

CASE STUDY

Kent & Medway NHS | Hannah Shepherd, Occupational Therapist Clinical Lead



Regular exercise sessions across six older adult wards and rehab unit



Kent and Medway

NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust

How did you find the training?

The quality of training that our staff received was excellent. All the staff who were trained in chair based exercise feel confident to use it and that the exercises are going to be beneficial to patients.

Implementation of chair-based exercise classes

We used to employ what we called 'wake and shake' prior to staff being trained, which consisted of simple, gentle movement. Now that the wards are using chair based exercise, these exercises are more targeted so that our patients are using more of their muscles to help with maintaining global strength and reduce swelling, both of which are problems we often come across when patients are in our care due to their conditions. The chair based exercise session is done first thing in the morning before the morning activity and serves to wake up the mind and body through effective movement.

Have you experienced any problems with implementation?

The main challenge we have is sessions being interrupted due to the set up of some of our wards. We have used signs to say to not interrupt and that a session is going ahead but this remains an ongoing battle.

Feedback from Patients

On many of our wards patients are now aware of the routine and will be in the lounge ready for the sessions. In the past we would have to go find them in their rooms, so this speaks volumes as to the value it brings to their day and recovery.

Patients tell us that they like to keep moving but the environment and restrictions can make this difficult so having a daily session which we call 'music and movement' has helped to provide time for exercise to take place as part of the routine on the ward so it is accessible to all.

Benefits and positive outcomes

The main benefit is that all our patients are provided with an opportunity to exercise as it is so inclusive. This includes patients who are restricted by physical and mental limitations as they can still do something within the session to exercise.

I believe that there is not one particular success story, the enthusiasm of our patients, being ready and waiting in the lounges on each ward for the session to start is the biggest success story. The seated exercise session kicks off the morning with a bang so our patients are ready to engage in whatever the ward has to offer.

Future plans

We believe that the sessions are now fully embedded in the ward routine, they are part of the activity timetable and daily board which help to inform our patients regarding what the daily therapy plan is. Having the chair based exercise as part of the structure of the ward was our goal and I believe we have achieved this. We will continue to ensure the sessions are meeting our patients needs by keeping the delivery lively and engaging.

March 2024