

Introducing the Water Wellbeing Programme

Create an inclusive, attractive and supportive pool environment to help people with health conditions to become active.



Water Wellbeing

Background

In 2017 Swim England published the Health and Wellbeing Benefits of Swimming report.

This evidence based report suggests that the unique properties of water, combined with the popularity and accessibility of swimming, provides enormous potential to help improve people's activity levels, health and social wellbeing.

A new approach to health

Building on the experience and understanding gained through our Dementia Friendly Swimming project, we have seen an opportunity to extend the benefits of swimming to a wider audience. We are now working with operators and partners to create pools that are attractive and supportive to people with health conditions.

Emerging findings

While it is early days in the delivery of the programme, we have already seen users benefit in a number of ways:

- reductions in pain
- improvements in performing everyday tasks
- improvements in mental health
- cancellation of operations – one individual reported such an improvement in function that they no longer required surgery on their knee.

Participants

"Since starting, I've managed to reduce the drugs I'm taking. With a back condition, it's very difficult to get to sleep. By doing these exercises I can get a good night's sleep and at the same time reduce my drugs, so it's a winner all round. The staff are great and informed and the exercises build up too, so you are gradually growing your confidence."

Pool sites

"The environmental audit has been a great tool to help us identify areas of improvement. We now have a plan for continuous improvement, which includes investment in our facilities to improve accessibility and provide a better customer experience."

Regular swimming can help to reduce long-term health conditions



of the NHS budget goes on chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease



