STROLLS WITH POLES CIC

**NORDIC WALKING FOR FUN AND FITNESS**

# Report following Nordic Walking Taster sessions held for people with Parkinson Disease

During July and August we held two taster sessions for people with Parkinson's Disease. There were 22 attendees across both sessions. These sessions were arranged in discussion with Parkinsons UK, North East and North Cumbria.

We had received a small amount of Funding from the Barbour Foundation and we used this to keep the cost down for the attendees.

The July session was held in North Tyneside and the August in Hexham. In discussions with the groups they were arranged at an area easily accessible for those attending.

Before the session we asked attendees to complete a Physical Activity Questionnaire. These give us any information required if an accident/illness occurs.

**Feedback**
After the session we collected feedback from attendees using a questionnaire. The feedback has been collated below.

**Note:** Participants were given the opportunity to check more than one response.

**Q1: Before attending the session had you heard of Nordic Walking and its benefits?**
Prior to booking and attending the session 16 people had heard of Nordic Walking and one person hadn't heard of Nordic Walking.

Most people had heard about Nordic Walking and the benefits by word of mouth. The sources were friends at work, physiotherapists at North Tyneside Hospital, where they had moved from, TV, social media, Strolls with Poles, personal experience (tried it before), general knowledge, from a friend with Parkinson's and through Parkinson's UK.

**Q2: How did you feel before attending the session?**
Before attending the session there were various feelings felt from the group. In our experience these are the feelings most people feel before a session.

The results were:

| | |
|---|---|
| Excited | 6 |
| Curious | 1 |
| Open | 1 |
| Glad to have an opportunity locally | 1 |
| Looking forward to try something new | 1 |
| Looking forward to it | 1 |
| Interested | 2 |
| Nervous | 5 |
| Scared/worried/anxious * | 2 |

* The members of the group who marked that they felt anxious said they are always anxious in new situations. One of them also marked excited.

**Q3: How did you feel during the session?**
We asked how people felt during the session as this helps us in identifying if we need to alter the way we run a session.

The results were:

| | |
|---|---|
| Excited | 7 |
| Calm | 9 |
| Confident | 6 |
| Happy – enjoyed it | 1 |
| Attentive and not worried about getting it wrong | 1 |
| Nervous/Worried/Anxious | 1 |

**Q4: At the end of the session, did you feel?**
The feedback from the end of the session was extremely positive as the results are as below:

| | |
|---|---|
| More confident | 15 |
| Refreshed | 5 |
| Happy | 6 |
| Relieved | 1 |
| Tired from walking on soft sand | 1 |

**Q5: Would you be interested in regular sessions?**
Following the session there was lots of chatting and people saying they wanted to do it again and wondering when the next sessions could be. The quantity of people wanting to do regular sessions is shown below:

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 14 |
| No | 4 |

Those that identified no said they would be interested in being able to attend irregularly.

**Q5: Would you recommend the session to others?**
The results of attendees that would recommend the sessions to others are shown below:

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 20 |
| No | 0 |

**Q6: Any other comments**
After asking attendees for additional comments, the following comments were given:

- Feel I need to keep practising
- Thank you for your infectious attitude and endorsement of benefits
- Good pace of instruction
- I really enjoyed the session
- Keen to try more Nordic walking
- A friendly group of people
- Useful but maybe more useful earlier in diagnosis.

**Verbal Feedback**
After both sessions I had an opportunity to sit and chat and people felt that their balance felt better, they were standing up straight and they had all managed to walk further than they had previously without support.

We have had the following feedback via email – "*We had a meeting at Hexham today and I've been asked to pass on that we'd all like more sessions like the taster if possible. One person, Peter, said it pushed him to his limits but he'd like to do it again. They loved the venue!"*.

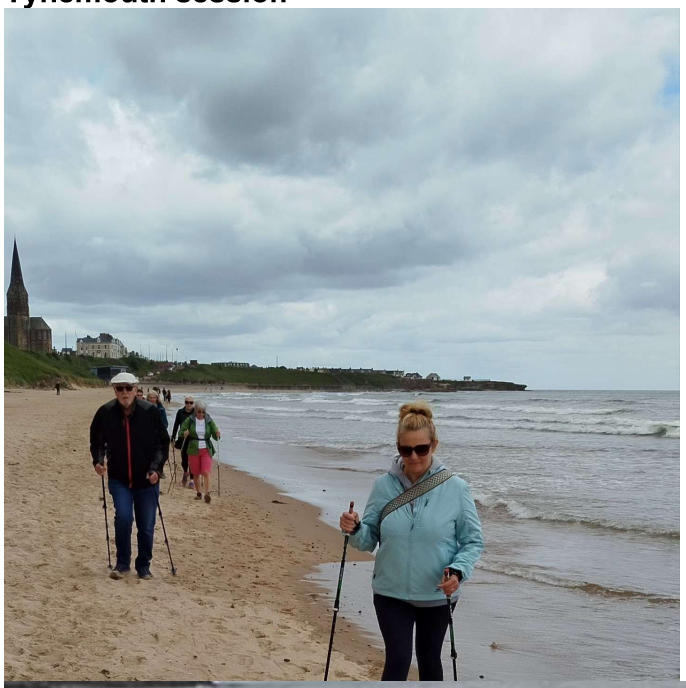
A group of my walkers attended the Parkinson's UK Baltic Walk, with our poles. I had a lot of opportunity to speak to other walkers with Parkinson's and they expressed an interest. I also bumped into some of the group who had attended the Tynemouth session and they said "*When are you coming to do it again, we really enjoyed it. Please come soon!"*

The results above have identified there is a need and an interest for Nordic Walking sessions for people with Parkinsons.

Our aim is to hold regular sessions with both groups individually with a hope to getting them together. We would offer a session for those at the beginning of their Parkinson's diagnosis and those who are only able to walk for a short time giving them the benefit and enjoyment of Nordic Walking.

We have had requests for the sessions to continue and we are looking at dates for this.
We have added photographs from the sessions.

**Tynemouth session**

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## Hexham session