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## INTRODUCTION

We know that the past year has been extremely challenging for everyone, but at Brio we have lots to be proud of. Our team have been working hard to make sure that both partners and residents are involved in the improvement, development and design of our services.

2020 has brought us unprecedented challenges, with the COVID-19 pandemic affecting how we operate and how we engage with our participants. However, the pandemic proved that we are agile enough to diversify quickly; supporting residents of Cheshire West and Chester in a number of new and innovative ways.

Many of our services were either closed temporarily or were unable to be delivered face-to-face for the majority of the year. We swiftly adapted our services to provide a remote offer, enabling our participants access to health and wellbeing information, family activities, exercise and education sessions online.

We are confident that many of our new methods of working will continue to be a success as we move closer to a 'new normal' way of living. This will further enhance our original services, offering variety for our clients to ensure full engagement and completion of programmes.

"Cheshire Change Hub has seen many changes since its creation. However, the past 12 months has brought unavoidable adjustments due to unforeseen circumstances. The team have worked tirelessly to ensure clients have remained well informed, engaged and positive about the future. Our 'hub' team, the Heath Referral Advisors, have played a vital role in remobilising our services by being the first port of call for all our clients, whilst maintaining regular contact to provide guidance and reassurance. I have no doubt our services will continue to thrive as restrictions ease, and we move closer to normality."



**Laura Pudvine**  
Health and Wellbeing Officer

"Whilst the pandemic in 2020 - 2021 has brought us many challenges it also gave us the opportunity to regroup and refocus on what we do best. We all agreed our priority for the coming years is to provide the same high quality and, person centred services. However we will aim to provide more of these services to our residents in ways that suit their lifestyles and where they need them most - their local communities. Working with our Shareholder, Cheshire West and Chester Council, we have revised our existing health and wellbeing model and agreed on a 'hub and spoke' approach which will enable us to bring services into our communities."



**Jessica Jeffreys**  
Communities Director

"Brio has really had to adapt its activity range into innovative and digital solutions during the significant lockdown period which impacted on 2020/21 with leisure facilities closed 8 of the 12 months. Brio Wellbeing responded to this by moving to supporting delivery of services in increased borough locations and were recognised nationally as one of 8 projects by PHE for Stop Smoking innovation. Going forward as many services have been on hold, an enhanced programme of service delivery is in readiness to make up for the lost time and address the growing challenges the legacy of Covid has left on the health and wellbeing of Cheshire West and Chester borough residents."

Digitalisation and sharing co-located places will be key areas for evolution and are linked to Brio's wider company re-modelling which took place during the year. This will include the development of 'spoke' services in locations where our community need these most. This will support overcoming wider barriers to access, including mental health, social isolation and poverty. The future, whilst challenging, is incredibly positive and we will use emerging data and anecdotal input to shape services which our residents really need and want."

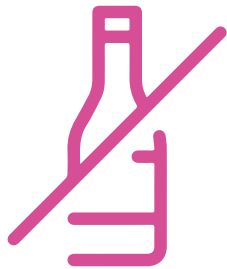


**Elly McFahn**  
Managing Director

#### Our thanks

We would like to thank all our fantastic staff and our wider partners for their dedication and hard work over the year which has helped us to achieve the many successes outlined in this report, and we look forward to ongoing future collaborations.

## REVIEW OF THE YEAR OVERVIEW



**100%**  
of all referrals have  
been offered brief  
interventions in  
alcohol, substance  
and sexual health



We have supported  
**OVER 1500**  
referrals in 20/21  
for health and  
wellbeing services



**58%**  
of referrals received  
were from the most  
deprived areas within  
the borough



Participants wellbeing  
scores increased by an  
average of  
**16%**

'I am feeling fitter and not coughing as much. The big thing that made me want to quit was my partner falling pregnant. Even though I sometimes felt sick on the Champix, the child was always at the back of my mind. Sickness was horrendous at times, but I knew it was for a long-term gain. Having a child changes your perspective. It gives you motivation. If I were doing it without the baby on the way, I would have struggled. It was a mental boost. Phone appointments were convenient. I am so busy at work that it was a good option for me. You have all been really helpful. Cannot fault the service.'

**Matthew, 30, Ellesmere Port  
Smoking Cessation Programme**



'I wanted to quit smoking because I've got asthma, my age, COVID and a number of other things really like money and my all-round health. The advisors kept me positive and kept me going. It was nice to have a chat each week and it's just really helped me get through, having the patches and helped me stay a bit more positive. It's amazing to know the positive side of quitting smoking.'

