

Link 4 Life - Rochdale and the Functional Fitness MOT

Link for Life Life Phase 1.

At Link4Life the Functional fitness MOT is used as a guideline and starting point for participants attending a 10 week exercise course. We gained funding to run 3 of these course across the borough by applying for a grant from the Clinical Commissioning Group. The courses target those 60+ and anyone with mobility problems, or who needed to strengthen joints and become more functional in daily activities.

The course is planned as follows:

Week 1 we went through the Functional Fitness MOT tests with participants and recorded their scores on the Functional Fitness sheets.

Weeks 2-9 then consisted of exercise circuit class working with exercise that would help the MOT results improve such as sit to stand, marching on the spot, lateral and frontal arm raises, step ups, side stepping etc.

Week 10 then repeated week one with the tests again being carried out and the results being recorded again, and checked against the week 1 results to see the progression.

The results were amazing here are just a few which are the best from the group:

Week 1 – Linda walked 195m on 6 Min Walk Test using her walking stick, on week 10 she walked 226m without using her stick at all!!!

Week 1 – Veronica walked 105m on 6 Min Walk test with 2 rest stops, week 10 she walked 225m without stopping at all!!

Week 1 – Neil managed 3 Sit to Stands and needed the help of a member of staff to help him up on 30 second Sit to Stand, on week 10 he managed 10 without any support!!!

Week 1 – Linda stood on her left leg for only 1 second and said she could not even do that as it was too painful, on week 8 she managed 42 seconds on that same leg!

Linda said on her feedback form:

“ I really enjoyed the course and knowing I was getting better at the exercises, it has really helped me, I now do more walking and I don’t feel that I need my stick as much. I think I had got too comfortable always using my stick and I now know I don’t always need it, I even walk on poolside now where it’s slippery but I feel ok and more confident. I also have found that it has improved the movement in my left knee which doesn’t bend properly, when I am swimming now I feel like it is working better and I can bend it and get more power, I did 8 lengths the other day! I would recommend this course to anyone!”

Evelyn said on her feedback form:

“ I enjoyed the course it was better than I thought it would be. I liked that you could see an improvement at the end. I enjoyed the fact it was aimed at my age group, you could go at your own pace and it was like minded people who were there. I feel the course has made me feel more confident with my mobility and ability and that I am healthier and have stronger joints. I have now joined the gym and attend the yoga and aqua aerobics sessions which I would not have done before going on this course”

Other feedback received indicates that it’s helped one lady change her duvet cover herself something she hadn’t done for 10 years without her son’s help, another lady has returned to a dance class she liked after suffering illness which led to her being housebound. Everyone who attended says they feel they are stronger in their joints, more confident with their ability and mobility when walking etc.

We have found that using the Funtional Fitness MOT as a guideline and giving them results really brings home to them how they have improved and how much more they can do, and it encourages them to keep trying and working harder to get better. Participants from this course now attend, aqua aerobics, yoga and Zumba Gold sessions on a regular basis. Several of them are coming back on our next course as they want to further improve their results!

[Link for Life Rochdale – phase 2](#)

Link4Life has maintained its' programme, with 3 years funding from the CCG to enable us to continue running our programme and for the past 3 years run 8 courses per year, 2 in each of the townships of the Rochdale Borough. So 24 courses in total over 3 years, averaging between 20-30 participants per course.

On the back of these courses, we have set up weekly continuation sessions for the participants so they can keep up the good work. We currently have 22 weekly sessions running which have now been handed over to the leisure centres under their management as they are all completely sustainable in terms of cost. We charge £3.00 per year for a Link4Life card and that entitles the holder to attend the sessions for £2.50 per session, we average approx. 20-30 participants per class, enabling us to pass the sessions on.

The established weekly classes also mean we have somewhere to forward people from our more specific courses, for example a Stroke course, Falls Prevention, Weight management, Cancer rehabilitation and COPD specific. The weekly classes and our 10 week courses are used as follow on for participants into a more mainstream sessions and means there is very little drop off in numbers as a course finishes.