental well-being.

Over the next three days, we will explore topics such as the correct implementation of sports exercises, motivation for everyday training, psychological support, injury prevention, and first aid. We will also explore the types of disabilities and diseases commonly found among the elderly, enabling you to adapt sports activities to accommodate their unique needs.

This workshop is not just about gaining theoretical knowledge; it's about developing practical skills that will enable you to make a tangible difference. We will provide learning materials, including presentations, case studies, handouts, and interactive activities to enhance your understanding and engagement.

We encourage you to actively participate, ask questions, and share your experiences throughout the workshop. We believe in the power of collective learning and collaboration, and your insights and perspectives are valuable.

By the end of this training, we hope you will feel confident in your ability to encourage, support, and empower elderly individuals with disabilities to embrace sports activities as part of their rehabilitation journey. Together, we can create inclusive and accessible sports environments that enable them to thrive and lead fulfilling lives.

Thank you for being so committed to this important cause. Let's embark on this transformative journey together and make a lasting impact in the lives of elderly with disabilities.





DAY 1

Session 1: Introduction and Orientation

- Participants introduce themselves and share their motivation for attending the workshop;
- Provide participants with a document outlining the objectives and schedule of the workshop.

Session 2: Understanding Volunteerism and Sports for Elderly with disabilities

- Introduce the concept of volunteerism in sports for elderly with disabilities, highlighting the benefits and importance;
- Share examples of individuals who have benefited from sports activities after rehabilitation.

Volunteerism plays a crucial role in creating inclusive and empowering sports opportunities for elderly individuals with disabilities. This session aims to provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of the intersection between volunteerism, sports, and the specific needs of elderly with disabilities. Volunteers will explore the benefits and importance of sports activities for this population, recognizing how physical exercise and social engagement can contribute to their overall well-being and quality of life. By gaining insights into the unique challenges faced by elderly individuals with disabilities, volunteers will develop a deeper appreciation for the impact they can make through their involvement in promoting sports participation and rehabilitation after injury or illness. Through interactive discussions and real-life examples, participants will be inspired to embrace the power of volunteerism in creating inclusive sports environments that foster empowerment, joy, and improved health outcomes for elderly individuals with disabilities.





DAY 2

Session 3: Types of Disabilities and Diseases of the Elderly

- Create informative handouts that explain different disabilities and diseases commonly found among the elderly;
- Present real-life scenarios and discuss adapting sports activities to accommodate each condition;
- Prepare a list of discussion questions to engage participants in understanding the specific challenges faced by individuals with disabilities.

In this session, participants will gain knowledge about the various types of disabilities and diseases commonly observed among the elderly population. Volunteers will learn about various physical and cognitive disabilities that may affect elderly individuals, such as mobility limitations, visual or hearing impairments, chronic conditions like arthritis or osteoporosis, and cognitive disorders like dementia or Alzheimer's. They will also explore age-related diseases and conditions that may impact the overall health and well-being of the elderly.

By understanding the types of disabilities and diseases prevalent among the elderly, volunteers can better comprehend the specific challenges and needs of individuals in this population. This knowledge will enable them to tailor sports activities and programs to accommodate and support participants with disabilities and health conditions. Additionally, it will promote a greater understanding of the experiences and perspectives of elderly individuals, fostering empathy and enhancing the effectiveness of volunteers in providing appropriate support and encouragement.



Session 4: Implementation of Sports, Exercises and Motivation for Daily Exercise

- Show videos illustrating the correct implementation of sports exercises for elderly with disabilities;
- Provide a handout with guidelines on how to adapt exercises based on different abilities and disabilities;
- Offer practical strategies for motivating and encouraging daily exercise routines.



In this session, participants will delve into the importance of correctly implementing sports exercises and strategies for motivating elderly individuals with disabilities to engage in everyday training. Volunteers will gain a comprehensive understanding of their role in ensuring the safe and effective execution of sports activities tailored to the abilities and disabilities of this specific population. They will learn techniques for adapting exercises to accommodate different levels of mobility, strength, and flexibility, considering the unique needs and limitations of elderly individuals with disabilities. Moreover, participants will explore various motivational strategies and approaches to encourage regular physical activity and overcome potential barriers to exercise adherence. By mastering the art of correct exercise implementation and motivation, volunteers will be equipped to empower elderly individuals with disabilities to pursue improved physical fitness, functional abilities, and overall well-being through sports participation.

A multicomponent physical activity approach for the elderly with disabilities will be included. Based on previous good practice and scientific research, each person with a disability who starts with the exercise program after a long period of inactivity or after surgery and rehabilitation should take care of the following for motor abilities: aerobic endurance, strength, flexibility, and balance. Also, general training organization and periodization rules, tips for trainers and volunteers, and other essential training issues will be presented.

