



National Fitness Leadership Alliance

Fitness for the Older Adult Leadership Performance Standards 2017

National Fitness Leadership Alliance Fitness for the Older Adult Leadership Performance Standards

Course Objective: At the end of the course the student should have the necessary knowledge and application skills to design and implement and lead a safe and effective Older Adult class for an apparently healthy population.

Aging Process

Performance Standard #1

The Older Adult Leader will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of the physiological, psychological and sociological effects of aging and its relationship to physical activity.

Competencies

- a) Knowledge of the difference between the terms chronological, biological and functional age
- b) Knowledge of the concept of functional fitness
- c) An understanding of the myths, stereotypes and barriers associated with aging and physical activity participation in later life
- d) Knowledge of probable age-related changes to the systems that provide and support movement in the body including cardiovascular, respiratory, muscular (decreased elasticity), skeletal, proprioception (balance), vision, integument (skin), digestion (nutrition), immune system and brain function. And the effect of physical activity on these systems in terms of increased risk & benefit
- e) Knowledge of potential changes to multiple dimensions of well-being related to aging. (i.e. intellectual/cognitive, emotional, physical, vocational, social, spiritual, environmental)
- f) Ability to identify the 5 levels of functional ability as identified in the Physical Dimensions of Aging
 - Dependent – cannot execute some of or all of the basic activities of living, including dressing, bathing, transferring, and toileting, feeding and walking
 - Frail – can perform activities of daily living (ADL) but cannot perform some or all of the activities necessary to live independently due to some disease or condition
 - Independent – live independently, usually without some debilitating symptoms of disease and may still have low levels of fitness
 - Fit – exercise at least 2 times per week or have a physically demanding job or hobby
 - Elite – train almost daily for competition or to engage in a physically demanding job or hobby
- g) Knowledge of sedentary lifestyle and other lifestyle choices/behavior that impact health
- h) Knowledge of physical literacy and how it relates to older adults
- i) Knowledge of atrophy and dystrophy and how it relates to older adults

Aging Process - Continued

Performance Standard #2

The Older Adult Leader will have knowledge of common health challenges facing older adults and how these changes affect functional mobility and independence.

Competencies

- a) Knowledge of the etiology of common health challenges relating to the aging process, including but not limited to: cardiovascular disease, stroke, hypertension, respiratory disorders, obesity, arthritis (including rheumatoid and osteoarthritis), osteoporosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), back pain, diabetes, balance and musculoskeletal conditions (including postural deviations Kyphosis and swayback and flatback) and motor control deficits (MS and Stroke), visual and hearing disorders, dementia, urinary incontinence, edema and joint replacement. chronic pain
- b) Knowledge of contraindications for a given health challenge (including those named above) and factors that affect appropriate exercise selection and modifications. (i.e. use of medication, supplementation or physical challenges)
- c) Knowledge of where and how to access accurate and credible information on diseases and related exercise precautions (i.e. health professionals, health association, websites).

Leadership and Communication Skills

Performance Standard

The Older Adult Leader will conduct a safe and effective exercise program using a variety of leadership styles and communication techniques appropriate for older adults.

Competencies

- a) Understand and apply the principles for developing a safe, friendly and fun exercise environment
- b) Explain the purpose of a given exercise and offer appropriate progressions, regressions and or alternatives
- c) Demonstrate an awareness of participants' feedback during an exercise program by acknowledging individual differences, considering the heterogeneous older adult population (e.g. gender, ethnicity, skill level, education level, health status)
- d) Identify potential challenges that leaders may experience in an exercise program and describe strategies for accommodating these situations for older adults (i.e. considering older adults with visual, hearing, proprioception and cognitive impairment)
- e) Knowledge of changes to learning in older adults (using a progressive approach and understand the breakdown of patterns, or modifications, when instructing complex movement patterns)
- f) Barriers to participation: including the following transportation, fear of falling, lethargic, medication use, family commitments etc.

Exercise Analysis and Risk Management

Performance Standard

The Older Adult Leader will demonstrate an understanding of methods that ensure safe and effective exercise programming for older adults.

Competencies:

- a) Describe pre-screening strategies for safe program delivery for older adults and their participation in physical activity (e.g., PAR-Q+)
- b) Demonstrate the use of space effectively to account for safety issues and needs of participants with visual, hearing proprioception or cognitive impairments
- c) Knowledge of Emergency Action Plan requirements, including safety issues related to but not limited to floor surfaces, proper footwear, lighting, acoustics, telephone, ventilation, and accessibility to water, washrooms, facility emergency procedures and exits
- d) Considerations for older adult programs: Facility type, size, location etc.
- e) The leader will need to be able to adapt exercises to health limitations, musculoskeletal disorders, postural deviations

Program Planning

Performance Standard #1

The Older Adult Leader will design an effective program using established methods and training principles. The Older Adult Leader will be capable of evaluating programs using measurable outcomes to ensure effective and appropriate programming.

Competencies

- a) List and describe the basic exercise components
- b) Describe methods for continued monitoring of older adult exercise intensity
- c) Describe methods to assess the effectiveness of an older adult exercise program
- d) Demonstrate an understanding of effective design and delivery for older adult exercise programming
- e) Knowledge of the change in THR to 30-75%
- f) Knowledge of change in strength repetitions to 8-15 repetitions
- g) Knowledge of the concept of falls prevention and common program requirements
- h) Knowledge of the CSEP Physical Activity Guidelines for the Older Adult

Program Planning - Continued

Performance Standard #2

The Older Adult Leader will design and conduct a safe and effective older adult exercise program using a variety of formats. The Older Adult Leader will have the ability to adapt programming to meet the needs of participants using available resources.

Competencies

- a) Prepare an effective lesson plan for an older adult program
- b) Demonstrate continuity of movements, progressions and compatibility with participants' abilities
- c) Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate exercises for strength, muscular endurance, balance, agility, flexibility, posture, and cardio-respiratory fitness for older adults
- d) Demonstrate and describe the components of older adult program design, including lengthened warm up and cool down, gradual aerobic progression, flexibility, muscle conditioning and relaxation
- e) Knowledge of exercise principles specificity, progressive overload, periodization and ceiling effect
- f) Demonstrate the use of ability-appropriate equipment
- g) Demonstrate ways to include social interaction

Use of Music

Performance Standard

The Older Adult Leader will demonstrate an understanding of the reasons for using music (or not) in an older adult exercise program

Competencies

- a) State or list reasons for using music (or not) in an older adult exercise program
- b) Identify the relationship between music and motivation for older adults
- c) Demonstrate how to pick music that is appropriate for content and intensity

Professional Practice

Performance Standard

The Older Adult Leader will demonstrate an understanding of their scope of practice and how to pursue continuing education related to exercise leadership.

Competencies

- a) Identify how to maintain their certification
- b) Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of a fitness leaders' code of conduct and scope of practice, including legal liability and insurance coverage
- c) Demonstrate the ability to identify and choose relevant current applicable professional development opportunities to maintain certifications

Applicable Definitions

Functional Fitness

Exercises train your muscles to work together and prepare them for daily tasks by simulating common movements you might do at home, at work or in sports. While using various muscles in the upper and lower body at the same time, functional fitness exercises also emphasize core stability.

Functional Age

A combination of the chronological, physiological, mental, and emotional ages.

Physical Literacy

As defined by Physical and Health Education Canada: Individuals who are physically literate move with competence and confidence in a wide variety of physical activities in multiple environments that benefit the healthy development of the whole person (PHE Canada, 2010).