

Dance to Health: The Effective Falls Prevention Programme







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Overview

Overview of Aesop Arts and Society

Aesop is a charity with a vision of a future when arts solutions for society's problems are valued and available for all that need them. Our current focus is on major health challenges.

Aesop's Chair is Professor Kevin Fenton CBE, Regional Director, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (London) in the Department for Health and Social Care, Regional Director of Public Health, NHS London and Statutory Health Advisor to the Mayor of London, GLA and London Assembly.

Aesop created and operates Dance to Health, our exemplar Arts and Health Falls Prevention solution.

Overview of Dance to Health

Dance to Health is a well-evidenced pioneering falls prevention programme. The programme uses PSI (Postural Stability Instructor), as recommended in the NICE guidelines and used by NHS physiotherapists. The PSI is embedded into creative dance co-designed with participants.

The programme, which is usually commissioned by the health and social care system, currently runs in multiple locations across England and Wales. It has many positive impacts which can be felt by both the participants and the system itself.



Dance to Health “At a glance”

Through a dance lens:

- ✓ Every session is different
- ✓ Culturally tailored and co-created with participants
- ✓ Not standard routines e.g. ballroom and folk
- ✓ Scope for a wide choice of movements, music, storytelling

Through a health lens:

- ✓ Every session is the same
- ✓ Delivered by a PSI qualified dance artist
- ✓ Faithful to evidence-based falls prevention exercise programmes (FaME and Otago)
- ✓ Health promotion in social time

Executive Summary

Dance to Health is a cost-effective programme to deliver, offering massive savings to the NHS, Public Health and Adult Social Services. The cost of fragility fractures alone is estimated to be £4.4bn in the UK, which includes £1.1bn for social care. Hip fractures account for around £2bn of this sum. Return on investment from the Dance to Health programme is calculated to be £2.89 per £1 spent, with many commissioners seeing savings of over £500K.

Dance to Health provides a valuable solution to the problem of falls in Care Homes and in the Community. It enables a significant decrease in falls and reduces the number of falls patients who become inpatients at hospital.

Including the Maintenance Programme ensures that the benefits of the training do not wane or disappear after a year, ensuring that participants can continue to lead a safe and happy life for longer.

The programme has the added value that it not only reduces falls, but also helps to improve both physical and mental wellbeing for participants, helping to create long-term friendships.



"At one time I couldn't even lift a cup of tea with my right arm. Now I can lift the teapot to pour the tea out... it's all due to the exercise I do now." **Participant**

"I have never enjoyed exercise, but the focus on dance takes the 'work' element away and distracts you. I feel 'lighter' after I have been to a class; coming gave me the opportunity and permission to relax for a couple of hours a week, and helped me cope with worries during the rest of the week."

Dance to Health is an important part of the week... to see friends, have some fun, and to maintain balance and fitness." **Participant**

Falls:

- Falls are a major cause of pain and injury, and are traumatic for older people – destroying confidence, increasing isolation and reducing independence.
- After a fall, an older person has a 50% probability of having their mobility seriously impaired. 10% die within a year.
- Falls are a major challenge for the health system, costing the NHS and social care £3.3 billion per year.
- Falls represent the most frequent and serious type of accident in people aged 65 and over.
- Falls in hospitals are the most commonly reported patient safety incident, with more than 240,000 reported in acute hospitals and mental health trusts in England and Wales.
- It is forecast that within two years nearly 1,000 older people every day will be taken into hospital after suffering a fall.
- Every day there are 147 ambulance callouts for falls.
- Care Home residents are 3x more likely to fall than their community dwelling counterparts, and 10x more likely to sustain a significant injury as a result.
- 40% of Care Home hospital admissions are falls-related.

"I can feel my legs are stronger. I went to a family christening at the weekend and my relatives couldn't believe the difference in me. My entire posture has changed." **Participant**



Evidence Base

Dance to Health- positive impacts on the System:

- The 58% reduction in falls leads to a reduction in fall-related A&E and inpatient admissions
- The 22% reduction in falls which require inpatient admissions equates to a significant cost saving not only in terms of front-line costs for the NHS but also in terms of reduced social care costs.
- This alleviates pressure on the NHS by reducing the number of inpatient admissions due to falls.
- The reduction in inpatient admissions also relieves the pressure on the surgical timetable.
- There is no workforce crisis in the dance sector as there is in health and care professions meaning that adoption and spread of the innovation is not limited by competing NHS workforce demands.
- The programme was designed with the intention of addressing older people's falls but the associated outcomes around lack of attendance at A&E offer support to current Urgent and Emergency Care challenges.
- Used as a pre-hab system, Dance to Health means that surgical results are more successful, and participants are released from hospital earlier.



- Research has found that standard PSI exercises are often considered 'dull' for patients, and 81% do not complete the programme meaning that the intervention is not effective.
- Dance to Health brings in creativity and fun and is enjoyed by participants; it has a high rate of participant retention.

Dance to Health- positive impacts on participants:

- Dance to Health reduces falls in over 65s by 58%.
- Dance to Health reduces the risk of an A&E falls patient becoming an in-patient from 35% to 13%.
- Dance to Health participants are more physically active (96%).
- Dance to Health participants make friends (87%) so are less isolated.
- Dance to Health participants improve their mental wellbeing (96%).
- Dance to Health receives a 98% score in the NHS Friends and Family Test.
- Participants overcome lost confidence, become more independent and less isolated, and are less afraid of falling.

"Now I walk more upright than I used to; I don't walk looking at the ground anymore. I've got more confidence to walk on the road."

Participant

Testimonials



"We all admitted (those of us that had been involved with physiotherapy) that it does wear off in the end; it is the sense of isolation and repetitive boredom... whereas this [Dance to Health], because it moves forward and is a social thing, is much easier to keep on doing. Quite a few of us have been surprised at what we can do now that we couldn't do when we started." **Participant**

"I have more balance. I am no longer scared to cross the road, my joints are less painful and I'm more mobile." **Participant**

"When I leave here I feel elated - it sort of uplifts you. Gives you a lovely feeling. I can come in depressed and go out feeling on top of the world." **Participant**

"Dance to Health makes me feel alive- I feel I have always got a smile on my face! I look forward to it enormously. I feel my self-confidence has improved." **Participant**

"I hated the impersonal nature of the medical gym or gyms in general. People like me who have never been an exercise type of person - I need the incentive to go to dance; because I enjoy it I go, for the music and dance rather than the exercises." **Participant**

"Participants have flourished as they have progressed and their enthusiasm in taking part was palpable. Dance to Health has not only provided an opportunity for older adults to reduce their risk of falls but it has improved confidence, self-efficacy and mental wellbeing. The lasting memory from the observations was the sheer joy of participants and their connection to the dance and music which in some cases was extremely moving." **Sheffield Hallam University**





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