

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

January 3, 2018

Help is at hand to get healthier in 2018

Fenland residents are being reminded about the district's GP-supported exercise scheme to help people with various medical conditions kick-start a healthy New Year.

Individuals with conditions such as diabetes, obesity and mental health are being urged to talk to their local health professional about the Exercise Referral scheme to support them to become more active and lead healthier lifestyles.

Delivered by Fenland District Council's New Vision Fitness leisure centres, Exercise Referral is a 12-week personalised fitness programme that can be prescribed by GPs and other health professionals to manage certain health conditions through exercise.

Programmes may include exercise classes, gym-based workouts, water-based exercises and condition-specific sessions and can be undertaken at any of Fenland's four leisure centres. Patients will have the help and guidance of specially-qualified exercise professionals throughout the course.

In the last two years the programme has helped more than 300 people referred from local services, with the majority reporting that they felt healthier following the programme.

Success stories include people helped back to fitness after operations and those who have gone from sedentary lifestyles to becoming active gym members.

Councillor Mike Cornwell, the Council's Portfolio Holder for health and wellbeing, said: "The referral scheme supports us in our aim to reduce health inequalities in Fenland. It not only helps control some health conditions and limit the regression of illnesses but also reduces the number of visits needed to GPs and hospitals and reliance on medication, therefore reducing the cost to our NHS.

"Being able to get out and use our leisure centres also enables patients to socialise and make new friends while improving their health."

Health professionals can refer patients over the age of 16 years of age with any of the following conditions:

- Diabetes (Type 1 & 2)
- Obesity (BMI > 30)
- Cardiac Rehabilitation
- Hypertension
- Mental Health
- Respiratory (including Asthma)
- Smoking Cessation
- Multiple Trauma/Injury
- Muscular Skeletal
- Neurological

GPs and health professionals can also refer patients with other conditions that they feel would benefit from the programme.

The Exercise Referral programme is subsidised by the Council and remains the cheapest way to access the leisure centres. It costs £24.50 a month on a three-month course agreement (normal anytime membership costs £40.50 a month), with no joining fee.

Cllr Cornwell added: "We would urge anyone wanting to be referred to the programme to speak with their GP or health professional to discuss it in more detail.

"We would also like to see more health professionals take advantage of the programme. The benefits for the health and well-being of our communities are numerous."

ENDS

For more information contact Fenland District Council press office on 01354 622226