

## Case Study

### Bournemouth After Cancer Survivorship Programme

# BACSUP

## Exercise improves quality of life for cancer survivors

#### Partners:

BH Live  
Royal Bournemouth and  
Christchurch Hospitals NHS  
Foundation Trust (RBCHFT)  
Wessex Cancer Trust

#### Website:

[www.livingwellchoices.co.uk/bacsup](http://www.livingwellchoices.co.uk/bacsup)

#### Base:

Bournemouth, Dorset

#### Industry:

Healthcare

#### Project:

Eight week exercise programme  
for cancer patients

#### Results:

Positive experience for cancer  
patients following treatment

98% achieved an increased  
sense of wellbeing and most felt  
fitter

Improved mobility and flexibility

Healthy weight loss and smaller  
waistlines

Lower heart rate and blood  
pressure

Lower risk of cancer recurrence  
and onset of other diseases



The Bournemouth After Cancer Survivorship Programme (BACSUP) offers recovering cancer patients a positive exercise experience to improve health and wellbeing following treatment. The scheme was first launched in 2009 by The Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (RBCH), Bournemouth Borough Council, NHS Bournemouth and Poole, Macmillan Cancer Support, Dorset Cancer Network and Bournemouth University.

Now a nationally recognised scheme (see *Macmillan's 'Move More'* report), BACSUP offers cancer patients a free eight-week programme of exercise and activity, advice and support, provided by BH Live health and fitness specialists in Bournemouth leisure centres.

#### How it works

- A referring healthcare professional completes a referral form with the customer

forwards it to the BH Live exercise referral team

- BH Live contacts the customer to introduce the programme and book the initial consultation
- The customer attends a Bournemouth leisure centre for a 60-90-minute consultation with a qualified Exercise Referral Advisor (Level 4 Cancer Rehabilitation). This includes health screening, assessment and measurement of health metrics such as blood pressure, resting heart rate, waist circumference, height, weight, ROM and flexibility, goal setting, exercise programme, prescription and activity agreement
- A second 60-minute appointment may be offered to clarify the exercise programme
- The customer receives an eight week complimentary membership and starts the programme

- At week four, the customer receives a support-and-review phone call to establish activity levels. At this point the Exercise Referral Advisor can offer support, advice, programme adaptation, motivation and praise, either by phone or a face to face appointment
- At week eight, the customer attends a 60-90-minute follow-up consultation to review the previous eight weeks of activity in terms of initial goals and motivations, and progress towards them, re-assessment and re-measurement of baseline assessment criteria, and then plan for ongoing exercise habits
- If appropriate, the customer can join the BH Live Exercise Referral scheme for a further 12 weeks', pay-as-you-go activity at concessionary rates.
- The customer will then be encouraged to continue with their exercise at any chosen venue

### Result

Of those who have completed the eight week programme:

- 98% achieved their goal
- 96% were still active at week eight
- 96% felt fitter
- 90% reported more energy and less fatigue
- 88% improved their exercise tolerance results
- 80% improved their EQ5D Health Scale
- 77%(breast cancer only) improved shoulder function
- 70% improved flexibility
- 64% decreased waist measurement
- 58% experienced weight loss

- 54% lowered their resting blood pressure
- 42% lowered their resting heart rate
- 94% reported an increased sense of wellbeing
- 78% said their confidence had increased

### Success stories

#### Weight loss:

- Diane – 57: I've lost half a stone and 6cm from my waist
- Helen – 67: I am really pleased with the CV improvements and now I need to concentrate on my weight. I'm very happy I did the programme

#### Motivation:

- Marina – 52: I found the routine and motivation really helpful
- Victoria – 40: I felt very lucky to have 8 weeks free motivation! I have found the programme to be excellent
- Wendy – 71: I have really enjoyed the programme and the motivational support. I have made some new friends which has been important to me
- Debbie - 49: I have found that the programme has really helped with my motivation.

