

Good and active aging by intersectoral collaboration

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The national health exercise programme **Strength in Old Age 2010–2015**

- ▶ The national health exercise programme Strength in Old Age 2010–2015 aimed to promote physical activity of independently living older adults (75+) with decreased functional capacity by group exercises.
- ▶ The programme was carried out in 38 municipalities in Finland. In the programme, selected municipalities were supported with the help of mentoring which emphasized the intersectoral collaboration between public and private sector and NGOs.
- ▶ Group exercise activities for older adults were implemented by professionals and volunteers.



Table 2. Results from the focus group interviews of multi-sectoral members in the municipalities in spring 2016

Key factors facilitating intersectoral collaboration	Key factors hindering intersectoral collaboration
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• positive attitudes• motivation (willingness to collaborate)• joint goals• commitment to collaboration• strong coordination and clear roles of actors• support of policy makers and managers• appreciation of each other's and old people• small municipality – knowing each other• good information flow• suitable facilities• experienced benefits of collaboration (individual/organizational)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• lack of time• high turnover of workers• negative attitudes• lack of courage• bureaucracy• lack of support of policy-makers• lack of other resources• difficulties of involving all key partners to collaboration

The aim of this study was to identify the factors which can be either facilitators of or obstacles to intersectoral collaboration in executing physical health exercise for older adults in municipalities participating in the programme.

The data were gathered 1) by survey from trainers of exercise groups (n=83, response rate 78 %) and 2) by focus group interviews of multi-sectoral members in eight municipalities. The data were analyzed by statistical methods and content analysis.

Results

Table 1. Results from the survey from trainers of older people's exercise groups in late 2015

Key factors supporting collaboration in organizing exercise groups	Key problems in the collaboration in organizing exercise groups
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) efficient communication between actors2) joint training3) organizing network events4) nominating a coordination person5) municipal support for the cooperation between actors	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) lack of time2) facilities3) communication4) dissimilar ways of action5) agreement on cooperation

Conclusions

Functional collaboration is based on multiple individual and organizational level factors. Individual factors were highlighted as promoters. Willingness to work together and commitment to joint goals were key individual factors especially in facilitating intersectoral collaboration. A significance of an active coordination person were particularly crucial in enabling multisectoral working and organizing exercise groups in practice. Main challenges were limited time resources and involvement/commitment of all key actors.

Discussion

- ▶ Intersectoral collaboration empowers and obligates all actors dealing with 75+.
- ▶ The success of intersectoral collaboration requires joint goal and shared understanding of the significance of physical activity of 75+, and reciprocal (face-to-face) communication (supporting by e.g. mentoring).
- ▶ The continuity of intersectoral collaboration requires sustainable organizational structure and support of managers and decision-makers, in addition to good active coordination.

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