**Janet, 58, Northwich  
Smoking Cessation Programme**

## | Smoking Cessation

The harms of tobacco use are well-established. Tobacco causes 8 million deaths every year from cardiovascular diseases, lung disorders, cancers, diabetes, and hypertension. Smoking tobacco is also a known risk factor for severe disease and death from many respiratory infections, most recently linked to Covid.

Managing the impact of smoking is a heavy resource burden for Primary and Secondary Care. Locally, it attributes approximately 147,580 GP consultations, 53,870 nursing staff appointments and 31,970 outpatient visits annually. Add this with the £6.2 million local health and social care costs, it's an expensive habit not just for our clients, but for our society.

Smoking prevalence in Cheshire West and Chester is 14.5%, although this is 2% lower than the England rate, we still have a way to go to achieve the national ambition of becoming smoke free by 2030. (QOF 2019)

The Integrated Wellbeing (IWB) Smoking Cessation service targets the following groups; COPD, Enduring Mental Health, 13-18 years old and Pregnancy. The ICP contract was a short term contract focusing on specific PCNs across the borough to reduce prevalence in under represented groups.



The IWB Smoking Cessation service had a

**69%**  
SERVICE UPTAKE

**52%**

of which successfully quit smoking (self-report)

Those with an enduring mental health condition had the highest quit rate of **51%** (self-report)



**47%** of pregnant women and partners who set a quit date successfully quit

## | ICP Smoking Cessation Pilot

The ICP Smoking Pilot had an

**88%** service uptake

**62%**

of service users self-reported a quit status at 4 weeks, this is 5% higher than the national quit rate

Winsford care community had the highest quit success rate with **62%** (self-report)



**69%**  
of referrals were self-referral



## | Exercise on Referral

COVID-19 has widened health inequalities and been particularly damaging for vulnerable groups including older adults. It has also exacerbated the pressures on the NHS and social care in the UK, meaning that more than ever, fitness and leisure facilities have an essential role to play in reducing the burden on health services.



On average **26%** of all participants were exercising at least 3 times per week (150 minutes) as per NICE Guidance

**68%** of participants who entered the Exercise on Referral programme were referred for an enduring mental health condition



**64%** of all participants were female

## | Weight Management



**85%** of referrals were referred for enduring mental health conditions

**59%** of participants accepted an intervention and set a Weight Management goal



**22%** of participants completed their Weight Management goal

"Before starting the programme, I was just sitting at home in my chair. I was only managing around 650 steps a day. I had terrible pain in my joints and muscles which was preventing me from being active and was affecting my well-being.

After six weeks on the programme, with the encouragement and guidance of my instructor I have increased my activity levels at the gym and at home. Now I am actually enjoying the exercise and I can definitely feel the difference.

I am feeling much better, the joint pain is much less, I look forward to my walking now instead of dreading it. I am now managing an average of 6,800 steps a day, I feel much more positive, and less hopeless. It really has changed my life!"

**Pauline, 61, Ellesmere Port  
Exercise on Referral**

"I found the programme extremely useful as it allowed me to exercise in a safe way that helped me improve my lower back pain and gave me the desire to do more activity. A special shout out to Kerry-Jayne who was extremely helpful and showed me exercises that I can use for the long-term prevention of my lower back pain. I will be getting a full membership at the Brio leisure site."

**Pauline, 74, Ellesmere Port  
Weight Management Programme**





## | Falls Prevention

The natural ageing process means that older people have an increased risk of having a fall.

In the UK, falls are the most common cause of injury related deaths in people over the age of 75.

Around 1 in 3 adults over 65 who live at home will have at least one fall a year, and about half of these will have more frequent falls.



