



The National Policy Programme for Older People's Physical Activity

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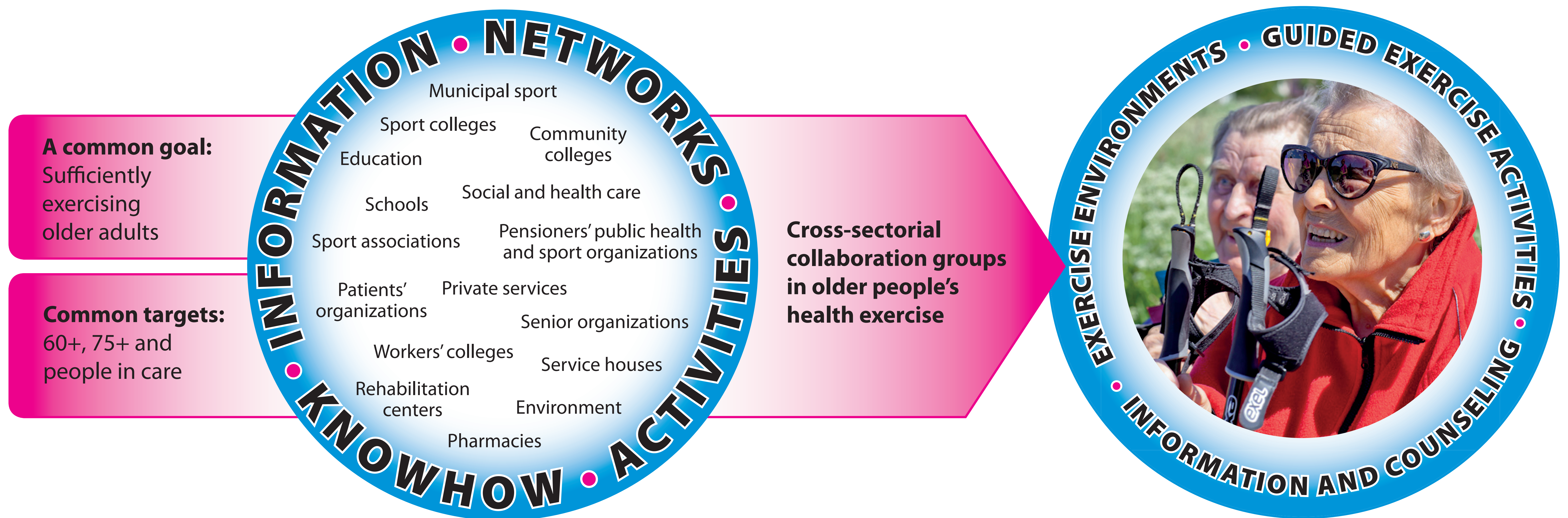


Figure 1. The National Policy Programme requires cross-sectorial collaboration with several actors

Background and aims

Finland is one of the fastest ageing countries in Europe. Exercise has a major role in supporting the health, mobility, mental well-being and memory of older population. Research shows that the physical activity of older adults is decreasing and only a few of them exercise according to health exercise recommendations. Especially strength and balance exercise is inadequate.

The National Policy Programme aims to promote the equal opportunities of older people, who do not get enough exercise for their health, to exercise according to current recommendations. Everyday mobility forms the basis of physical activity, and it is complemented by guided exercise.

Target groups

Target groups include older people who do not get enough exercise for their health and persons at the crossroads of their life course:

- 60+ retiring people
- 75+ independently living persons with early problems of functional capacity
- older people in home care, service housing or institutional care.

A networking method

The Policy Programme aims to increase the exchange of information, cross over sectorial borders, create networks and combine resources between various actors. The basis of the programme is to recognize each other, building trust and commitment in order to reach a common goal.

The cross-sectorial collaboration groups in municipalities produced more

- easy-access and safe exercise environments
- high-quality guided exercise activities
- information, counseling and knowhow

In order to promote collaboration in 2014, the programme organizes seminars in six municipalities together with Regional State Administrative Agencies. All interested parties are welcome to join the open network.

The Age Institute coordinates the Policy Programme together with a steering group. The programme is financed by Finland's Slot Machine Association, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and Ministry of Education and Culture.

Conclusions

The successful promotion of older peoples' health exercise requires networking and cross-sectorial methods. The national, regional and local networks of the Policy Programme should receive continuous maintenance, support and attention.

The Policy Programme can be read in English at www.liikkeellavoimaavuosiin.fi