

Heart Foundation Heartmoves—a partnership between the fitness industry and the health sector: delivering sustainable exercise options for people with stable chronic conditions

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Dannie Butcher is a registered fitness professional (since 2005) with a range of experiences in the fitness industry. Having held various personal trainer and gym instructor positions over the past 7 years, Dannie now delivers components of the Certificate III Fitness course to students of Central Institute of Technology (formerly Central TAFE). Dannie began working as the WA Heartmoves Training Support Officer for the award-winning Heart Foundation Heartmoves Program in November 2008, and is a key presenter of the accredited Heartmoves Short Course for Exercise Professionals.

What is Heartmoves?

Heart Foundation Heartmoves is a gentle physical activity program suitable for anyone who hasn't done any exercise in a while. You can exercise at your own pace in a friendly atmosphere. Heartmoves is open to everyone and is designed to be safe for people with stable long term health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes or obesity.

Heartmoves Leader Training

The Heartmoves Leader Training course will provide the skills, resources and knowledge needed to become an accredited Heartmoves Leader, essential for delivering a Heartmoves licensed program. The course consists of two compulsory components:

Part I: Distance Theory Modules (approx 14 hours), completed online or by DVD and presented by exercise and health professionals. These modules cover risk factors and chronic disease, safety guidelines, risk assessment and risk management in delivering Heartmoves to people with chronic conditions.

Part II: Practical Training Workshop (2 days), including demonstrations, case studies, small group work and panel discussions designed to integrate the theory into your delivery, management and marketing of Heartmoves.

The course is accredited by:

- Fitness Australia (15 CECs)
- Australian Physiotherapy Association (54 CPD)
- Exercise and Sports Science Australia (13 ECs)
- Australian Diabetes Educators Association (24 credential points)
- Kinect Australia (3 PDP)
- Australian Pilates Method Association (1 CEC)

Heartmoves Leaders

Heartmoves is run by accredited exercise professionals specifically trained in managing safe, low to moderate intensity physical activity programs. Heartmoves Leaders:

- are registered fitness professionals with CPR qualifications

- have public liability / professional indemnity insurance
- are accredited to deliver Heartmoves branded physical activity programs
- are licensed to deliver Heart Foundation Heartmoves programs.

Heartmoves leaders are trained to engage with their participants in ensuring they work to an exercise level suitable to them. This partnership includes open communication, identification of symptoms of exercise intolerance, strategies to manage these symptoms, safety protocols and feedback to the referring health professional.

Heartmoves Programs

Heartmoves programs are freestyle, developed by each leader and adapted to the needs of the participants and levels of conditioning. Programs have chairs incorporated into the exercise routine, providing support for those who may not have exercised for a while or are de-conditioned.

Heartmoves programs:

- monitored and supervised
- low to moderate intensity—encourage self-monitoring
- varied to each client's pace
- include aerobic, strength, flexibility, coordination and balance components.

Resources

The Pre-exercise Assessment and Referral (PEAR) Form is a one-page form designed for multiple purposes:

- as a referral form for use by health professionals
- as a screening form for use by Heartmoves Leaders and Centres to identify those clients who may need medical clearance prior to exercising
- as a monitoring tool for the Heart Foundation to collate de-identified data in program growth and characteristics.

The PEAR Form is available to GPs and health professionals as either:

- a pad containing 50 carbonised forms (with copies for the GP, health professional, fitness leader and Heart Foundation)
- an electronic file in rich text format compatible with Medical Director software, mainly used by GPs

The Heartmoves PEAR Form also asks potential participants if they have an existing chronic condition, in which case they are advised to obtain medical clearance from their GP. Clients can self refer into Heartmoves exercise programs or they can be referred by their local GP, nurse or allied health professional, community health team or aged care team.

The Heart Foundation has developed guidelines to assist medical practitioners in determining the eligibility of particular patients to participate in a Heartmoves exercise program. These are not prescriptive and the determination of clearance to exercise rests ultimately with the patient's medical practitioner. As Heartmoves is a low to moderate intensity exercise program these guidelines recommend that medical clearance is only advised for those clients who have existing chronic disease.

Pamphlets, posters and banners, t-shirts, communication and marketing templates and the Heartmoves home-based exercise DVD are also available resources.

Locate a Heartmoves Program

There are three main ways to search for a Heartmoves program close to you:

- web-based Google Maps Locator, available on the Heartmoves website
- web-based Locality Directory of all Heartmoves locations, available on the Heartmoves website
- Heart Health Information Service

http://heartmoves.heartfoundation.org.au/assets/pdf/HM_Locality_Guide.pdf

1300 36 27 87

health@heartfoundation.org.au

These listings provide information on accredited Heartmoves Leaders and program locations by postcode, by State, by Division of General Practice and by Health Region. They are updated regularly with new Leaders and programs around Australia.