Cheshire West and Chester has a higher percentage of older adults which is expected to increase from **21%** to **28%** over the next 10 years

**30.5%** of older residents living in Cheshire West and Chester are living alone



**98.7%** of emergency admissions for hip fractures comprise of residents aged 65+ (local health profiles in Cheshire West and Chester 2017)



We delivered **22 weekly Strength and Balance sessions** across the borough

We provided homework and equipment to all our participants to ensure they could continue their programme safely at home throughout lockdown



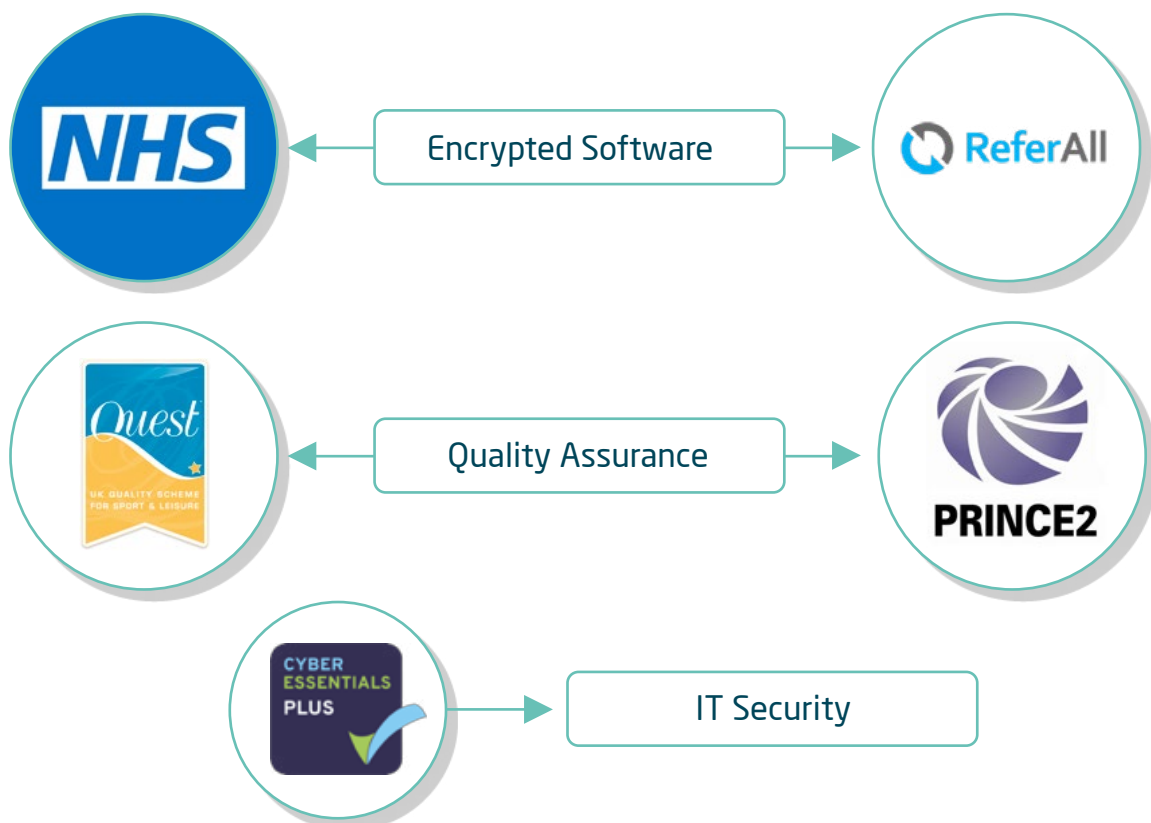
A catalogue of online education and activity sessions were created to target our older participants

Participants received regular wellbeing checks to minimise isolation and signposting to specialist services





## IT Governance and GDPR







## SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS



The Smoking Cessation Service was recognised by Public Health England as **1 of the top 8 Smoking Cessation Services in the UK** for delivering best practice during Covid

The IWB Smoking Cessation service had a

**10.4% increase**

in referrals in 20/21 compared to the previous year



Awarded **'Excellent'** for both Community Impact and Health and Wellbeing categories in recent **Quest Assessments**



### Leisure Net Interviews:

We shared our expertise with Leisure-Net Solutions via YouTube, detailing the innovative steps taken during Covid-19 with our delivery of Falls Prevention and Smoking Cessation Services

### Parliamentary Review\*:

Brio Leisure look at the challenges and successes of adapting public health throughout Covid-19

Published by Elix McFadden on February 9th 2021, 11:11am



\*<https://www.leaderscouncil.co.uk/news/brio-leisure-look-at-the-challenges-and-successes-of-adapting-public-health-throughout-covid-19>



## THE NEUROTHERAPY PROJECT

In 2018 Brio Leisure partnered with the Neuro Therapy Centre (NTC), based in Chester, to launch the Access to Exercise project in May. With funding from Sport England and support from other external partners including The Walton Centre, MS Society and Parkinson's UK; the aims of the project were to develop and improve pathways for individuals living with long-term neurological conditions in accessing exercise activities.

