

FITNESS NORTHERN IRELAND

Health and Safety Policy

General Statement

The Directors of the company regard the promotion of Health and safety measures as a mutual objective for all teachers, instructors and participating personnel at all levels of activity.

It is therefore the Association's policy to do all that is reasonably practical to prevent personal injury and damage to property and to protect everyone in contact from foreseeable exercise and environmental hazard.

In particular the Association teachers and instructors have a responsibility to provide a safe working environment, taking into account statutory requirements.

- Plan and deliver a safe exercise session suitable for the participants.
- Ensure that correct clothing is worn by teacher and participants.
- Keep up to date with current research and exercise knowledge base.
- Update training in CPR annually
- By observation prevent any potential incident
- Report any incident or accident during or after the session which may cause injury to any participant.
- Store all records in a secure place and treat confidentially

The association as employers have a duty to:-

- Provide a safe working environment for the employees and ensure training courses and workshops take place in a safe and suitable venue.
- To ensure training in Health and Safety procedures, relevant to exercise activities is provided for potential and qualified teacher/instructors.
- To ensure that any equipment for use by employees and training staff is kept in good order and checked for faults before use. This will require a designated electrician to undertake **portable appliances testing** annually. Appliances include sound systems, computers, etc.
- Check that all electrical equipment being used by trainers at course venues have been tested as above and a copy of the certificate issued.
- To ensure that any exercise equipment held by the Association is issued to teachers/ instructors qualified in the relevant discipline.

Instructors qualified in teaching participants in **phase IV of Cardiac Rehabilitation** are to implement the following emergency procedures:-

- Display and draw participants' attention to a written emergency protocol and plan
- The emergency number is displayed (999)
- 1 designated person to contact the emergency number
- 1 person, qualified and training updated annually, to administer CPR
- 1 designated person to contact relatives of 'patient'
- 1 designated person who is qualified to use a defibrillator.
- The defibrillator is to be available on the premises and maintained in accordance with local protocol.

- Through vigilant observation, instructors should recognise signs and symptoms of stress and by intervention, prevent problems developing and limit the repercussions.
- The instructor should employ a method of monitoring within the class. Participants should know the appropriate intensity for them to work within.
- e.g. Borg scale.
- Instructors should keep all records of participants' details in a secure place and have contact numbers available in case of an emergency. Details of medical problems other than that of the cardiac history should be recorded on a physical activity readiness questionnaire (PARQ). Information relevant to the participants history while receiving cardiac rehabilitation in hospital is important to ensure appropriate exercise prescription.
- The participant has a responsibility to let the instructor know if any problem has been found while having a health update by the cardiac team. Letter giving permission to exercise may be required.
- Instructors who require substitute instructors should ensure that they are qualified, insured and have updated training in CPR.

Safety Regulations and Risk Assessment

The attention of all teachers/instructors is directed to the following areas which constitute risks to Health and Safety.

The Environment

- At each session the floor surface on which the activity takes place should be checked for uneven or slippery surface, litter, cleanliness, wetness, and dust free.
- The size of the area is adequate for the number of participants – approx 2 metres square per person.
- Air quality of the atmosphere is good and temperature is appropriate for an exercise session approx 55 deg.

- Items of furniture should not impede the free movement of any participant.
- Provision of electrical supply should be in good order e.g. sockets, light fittings. The latter should not be used as a power supply for other than a light bulb.
- Access to the fire exit should be left clear.

Clothing

The instructor should advise participants on appropriate clothing before start of class.

Clothing worn by the instructor or the participant must promote easy movement

Clothing worn by the instructor should enhance a clear demonstration of the movement.

Footwear should be supportive to the foot and ankle and be securely laced.

Footwear should not be heavy and give protection from impact stresses.

Warm clothing should be available during the cooldown phase to prevent the body cooling too quickly.

Participants should be advised that the wearing of jewellery is a potential hazard.

Equipment

Any equipment used by the instructor must be in good order and maintained without faults that may cause accidents.

Sound equipment must be used, maintained and stored following the manufacturers instructions.

Appliance testing should be done on a regular basis by a qualified electrician and a certificate of safety received.

Emergency Procedures

Instructors must know the fire and emergency procedures required by the management of the venue being used.

The instructor must know the emergency number and location of the nearest phone. If using a mobile ensure it is fully charged beforehand.

The instructor must be familiar with the principles of and competent in giving First Aid as appropriate to his/her first aid training.

Instructors in Water Based exercise should have knowledge of life saving procedures and ensure the presence of a life guard during the class. He/She should know how to raise the alarm and get help, staying calm and disciplined.

Instructors of Cardiac rehabilitation Phase IV.

The Lesson

The instructor must **plan** the session in full knowledge of:-

- Human physiology and anatomy
- Differing abilities in the class
- Medical problems and contraindications
- Size of workspace
- Age of participants
- Duration of the session
- Physical fitness of participants

The structure must include a warm up and cooldown phase.

Good observation skills are to be employed to ensure intensity is suitable for class and that good technique is practised.

Instructor should be able to recognise signs of distress and know how to decrease intensity safely.

Instructor should always strive to educate the class to take responsibility for themselves by working within their own limit eg not chewing gum in class, wearing jewellery.

Screening for Contra indications

The instructor should gather information from the participants to help plan a safe effective session. This includes physical and medical problems which will be effected by exercise.

Advise should be given to the participant if :-

- Exercise needs to be deferred
- Another health professional needs to be consulted
- Exercises have to be modified or alternatives have to be given
- Intensity levels adjusted – knowing own limits

- Information should be known on next of kin to be contacted in an emergency.

Reporting

Instructors must make a written report on any accident or incident which has resulted in injury to a participant or the instructor.

The report must be made in writing as soon as possible after the event.

Follow up enquiries must be made to show care and concern for the wellbeing of the participant.

Teaching Ratio

The instructor must have good two way vision of all the members in the class. Additional help to 'spot' should be decided if numbers of participants prohibit effective observation.

Noise Levels

Volume of noise should not be as loud as a petrol-driven lawn mower for the duration of an hour.

The participants should be able to hear teaching points/advise etc.

The music needs to be at a motivating volume

Insurance

While having insurance does not prevent injury or make an instructor provide safer exercise, it can ensure a more stress free atmosphere with the knowledge that both parties are safeguarded in the event of an accident. For this reason Fitness Northern Ireland have negotiated cover for Public Liability for instructors in all recognised disciplines

Safety Audits

The Association

The association will provide such information to the instructors and employees to enable all involved to take responsibility for their own safety and of the participants.

This Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed and updated if necessary within a three year period. The appointed Chair person will review,sign and date the document

The Instructor

The Instructor is required to keep a personal log of his/her professional development.

Keep updated on safety measures and exercise technique.

Attend workshops and courses.

The Training Staff

The training staff are also required to provide evidence of professional development with future plans for a year ahead.

Further Information may be found in Leaflet HAS 3-Advice to the self employed issued by the Health and Safety Agency for NI. Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978

Update.....by

Public Liability Insurance

Insurance Policy No. 127/3S01/GC581761/8

Zurich Insurance Company

'Your client is covered whoever the instructors teach but they need to be able to show that they have taken all reasonable steps to take care of the people they are instructing and have not knowingly exposed them to unnecessary danger. We would expect instructors to carry out risk assessments, take 'State of Health' questionnaires, obtain knowledge of the condition that the attendees have suffered from, and liaison with cardiac specialists for their advice'.