

Introducing the Water Wellbeing Programme

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



Swim
England

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.

Pilot findings

After testing the Water Wellbeing approach on 47 pilot sites around England, training hundreds of professionals who have now worked with thousands of inactive people with one or more long term health condition, the outcomes have included:

- reductions in pain
- improvements in performing everyday tasks
- improvements in mental health
- cancellation of operations – individuals reporting such significant improvements in function that they no longer require surgery

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



70%
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



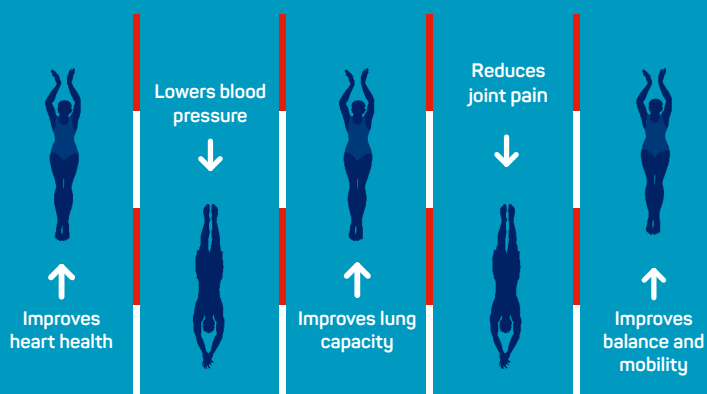
It helps adults reduce stress and improve overall health



It helps older people stay mentally and physically agile



Swimming is low impact, but high reward



About the Water Wellbeing Programme

Swim England have developed a new **accreditation pathway** for aquatic providers to follow, to ensure that all of the essential elements in creating the most inclusive, attractive and supportive environment are addressed, providing referring healthcare professionals and members of the public with reassurance around high standards of consistency and quality of support.

Water Wellbeing Accreditation Process

Stage 1: 'Accessible and Inclusive'

Review site opportunities and action plan

Environmental audit and site improvement plan developed

Inclusive customer experience training (online/face to face)

Inclusive marketing materials

Basic data collection

Stage 2: 'Personalised aquatic offers'

Aquatic Exercise Referral
(referral/self-referral)

Learn to Swim
(AL2S/Learn to Swim for targeted health needs)

Good Boost

AAFH Training

Delivery and self-guided activity in place

Learn to Swim checklist

Online/face to training on AL2S/health conditions

Good Boost training and support

Equipment and software license in place

Stage 3: 'Demonstrating Impact'

Recruitment targets met

Evidence of change and impact through data collection

Case study development

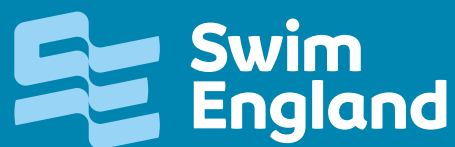
Key elements

Pool audit	Training for all staff	Training for exercise referral instructors	Training and resources for swimming teachers	Marketing guidance	Guidance on evaluating impact	Other 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 learn to swim experiences, for people with long term health conditions.	Resources on marketing of programmes and recruiting participants; including links with key national charities and local volunteering groups.	Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidance on data collection and sharing of best practice. Support and guidance on using data collected to demonstrate economic impact. 	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], **Sport England** [sportengland.org] and **Versus Arthritis** [versusarthritis.org] to encourage the least active to get into aquatic activity and identify local leads to support recruitment.
- **Good Boost** [goodboost.org] rolling out 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 have supported 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

The Swim England Health and Wellbeing team

health@swimming.org

swimming.org/swimengland/health-and-wellbeing/

Pavilion 3, SportPark, 3 Oakwood Drive, Loughborough University, Leicestershire LE11 3QF

Tel: 01509 618700 | swimming.org

Funding Partner