As the project draws to a close, it's important for us to reflect on the main achievements, learning points and to consider how the work continues without the parameters and structure of a funded project.

During the project's inception, Brio identified the integral position it held in addressing some of the challenges and

barriers that people living with neurological conditions face in accessing and using health, wellbeing and leisure facilities. We wanted to demonstrate how we as the provider are able to adapt and tailor services to better support those living with long-term neurological conditions.

One of the main issues highlighted during the early stages of the programme was the need for specialist knowledge and expertise from our Lifestyle Officers in order to appropriately tailor the support for individuals as conditions and circumstances vary widely. Since the start of the project, four Health and Wellbeing staff members have completed the Wright Foundation Level 4 Exercise for Neurological Conditions course and continue to attend professional workshops. These workshops support them to implement their newly acquired knowledge and skills in this area.

### Other achievements include:



A total of **86 individuals** participated in the project over the course of 3 years



Average physical activity minutes per week for participants rose from **80 minutes** at baseline to **140 minutes** at 6 months of participation (75% increase)



Brio implemented online classes and telephone support services in partnership with the NTC



Wellbeing scores increased over the course of the project. Most notably for happiness, satisfaction, and feelings of worthwhile and a slight increase for exercise self-efficacy

We have remained flexible and adaptable throughout the duration of the Covid-19 pandemic. This has been no mean feat with the unavoidable closure of our leisure centres. We worked with the Neuro Therapy Centre to adapt service offerings and make sure that participants were still able to access some activities from home virtually. This worked very well, with individuals providing feedback on how these activities had aided their mobility during lockdown periods and just as importantly their mental wellbeing through maintaining social connections. These outcomes are largely attributed to the robust and successful partnership working between ourselves and the Neuro Therapy Centre.

I know that if I wasn't able to access the Access to Exercise activities, I'd be more immobile and stiff. I also think my mental health wouldn't be as good. Seeing people in the class and interacting them on a weekly basis has been a real comfort.

**Anonymous, 59, Northwich**  
Neurotherapy Project

**Elizabeth Mason,**  
Health Improvement Project Officer

## EVENTS

- National No Smoking Day included a social media take over from the Smoking Cessation team and Zoom drop-in sessions.
- The team delivered a range of Health and Wellbeing sessions at several local virtual events, including Winsford Wellbeing and International Women's Day.
- The team were involved in the promotion of awareness days and signposting information, including Dry January, World COPD Day, International Day of People with Disabilities and Stress Awareness Week.
- The Smoking Cessation Practitioners delivered smoking awareness sessions remotely to HSBC and Marks and Spencers.



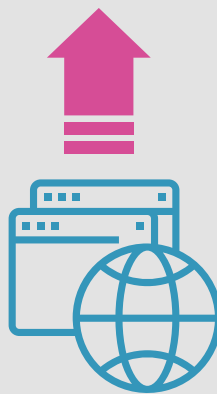
## DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT



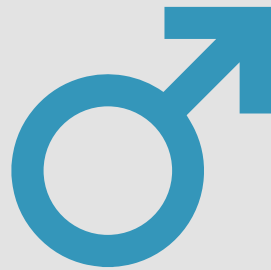
The Cheshire Change Hub website received

**11,270**

web visitors (Apr 20-Mar21)



**49%**  
**increase**  
on last year's  
web figures



**The posts with the highest engagement and reach include:**

Advertising quit smoking services:  
**1,065** impressions, **61** engagements,  
**5.7%** engagement rate

Update on our services due to COVID:  
**612** impressions, **93** engagements,  
**15.2%** engagement rate



**68%**  
of our twitter users  
were female



The majority of users who visited our webpage were **male** and aged between **25-34 years**.

This is a hard group to capture for health and wellbeing services, so this is a result we are very proud of!



Overall, the **Smoking Cessation** page had the highest number of views closely followed by the **Weight Management** page



We were new to Twitter in 2020 and in the last 12 months we tweeted **344 times**, with the tweets being displayed **26,025 times** and viewed by **112,622 people**



Our **Cheshire Change Hub Facebook page** was created in October 2020, since then we have gained **329 followers**, posted **189 times** and our posts have received **313 likes**



**The posts with the highest engagement and reach include:**

Gemma Coombes (Falls Instructor / Physiotherapist) COPD video; reached **3.2K** people, **105** clicks and **35** interactions

Blog about Stress Awareness Week; reached **2.2K** people, **26** clicks and **17** interactions

2020 highlights video; reached **124** people, **22** clicks and **76** interactions

## SKILLED WORKFORCE AND TEAM WELLBEING

We placed a heavy focus on workforce training and wellbeing throughout the year, with specific consideration to both those remaining in work undertaking long and complex functions, but also for those unable to work due to the closures.