Swimming is good for health and wellbeing, at any age



It helps children develop more quickly

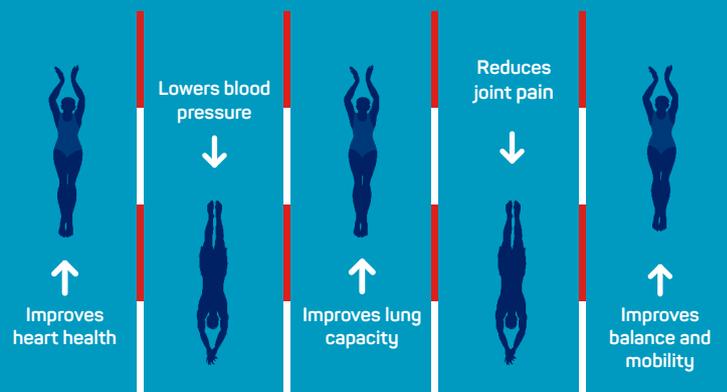


It helps adults reduce stress and improve overall health



It helps older people stay mentally and physically agile

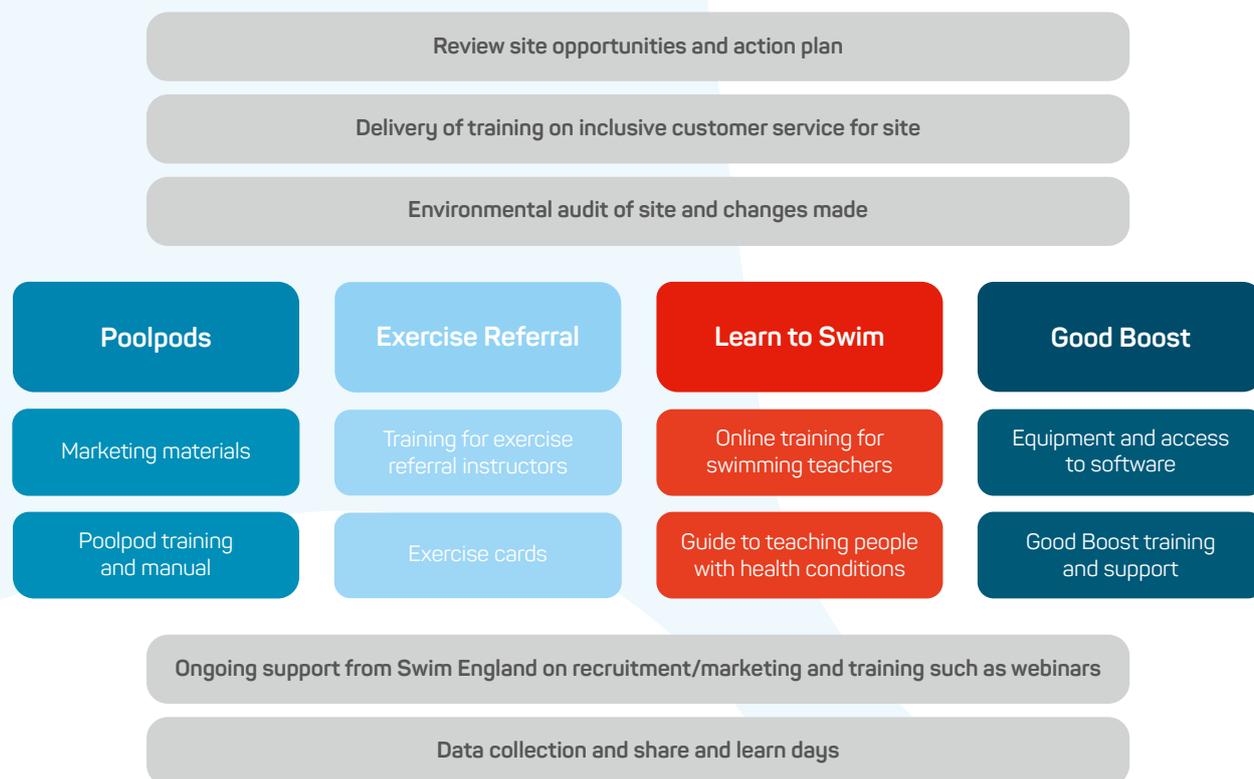
Swimming is low impact, but high reward



About the Water Wellbeing Programme

The Water Wellbeing Programme encompasses the entire customer journey – facility, staffing and programming – to create the right environment to support people with health conditions and encourage people to become active.

Programme overview



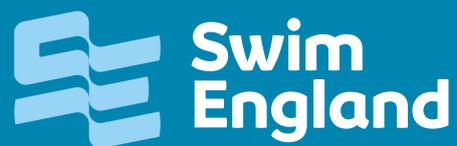
Key programme elements

| Pool audit | Training for all staff | Training for exercise referral instructors | Online training for swimming teachers | Marketing support | Ongoing support |
|---|--|--|--|---|--|
| An analysis of the pool environment with recommendations on any changes needed to make the facilities more inclusive. | To help them deliver an inclusive customer service, better supporting people with health conditions and impairments. | Aquatic Activity for Health course to help instructors to deliver an aquatic exercise programme. | Access to training and resources to provide more targeted adult learn to swim experiences, plus webinars on health conditions. | Advice on marketing of programmes and recruiting participants; including links with key national charities and local volunteering groups. | Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help with data collection and sharing of best practice. • Fact sheets on health conditions for swimmers, coaches and health practitioners. |

Delivery Partners

Swim England is working with a number of expert partners to support effective delivery, including:

- **Richmond Group of Charities** [richmondgroupofcharities.org.uk] and **Sport England** [sportengland.org] to encourage the least active to get into aquatic activity and identify local leads to support recruitment.
- **Versus Arthritis** [versusarthritis.org] training volunteers to act as peer mentors to support the recruitment of people with arthritis into the programme.
- **Good Boost** [goodboost.org] piloting the use of artificial intelligence to develop individualised exercise programmes for people with health conditions.
- **Poolpod** [poolpodproducts.com] with funding from the London Marathon Charitable Trust we are supporting the installation of innovative pool entry systems for people with impairments.
- **Activity Alliance** [activityalliance.org.uk] to create online inclusive customer service training.



Contact us today for more details

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