Available Heartmoves Programs

There are currently more than 240 Heartmoves programs available throughout Australia (May 1999 to April 2011):

- NSW—140
- Queensland—38
- WA—30
- Tasmania—14
- ACT—11
- SA—8
- Victoria—4

Integrating Heartmoves to rural and remote communities

Aboriginal Fitness Leader Training Case Study

The **Aboriginal Fitness Leader Project** was developed in partnership with Hunter New England Area Health Service, NSW Department of Sport and Recreation and the Heart Foundation NSW Division. All three organisations share strategic objectives to improve the overall health of Aboriginal people and increase physical activity levels. These objectives aim to reduce the disparity between Aboriginal and non Aboriginal communities in relation to levels of risk, levels of physical inactivity and disease burden. For example, 49% of Aboriginal Australians (aged >18 years) in non remote areas have reportedly engaged in less than 25 minutes of physical activity in the last two weeks.¹ Increasing levels of physical activity is a high priority with 53% of Aboriginal Australians having three or more modifiable risk factors for cardiovascular disease and 99% having at least one risk factor.²

Funding sources and timeline

The majority of the funding for this project was made available by Hunter New England Area Health Service Regional Health Services Program with a contribution from NSW Department of Sport and Recreation. The key milestones included:

- A start date in March 2008
- monthly meetings of the Steering Committee
- provision of a combined Cert III Fitness and Heartmoves Training Course in Armidale in July 2008

- a weekend mentoring session conducted in Newcastle in October 2008
- finalisation of accreditation in December 2008
- support for Leaders to establish their exercise programs (January 2009 to June 2009)
- final Outcomes Report in June 2009
- completion of Project July 2009.

Project objectives

These were to:

- build the capacity of Aboriginal communities to deliver a variety of exercise programs for Aboriginal Australians
- provide nationally accredited training in Fitness for Aboriginal people, enabling employment in the fitness industry
- provide nationally accredited Heartmoves training and support to enable the Aboriginal Fitness Leaders to establish Heartmoves exercise programs for clients with chronic disease, as a referral destination for Aboriginal Medical Services and Health Services
- support the Aboriginal Fitness Leaders to establish exercise programs for Aboriginal Australians in their communities.

Project description

The Aboriginal Fitness Leader Project involved training Aboriginal Health Workers (AHWs) and nominated Aboriginal Community Members (ACMs) in a Certificate III Fitness Instructor and Accredited Heartmoves Training Course. This training aimed to develop the skills of the participants to deliver culturally appropriate, safe, community based fitness programs. It targets those with or at risk of chronic conditions as part of their professional role in the community.

The project recognised the need within the workplaces of the AHWs for capacity to deliver exercise programs following the training. Hence it was decided that signed Service Level Agreements were required between the AHW's line manager and Director of the Community Health Strategy Group to ensure that the AHW's work plan would include capacity to deliver exercise programs following the training.

The training and credential packaging

The University of New England campus in Armidale was selected as the training venue, as it was located 6-7 hours drive North West of Sydney and equally accessible to the northern and western regions being targeted (Tamworth, Taree, Newcastle, Brewarrina, Walgett, Bourke and Gilgandra). The rural University campus provided a seminar room and a gym, as well as accommodation and meals for the participants.

The Outcomes

A total of 23 Aboriginal participants **enrolled** in the combined Certificate III (Fitness) and Heartmoves training (16 of these were funded by Hunter New England Health, and 7 were funded by the Department of Sport and Recreation). These 23 enrollees comprised of 11 Aboriginal Health Workers (AHWs), 5 Aboriginal Community members (ACMs) who were nominated by either local AHWs or the local Aboriginal community and 7 DSR Trainees.³

Of these, 17 (74%) attended the combined Training Courses and, of those who attended, 12 (71%) completed all components and achieved accreditation status.³

These leaders are now a resource for the Health Service, Aboriginal Medical Services and Aboriginal Communities. As at July 2010, 6 Heartmoves programs are being delivered by these leaders, and other leaders

have used their training in new Project Officer Positions. An additional 9 leaders have subsequently been integrated into existing Cert III and Heartmoves Training Courses.

References

- 1 AIHW: Pen E 2008. cardiovascular disease and its associated risk factors in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples 2004-2005. Cardiovascular Disease Series no. 29. Cat no. CVD41. Canberra. AIHW
- 2 AIHW: Mathur S, Moon L, Leigh S. 2006. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with coronary heart disease: further perspectives on health status and treatment. Cardiovascular disease series no. 25. Cat. No. CVD33. Canberra: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.
- 3 Aboriginal Fitness Leaders Project Interim Report Training and Credentialing Phases. New South Wales Department of Sport and Recreation, Hunter New England Area Health Service, Heart Foundation. Internal Report.