#### Sociability:

- Carolyn – 70: The social aspects of the programme have been really important to me and I've really enjoyed the classes.
- Susan - 60: I have found the social aspects helpful
- Phillip – 73: I have enjoyed the exercise classes and the social aspects have been important to me too
- Ruby – 67: I was so pleased to take part and really enjoyed the social aspects of the programme too
- Patricia - 61: I have really enjoyed the classes and exercise overall and was pleased to meet others in the same situation as me

- Ruth – 55: I have been exercising 4-5 times a week and am pleased to have improved on all my goals and the social aspects have helped too

#### Attitude towards exercise:

- George – 79: I will continue exercising outside throughout the summer (golfing and walks) and may join leisure centre in the winter
- Ruth – 69: I have enjoyed the activities and am happy with the results of the reassessment. I will continue with the activities.
- Ray – 68: I have really felt the benefits and will continue with the sessions.
- Louise - 45: I'm feeling fitter and going to continue to exercise
- Maria – 49: I was really happy doing the programme and will continue with gym and classes

#### Sleep:

- Maureen – 71: I'm sleeping better and have enjoyed the social aspects of the programme
- Alex – 60: I am feeling better, sleeping better and have more energy. The disease is challenging but I'm learning to manage my life

#### Wellbeing:

- Joyce - 58: I am really enjoying the activities and amazed at how much better I feel.
- Anthony - 66: I can't believe how good I feel! I'm really happy with my progress and so is my GP
- Alan – 72 : The programme has made me more conscious of being healthy
- Jacqueline – 49: Really enjoyed the programme and it has helped me to focus on myself and what is important. Good to see improvements at eight weeks.

- Roger – 69: My RA is severe but I do feel that the exercise has helped and I will continue.
- Catherine – 70: Absolutely excellent, I am so grateful I was offered this programme.
- Susan - 66: I think the programme is brilliant and would be happy to share my experience with health professionals if they ask.

### What the experts say about BACSUP



Macmillan's  
**Move More**  
- Physical

### Activity the Under-rated

'Wonder Drug' report advocates cancer patients taking part in physical activity to significantly help prevent cancer recurring and the onset of other long-term illnesses.

The report uses robust evidence, such as ACSM guidelines, which states that physical activity is safe during and after most types of cancer treatments and says that survivors should avoid being inactive.

New evidence now suggests that physical activity can reduce the impact of other cancer side-effects such as anxiety, depression, fatigue, swelling, impaired mobility and weight changes — and should therefore be part of standard NHS care for all cancers.



**Cancer Research UK** states that after 12

weeks of attending exercise classes, a control group of women receiving treatment for early stage breast cancer saw an improvement in fitness levels, shoulder mobility and mood. Six months later this was still the case — and there was

also an improvement in their quality of life. Further research suggests that higher levels of physical activity are associated with a reduced risk of the recurrence of cancer, and a longer survival after a cancer diagnosis. In particular, breast and colorectal cancer survivorship has been shown to improve with a regular exercise programme.



**The British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES)** also states that the risk of cancer recurrence, cancer-specific mortality and all-cause mortality is around 40-50% lower in physically active than it is in inactive individuals.

More recently the **Journal of Clinical Oncology's After Colon Cancer, Activity is Linked to Better Survival** report concludes that high levels of sedentary behaviour increases mortality associated with cancers. ACSM guidelines recommend the same level of exercise for colorectal survivors as for the general population among the general population (150 minutes of moderate intensity exercise a week).

Researchers agree that greater understanding of the relationship and effect of different forms of exercise (i.e. cardio-vascular exercise, strength training, interval training) on cancer patients is still needed, taking account of carried different diagnoses, age groups and ethnic backgrounds. Nonetheless, their advice is that any form of exercise is better than none and should always be encouraged.

### Where next?

Originally aimed at breast cancer patients, the scope of the programme has been widened to include patients who have undergone treatment for prostate, kidney, bladder, head and neck,

oesophageal, haematological, testicular, and colorectal cancers.

Since 2009, more than 800 people have been referred to the programme, 25% of them men and 75% women, aged between 25 and 78.

Thanks to new funding from Wessex Cancer Trust in 2014, the scheme is still running and a further 108 local people living with cancer have been enrolled. Referrals have come from Bournemouth Hospital, Poole Hospital, GPs and Community Cancer Care Specialists.

There is a clear need in the cancer care pathway to help people start or continue physical activity during and after treatment. Promoting physical activity at every stage of the cancer care pathway could save money and experience shows that with recommended activity is tailored to the individual, the outcome is beneficial.

Those who have come through the programme claim exercise is a 'wonder drug' in the treatment of cancer and should be routinely offered on the cancer care pathway.

BH Live will continue running the cancer survivorship programme, and is currently inviting funding partners to help BACSUP continue as the preferred scheme for referral by local healthcare professionals.

### About BH Live

BH Live is the South Coast's leading operator of leisure and event venues - a social enterprise that designs and builds engaging experiences to inspire people and enrich lives.

[www.bhlive.org.uk](http://www.bhlive.org.uk)