Session 5: Injury Prevention and First Aid

- Explain common injuries in sports for elderly with disabilities and strategies for prevention;
- Provide a booklet or handout covering basic first aid techniques and emergency response procedures;
- Distribute a checklist to ensure the sports environment is safe for participants.

In this session, participants will learn about the importance of injury prevention and first aid in the context of sports activities. Volunteers will be introduced to general principles of injury prevention, including warm-up and cool-down exercises, proper technique and form, and appropriate safety equipment. They will gain an understanding of common injuries that can occur during sports participation and strategies to minimize the risk of such injuries through proper training and precautions.

Additionally, this session will address the specific considerations and challenges related to injury prevention and first aid for individuals with disabilities participating in sports. Volunteers will learn to adapt injury prevention techniques and safety measures to accommodate different disabilities, considering any specific limitations or vulnerabilities.

They will also explore methods to effectively provide first aid to individuals with disabilities, considering their unique needs and ensuring appropriate care in case of injury or medical emergencies. By understanding and implementing appropriate injury prevention strategies and having the necessary first aid skills, volunteers can help create a safe and supportive environment that enables individuals with disabilities to engage in sports confidently and peacefully.

DAY 3

Session 6: Psychological Support and Empowerment of People With Disabilities for Sports

- Discuss the psychological aspects of disability and sports participation, emphasizing the importance of support and empowerment;
- Provide a list of activities and exercises that promote self-confidence and emotional well-being;
- Share a curated list of books, websites, and support organizations for additional psychological support.

This session focuses on the crucial role of psychological support and empowerment in promoting sports engagement among individuals with disabilities. Volunteers will explore the psychological aspects of disability and sports participation, understanding the emotional and mental challenges faced by individuals with disabilities. They will learn strategies to provide adequate emotional support, build self-confidence, and promote a positive mindset to overcome barriers and self-imposed limitations. Participants will gain insights into empowering techniques that foster a sense of control, resilience, and determination, enabling individuals with disabilities to unlock their full potential in sports. By cultivating an environment of inclusivity, understanding, and support, volunteers can become catalysts for transforming the lives of individuals with disabilities, empowering them to overcome challenges, embrace their abilities, and experience the transformative power of sports participation.





Session 7: Reflection and Wrap-up

- Provide participants with a journal or worksheet to reflect on their learning experiences throughout the workshop;
- Prepare discussion prompts to encourage participants to share their thoughts, insights, and future action plans;
- Distribute a feedback form to gather participants' feedback on the workshop content and facilitation.

In this three-day workshop, volunteers will be introduced to a comprehensive curriculum to encourage and enable elderly individuals with disabilities to participate in sports activities after rehabilitation. The workshop covers topics such as the correct implementation of sports exercises, motivation for daily exercise, psychological support, injury prevention and first aid, and understanding the types of disabilities and diseases commonly found among the elderly. Through interactive sessions, participants will gain knowledge, skills, and resources to create inclusive sports environments and empower elderly individuals with disabilities. The workshop concludes with a reflection and wrap-up session, where participants engage in personal reflection, action planning, and evaluation, fostering a sense of empowerment and commitment to making a positive impact in the lives of elderly with disabilities through sports.



Resources

- 1) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2018.
- 2) "Physical Activity and Health Guidelines for Older Adults with Disabilities" - National Center on Health, Physical Activity, and Disability (NCHPAD)
- 3) "Physical Activity Guidelines for Older Adults" - World Health Organization (WHO)
- 4) "Exercise and Physical Activity: Your Everyday Guide from the National Institute on Aging" - National Institute on Aging (NIA)
- 5) "Physical Activity Guidelines for Older Adults" - American Academy of Family Physicians
- 6) Smith, B., & Wightman, L. (2021). Promoting physical activity to disabled people: messengers, messages, guidelines and communication formats. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 43(24), 3427-3431.
- 7) „Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Vocational Training“ - International Labour Office, Geneva
- 8) Sunde, S., Hesseberg, K., Skelton, D. A., Ranhoff, A. H., Pripp, A. H., Aarønæs, M., & Brovold, T. (2020). Effects of a multicomponent high intensity exercise program on physical function and health-related quality of life in older adults with or at risk of mobility disability after discharge from hospital: a randomised controlled trial. *BMC geriatrics*, 20, 1-10.
- 9) Heath, G. W., & Levine, D. (2022). Physical Activity and Public Health among People with Disabilities: Research Gaps and Recommendations. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(16), 10436.

Online resources:

- 10) <https://www.wheelpower.org.uk/>
- 11) <https://ablemagazine.co.uk/>
- 12) <https://www.activityalliance.org.uk/>
- 13) <https://www.physio-pedia.com/>
- 14) <https://cpsport.org/>
- 15) <https://www.activityalliance.org.uk/>
- 16) <https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/>