

Introduction

Later Life Training LLT) were interested in finding out the reach to older adults that qualified Postural Stability Instructors (PSIs) have. PSIs deliver the FaME programme¹ and come from a variety of backgrounds. The survey was sent to all PSIs still on the LLT database and willing to be contacted. It was also shared on Social Media. It was open from May-Sept 2020. We had responses from 656 PSIs. You can download the in depth Survey results [here](#).

Summary of Key Points:

We had responses from 656 PSIs (18% of total qualified PSIs).

53% had qualified in the last 5 years and most work in the UK.

57% are exercise instructors and 41% are allied health professionals (24% physiotherapists).

69% work in community settings, 16% in hospital settings and 7% in care homes.

74% were currently delivering FaME (n=488) but nearly 8% had never delivered FaME since qualification.

488 PSIs reached 10,729 older adults per week and over a year a potential of 557,908 people. 74% of the sample were still delivering FaME. If we extrapolated this to assume that 50% of all qualified PSIs (n=3561) still deliver FaME then potentially PSIs reach over 39,145 older people a week and a potential of over 2 million older people a year.

63% received a referral form from a physiotherapist (falls service/community etc.) as part of an agreed referral pathway and 47% receive referrals from a local GP.

However, 13% of PSIs have people turn up to their sessions without any pre-exercise assessment or referral.

83% demonstrate getting down and off the floor in sessions.

However, only 39.5% introduce backward chaining to most participants.

76% provide resistance bands and home exercise sheets for participants.

57% of PSIs have programmes that are unlimited in duration, participants can attend for as long as they want or need to.

77% of PSIs include FaME elements in other sessions they deliver with older adults.

53% of PSIs said their programmes included evaluation of some outcome measures.

More than half of all PSIs felt that at least 60% of their FaME participants had shown improvements in confidence in balance, lower limb strength, trunk stability and posture, physical activity over and above attending the sessions, reduced fear of falling and increased social interactions outside of the sessions. But only 25% of PSIs felt that over 60% of participants had regained the skill of getting up off the floor ☹ and this is probably as a result of only 39% of PSIs adding this key element of FaME to their sessions.

Demographics of those who responded

48% qualified over 5 years ago and 52% had qualified within the last 5 years. 41% are Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) and 59% are Exercise Professionals.

¹ Iliffe S, Kendrick D, Morris R, Masud T, Gage H, Skelton DA, Dinan S, Bowling A, Griffin M, Haworth D, Swanwick G, Carpenter H, Kumar A, Stevens Z, Gawler S, Barlow C, Cook J, Belcher C. Multi-centre cluster randomised trial comparing a community group exercise programme with home based exercise with usual care for people aged 65 and over in primary care. Health Technol Assess. 2014 Aug;18(49):vii-xxvii, 1-105.

| Role ² | % | Combined % | Number |
|------------------------------------|-------|------------|--------|
| Physiotherapist | 24.4% | 40.9% | 160 |
| Other AHP (OT, Rehab. Asst, Nurse) | 16.5% | | 108 |
| Exercise Instructor | 57.3% | 57.3% | 376 |
| Exercise Physiologist | 1.8% | 1.8% | 12 |

Current PSI work Setting

69% work in community settings, 16% in hospitals, 7% in care homes and 8 one to one.

| Work Setting ³ | % | Combined % | Number |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-----------------|--------|
| NHS Inpatients | 6.1% | 15.9% | 40 |
| NHS Outpatients | 9.8% | | 64 |
| NHS Community Settings | 23.0% | 69.2% | 151 |
| Community Leisure/Fitness Settings | 34.6% | | 227 |
| Charity/NGO Community Settings | 11.6% | | 76 |
| Self-employed (classes or one to one) | 35.4% | 7.6% one to one | 232 |
| Care/Nursing Homes | 7.3% | 7.3% | 48 |

What part of the UK or Abroad?

Nearly 98% work in the UK.

| Country ⁴ | % | Combined % | Number |
|--|-------|------------|--------|
| England | 73.9% | 97.7% | 485 |
| Scotland | 13.4% | | 88 |
| Wales | 9.9% | | 65 |
| Northern Ireland | 0.5% | | 3 |
| Europe (Ireland, Germany, Malta) | 1.7% | 1.7% | 13 |
| Outside of Europe (Australia, New Zealand) | 0.6% | 0.6% | 4 |

Have they delivered FaME since qualified?

74.4% (n=488) were delivering FaME (prior to Covid-19), 18% (n=118) had in the past but not for some time and 7.6% (n=50) had never delivered FaME.

Reach – how many people are receiving FaME?

How many people in an average week were they working with?

We had 445 responses to this question from people currently working with FaME programmes. They could choose from the following responses – 1 to 4; 5 to 9; 10 to 14; 15 to 19; 20 to 24; 25 to 29; 30 to 39; 40 to 49 and over 50. 42.7% worked with 14 or less people each week and 20.5% worked with over 50 people per week.

We took the mid-point of each answer choice and multiplied by the number of responses to extrapolate that the 488 PSIs reached 10,729 older adults per week and over a year a potential of 557,908 people⁵ if they worked 52 weeks a year.

² We had a total of 785 responses to Role as people could tick more than one. However, only one person ticked 'Other' only so the combination of the AHP and Exercise Instructor/Physiologist Roles (as main Role) = 655 responses.