A wide range of interactive activities were put in place and there were frequent company updates provided by the Senior Management Team and Service Managers. FAQs were produced and shared amongst the workforce and messages regarding rapidly changing legislation were available to all. Online training remained critical to keeping staff up to date and engaged.

**The Health and Wellbeing service undertook a diverse range of remote training including:**

- BACPR Level 4 Cardiac Specialist Rehabilitation
- Covid Recovery
- Making Every Contact Count (MECC)
- Mental Health First Aid Training
- Mindfulness Now
- National Centre for Smoking Cessation Training (NCSCT)
- Otago Exercise Instructor
- Wright Foundation Level 4 Exercise for Neurological Conditions
- Wright Foundation Level 3 GP Exercise on Referral
- Wright Foundation Level 4 Mental Health in Exercise
- Wright Foundation Level 4 Pulmonary Rehabilitation





## ADDED VALUE

- Our team supported their local communities by volunteering at Covid centres and delivered food parcels and medication to the most vulnerable.
- Over 8% of referrals were signposted to external services for additional support including; Cheshire Wirral Partnership Crisis Line, Cheshire Food Bank, Westminster Drugs Partnership and GPs across CWaC.
- Brio heavily supported the crisis via the provision of both its leisure and entertainment facilities. We also agreed with our workforce to support delivery and staffing needs at Shielding Centres, Test and Vaccination sites and other Council Companies and services.

## PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

The Communities Director will lead on the development of the Communities arm of the business ensuring it meets the needs of our local residents. This will focus on the 2021 - 2022 growth of the department to include community support teams, research and intelligence and social value return on investment.



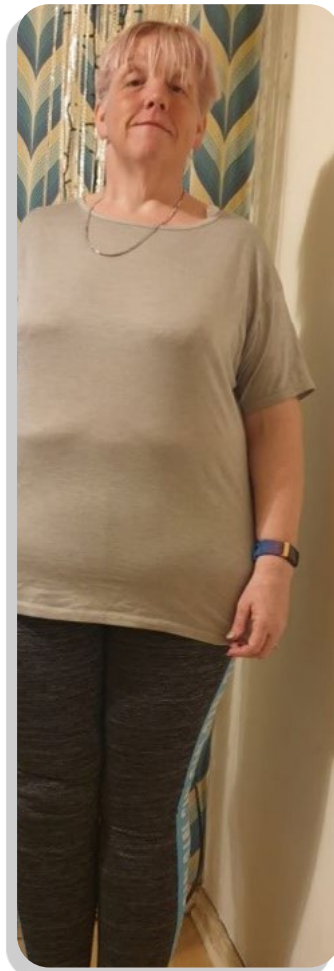
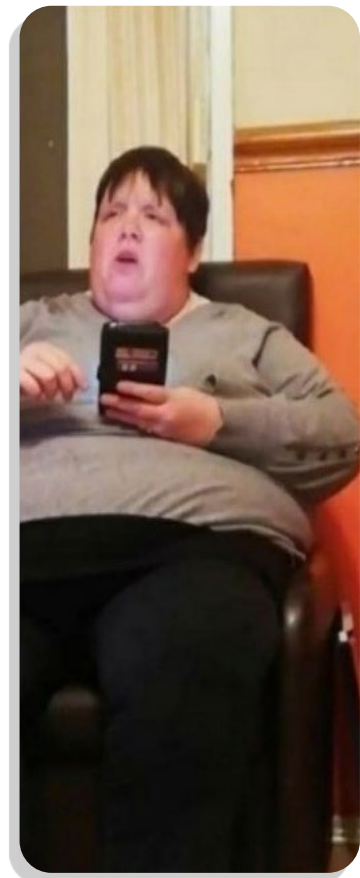
## TESTIMONIALS

### CUSTOMER HIGHLIGHTS

"During my 12-week programme I was coming almost every day, using the gym and swimming pool. I also changed my eating habits and started to eat more healthily, with advice from HILO. I stopped eating biscuits and crisps and started to drink more water. I started to lose weight and that spurred me on. Even during lockdown, I didn't lose my motivation. I walked a lot, 20-30 min a day and stuck to my good eating habits. After the lockdown when the gym reopened, I joined as a member.

