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Annotated Bibliography: Facilitators & Barriers to Exercise in Older Adults

**Biedenweg K, Meischke H, Bohl A, et al. Understanding older adults' motivators and barriers to participating in organized programs supporting exercise behaviors. *J Prim Prev* 2014;35(1):1-11. doi:10.1007/s10935-013-0331-2.**

Summary: 39 older adults living in King County, Washington were interviewed regarding motivators and barriers to participation in an exercise program. The individuals who were interviewed had either declined to participate in a program, were participating in a program, or decided to start and then quit a program. The most frequently cited motivators to exercise were comradery, the desire to have a routine that instilled accountability, receiving encouragement from a trusted person, lack of program fees, program marketing, and location of the program. Barriers included not being motivated, the perception that the individual was already exercising enough, time constraints, and poor health.

Relevance: This study provides valuable insight into the perceptions of older adults who had the opportunity to join a community-based exercise program. The implementation of follow-up phone calls in CHAMP is one strategy that was designed to increase exercise adherence and help participants remember to fill out their calendars. When making these phone calls, it will be important to understand barriers that may affect a participant's willingness to exercise and subsequently help the participant develop strategies to overcome these barriers. Barriers that can be addressed during these calls include motivation, perception of current activity, and time constraints.

**Miller W, Brown PR. Motivators, facilitators, and barriers to physical activity in older adults: A qualitative study. *Holist Nurs Pract* 2017;31(4):216-224. doi:10.1097/HNP.000000000000218.**

Summary: A sample of active older adults was interviewed regarding the stimuli that causes them to exercise, the facilitators that contribute to exercise becoming a habit, and potential barriers that hinder regular physical activity. Results showed that health, social support, enjoyment, and making exercise a priority serve to stimulate regular exercise in active older adults. Reported facilitators of regular physical activity included comradery, convenience, and affordability. Finally, reported barriers included health problems, cost, and life circumstances.

Relevance: It is important for healthcare professionals to understand motivators, facilitators, and barriers to exercise in older adults to best meet the needs of this population. The information gained from this article can be applied when talking with CHAMP participants. Although cost is not an issue in this program, since CHAMP is free of charge, both life circumstances and health problems are likely to become barriers for many participants at some point. It will be important to understand the difficulty these challenges present and help participants find strategies to continue to adhere to their program when possible.

**Kiami SR, Sky R, Goodgold S. Facilitators and barriers to enrolling in falls prevention programming among community dwelling older adults. *Arch Gerontol Geriatr* 2019;82:106-113. doi:10.1016/j.archger.2019.01.006.**

Summary: This study aimed to identify factors that may increase an older adult's probability of joining a community-based falls prevention program. A questionnaire was administered to 369 community-dwelling older adults living in New Hampshire. Factors that were found to be associated with a greater likelihood of participating in a falls prevention program included history of falls, fear of falling, self-efficacy, and understanding the benefits of the program. Common facilitators included proximity to location of program, cost, friendly leader, and an opportunity to socialize. Barriers that were cited in the study include little concern about falling, lack of time, transportation, poor health, and program location being too far from home. 72% of participants reported that they were likely to register for a falls prevention program; however, only 28% were aware of whether or not a program was offered in their community.

Relevance: This study demonstrates that many older adults in the community are willing to join a falls prevention program; however, most are not aware of whether their community offers such a program. This information can be applied when selecting future CHAMP sites. It will be important to select locations that older adults can easily access and ensure that the program is advertised at senior centers and other community centers. Additionally, when conducting follow-up calls it will be important to ensure that the participants are aware of the benefits of the program to best facilitate adherence to their programs. Finally, if a participant is not concerned about the potential risk of falling, it will be important to educate him or her about the assessments that were conducted and the interpretation of their results (i.e. that the participant is at increased risk of a fall).

**Killingback C, Tsofliou F, Clark C. Older people's adherence to community-based group exercise programmes: a multiple-case study. *BMC Public Health* 2017;17(1):115. doi:10.1186/s12889-017-4049-6.**

Summary: This study aimed to better understand factors associated with adherence of older adults in group exercise programs. The results showed that in order to optimize exercise adherence in this population, five main factors need to be considered. These areas include individual factors of the participant, the instructor, program design, social features, and participant perceived factors. Ensuring the program is personalized, the instructor is encouraging and approachable, and that the participant is aware of the benefits of participation in an exercise program are likely to improve one's adherence to a program.

Relevance: This article highlights some of the main factors that promote adherence to an exercise program. When following up with participants, it will be important to ensure that they feel the program is tailored to their individual needs and that they understand the benefits of participation in the exercise program. Additionally, when conducting follow-up calls it will be helpful to be encouraging and receptive to any questions the participant may have. Hopefully, addressing these factors will ultimately increase the participant's adherence to the program.

**Bunn F, Dickinson A, Barnett-Page E, Mcinnes E, Horton K. A systematic review of older people's perceptions of facilitators and barriers to participation in falls-prevention interventions. *Ageing Soc* 2008;28(04):449-472. doi:10.1017/S0144686X07006861.**

Summary: This systematic review aims to analyze factors relating to adherence to falls prevention strategies in older adults. Factors that were found to facilitate participation in falls prevention strategies included social support, lower intensity of exercise, education, involvement in decision-making, and an understanding of the benefits of the program. Barriers included denial, low concern about falling, poor self-efficacy, no history of exercise, fear of falling, and poor health. The studies included in this review sampled older adults living both in the community and in long-term care settings.

Relevance: The barriers and facilitators to participation in an exercise program for older adults are important to consider when working with CHAMP participants. When speaking to participants it will be important to ensure that they feel supported and are educated about the benefits of participation in the exercise program. Additionally, it is important to understand the barriers they may face. If a participant is not concerned about falling despite demonstrating high risk of falls during the initial screening, they may need to be educated about the interpretation of their falls screening results. This information should be delivered in a gentle manner, in such a way that the participant feels supported and encouraged.