³ We had a total of 916 responses as some PSIs work in multiple settings.

⁴ We had 658 responses to this, 2 people work in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

⁵ See Excel spreadsheet PSI Survey Reach_2020 for calculations.

97 PSIs who have in the past delivered FaME (but not now) responded to this question. They reached 1104 people a week with a potential 57,434 a year⁵.

If we extrapolated this to the 3561 PSIs qualified since 2003 and 50% were still delivering FaME sessions, the potential reach to older people every year would be over 2million⁵. For those who qualified since 2014 the potential reach is over 686,000⁵.

How many people (rough estimate) received FaME in one year (Jan 2019-Jan 2020)?

445 PSIs currently working in FaME programmes estimated how many people they worked with in this period and the total was 68,796 people. This shows that FaME programmes and PSIs are not working (delivering FaME) all year. The average number of participants annually was 155 (SD 340) and the Median was 60 (with a range of 0 to 3000 participants)⁵.

We have extrapolated how many people a year might be reached by our qualified PSIs. If we assume 50% are still delivering, then the potential reach is 251,000.

How many people have these PSIs worked with since qualification?

445 PSIs currently working in FaME programmes answered this and the average was 719 people so the total these 445 PSIs had worked with was 319,955 people⁵.

97 PSIs who have in the past delivered FaME (but not now) responded to this question and the average was 192 people so the total these 97 PSIs had worked with was 18,624 people.

What proportion were men, over 80 years old or from BaME?

63% said less than a third of participants were men and only 2.5% said more than half of their participants were men.

31% said more than a half of participants were over the age of 80 and 19% said less than a third were over 80.

95% said less than a third of their participants were from black and ethnic minorities.

In depth FaME delivery – who assesses, refers, helps with sessions and key content

Referral options

63% received a referral form from a physiotherapist (falls service/community etc.) as part of an agreed referral pathway and a further 24.5% received assessment information on participants from a physiotherapist (informally/not formally agreed and recognised pathway).

47% receive referrals from a local GP and a further 31% receive recommendations from the GP.

However, 13% of PSIs have people turn up to their sessions without any pre-exercise assessment or referral.

Assessments

65% do their own pre-exercise assessments but only 8.5% send these on to the referrer.

52% do follow up functional assessments and 14% send these on to the referrer.

Class size and help

26.5% commonly have more than 15 people in their groups but only 18% have help from another PSI in large classes, 25% are helped by unqualified volunteers and 14% from a L2/3 Instructor.

Backward chaining and home exercise

39.5% introduce backward chaining to most participants and 83% demonstrate getting down and off the floor in sessions. 76% provide resistance bands and home exercise sheets for participants but 86% encourage top up home exercise.

Duration of FaME programme

57% of PSIs have programmes that are unlimited in duration, participants can attend for as long as they want or need to. 25% deliver FaME for between 13-24 weeks. Sadly 18% offer programmes that are 12 weeks or less (not meeting the evidence base).

Do you use FaME elements in other sessions you deliver to older people?

77% of PSIs responded they did include FaME elements in other sessions they deliver with older adults.

Evaluation of FaME programmes

53% of PSIs said their programmes included evaluation of some outcome measures but 27% did not know if the programmes they were employed on had any evaluation.

Effect of leading FaME on PSIs

507 PSIs answered this and 5% agreed they had the ability to individualise the exercises to the needs of the participants, 84% felt FaME improved their teaching skills, 82% felt confident to progress strength and balance with participants and 77% felt the FaME exercises improved outcomes better than other older adult sessions they ran. 85% felt a sense of pride in seeing the changes in people in the FaME programme and 70% felt that the PSI training had helped them to understand the importance of dose and regularity of exercise for training gains. 45% said they had a solid collaboration with health professionals and falls services.

Perceptions of impact of FaME on participants

In retrospect we should have worded this question differently! Hard to interpret! The table below explains key results. 507 PSIs answered this question. More than half of all PSIs felt that at least 60% of their FaME participants had shown improvements in confidence in balance, lower limb strength, trunk stability and posture, physical activity over and above attending the sessions, reduced fear of falling and increased social interactions outside of the sessions. But only 25% of PSIs felt that over 60% of participants had regained the skill of getting up off the floor 😊 and this is probably as a result of only 39% of PSIs adding this key element of FaME to their sessions.

| Impact | Percentage who thought 61-80% of participants benefitted | Percentage who thought 81-100% of participants benefitted | Percentage who thought that more than 60% of participants benefitted |
|---|--|---|--|
| Had less falls or less injurious falls | 33.3% | 13.8% | 47.1% |
| Regained skill of getting up off the floor unaided | 17.5% | 7.7% | 25.2% |
| Improved confidence in balance | 40.8% | 36.7% | 77.5% |
| Increased physical activity over and above attending the sessions | 36.1% | 23.1% | 59.2% |
| Returned to other forms of physical activity they had stopped previously | 18.3% | 4.7% | 23.0% |
| Reduced fear of falling or avoidance of activity | 36.5% | 17.0% | 53.5% |
| Improved lower limb strength | 43.2% | 29.8% | 73.0% |
| Improved trunk stability and posture | 37.9% | 20.7% | 58.6% |
| Increased social interactions with others of same age outside of the programme sessions | 27.4% | 31.6% | 59.0% |

- END OF REPORT -