I weighed 23st and half when I started and now, I have lost just over 7st. I have dropped dress size from 32 to 18-22. I feel a lot fitter and happy with what I have achieved. I have more self-confidence and I feel better about myself."

**Vicky, Winsford**  
Exercise on Referral



"In 2017, weighing 21st 7lb and aged 67 years, I was diagnosed with Type 2 Diabetes. My doctor referred me to Brio, Memorial Court, Northwich. Since I joined in April 2017, I have enjoyed Aqua Fit classes under the guidance of Jill, Heather and Clare who are all very helpful teachers. In addition I use the gym, where the trainers are very helpful and since lockdown ended I usually attend 5 times a week.

Healthy eating and exercise have helped me lose 8 stone and I have now reversed my diabetes. I feel much fitter now with fewer aches and pains and my breathing is easier. Thanks to all the staff at Brio for helping me achieve my weight loss and become healthier. I now weigh 13st 6lb."

**Terry, Northwich**  
Exercise on Referral



## OUR PARTNERS

We have worked with over 75 different services and partners in 20/21:



Cheshire and Wirral Partnership **NHS**  
NHS Foundation Trust



University of  
Chester







**The Work Zone**  
*All the help you need to get a job*



Cheshire West and Chester Council and the NHS working together



Public Health  
England



'We have a great working relationship with Brio Leisure and we were able to introduce a Stop Smoking clinic within the Maternity department. This allowed women and their partners to access support and NRT whilst attending other hospital-based appointments.

I am able to obtain feedback for the referrals we have sent, and this allows Midwives to re-approach the tobacco dependence with patients at their next appointment.'

## Lara Nilssen

Lead Midwife for Smokefree Pregnancies  
Countess of Chester Hospital

'Over the past year Brio have continued to offer the best provision they have been able to consider the backdrop of the pandemic. Whilst some services have had to stop temporarily, areas such as smoking cessation have continued, and indeed, thrived with new hybrid ways of working both face-to-face and often remotely to support residents on their journey to quit!

As well as adapting to the changing landscape, they have been instrumental in supporting commissioners and Public Health colleagues in bids for additional funds to support with weight management and healthy lifestyle projects. They have adapted existing funding to better support areas such as Falls prevention, and actively engaged in various networks and forums to support; and influence decisions which have a positive impact on the health and well-being of our residents.'

## Lee Barnett

Commissioning Manager  
Cheshire West and Chester

'The Access to Exercise project was developed as a result of people living with a neurological condition (PWNC) reporting that they did not feel confident accessing leisure services due to barriers around access, staff knowledge of their condition, and suitability of some of the activities on offer. The project partners have worked together to reduce or remove those barriers, and key to this was the development of a nationally recognised level 4 Neurological Conditions Course. Brio have now trained 4 staff and this along with the input of a dedicated HIPO working on the project and the inclusive culture of the staff at Brio has led to a real change in PWNC's perception of local services.

Having been closely involved with the Aqua-therapy class the things that have stood out for me are the positive, welcoming attitudes of the staff and their willingness to look for solutions to issues, the enjoyment that participants have got from a class that is designed around their needs, and the obvious way that it has helped them with their condition, not only maintaining strength and stamina, but making real progress with 1 lady who has MS moving from needing buoyancy aids to independent swimming of 20+ lengths, and another with cerebral palsy who needed a Carer in the water to assist who was able to progress to independent walking in the water. This translated to independent transfers at home and much greater movement.

I know they can't wait to get back to their class!

## Jane Johnston-Cree

Centre Director  
MCSP

## REFERENCES

- Smoking and Covid- 19- World Health Organisation (<https://www.who.int/news-room/commentaries/detail/smoking-and-covid-19>)
- Activity guidance- NHS Live Well (<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/exercise-health-benefits/>)
- Falls in older people-NHS (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/falls/>)
- <https://qof.digital.nhs.uk/>
- Brio Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2020-2023
- UK Active- <https://www.ukactive.com/news/ukactive-report-sets-out-key-role-sector-can-play-in-getting-our-ageing-nation-active/>
- ASH Ready Reckoner for local communities (<https://ash.org.uk/ash-ready-reckoner/>)





