

CASE STUDY

Kent & Medway NHS | Tatjana Krizanovska, Interim Occupational Therapist Clinical Lead



Occupational therapists insights into the implementation and impact of chair-based exercise instructor training


Kent and Medway
NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust

Tatjana Krizanovska, Interim Occupational Therapy Clinical Lead, recognised the value of the seated exercise training her East Kent colleagues had received. She subsequently organised similar training for OT staff in West Kent. The team members, located at various sites, participated in the Chair-based Exercise Instructor training via Zoom. The training aimed to enable them to conduct daily seated exercise groups on the wards.

The case studies of Emma Beckham, James Hamisi, and Chloe Staff, all occupational therapists working with older adults in different settings, provide rich insights into the implementation and impact of chair-based exercise instructor training. Several key themes emerge from their responses.

Role of the occupational therapist

All three practitioners underscore the importance of their roles in facilitating physical activity among older adults, often within mental health or inpatient settings. Emma Beckham's role involves "running groups for older people" in an acute setting. Similarly, James Hamisi works with older adults who "normally remain seated for long in one place," emphasising the necessity of exercises to maintain activity levels. Chloe Staff, an Occupational Therapy Degree Apprentice, supports OTs and OTAs in a male inpatient mental health ward, running various activities including exercise and ball game groups.

Addressing specific needs of patients

The training provided by AllActive has been pivotal in addressing the specific needs of patients, particularly through structured, personalised exercise routines. Emma appreciates the "structure" it provides for her groups, a sentiment echoed by Chloe, who notes the importance of tailoring exercises to individual physical abilities and mental health conditions. James highlights that the training covered essential movements vital for the physical needs of his patients.

Overall training experience

The training experience has been positively received across the board. Emma describes it as "very informative" and well-demonstrated. James mentions that it provided him with valuable ideas for exercises, preventing monotony. Chloe found the training "detailed, motivating and informal," which reassured her about her approach to running exercise groups.

Positive influence on service delivery

Practical outcomes and improvements in service delivery are notable. Emma observed that using the exercise sheet made her class "so much more structured." James reported that his service users now enjoy light exercises tailored to their age and capacity. Chloe felt reassured by the training and confident in continuing to engage patients in exercise groups using her therapeutic sense of self.



Benefits and positive outcomes for patients

All three practitioners have identified significant benefits for their patients. Emma notes that her patients enjoyed the structured classes and the inclusion of marching to break up exercises. James observed that patients enjoyed light exercises and the relaxation sessions at the end. Chloe emphasised the adaptability of exercises to individual needs, which allows for person-centred care and positively impacts both physical and mental health.

Success stories

Chloe mentions that patients who were previously isolative and anxious have begun engaging more in meaningful occupations through the exercise groups. This highlights the potential of these exercises to facilitate broader therapeutic outcomes beyond physical health.

Broader implications for patient well-being

Chloe also discusses the broader implications for patient well-being, noting that chair-based exercises help break down barriers between staff and patients by making physical activity "fun, light-hearted, and adaptable." This, in turn, supports well-being for both patients and staff, fostering a supportive and engaging group environment.

The chair-based exercise instructor training has provided these occupational therapists with the tools and confidence to effectively address the specific needs of older adults, enhancing service delivery, and promoting positive patient outcomes. The themes of structured and personalised care, the value of detailed and motivating training, and the broader impacts on mental and physical well-being are consistently highlighted across their experiences.