

Residents' views of physical activity as part of healthcare interventions

CFE Research



Contents

- These slides contain the findings from the Residents' Panel survey conducted in July 2023.
- 184 residents completed the survey.
- The findings cover:
 - The characteristics of those responding to the survey.
 - Awareness of the role physical activity can play in the treatment or rehabilitation of health conditions.
 - Experience of health conditions where physical activity could form part of treatment or rehabilitation, recovery and prevention.
 - Perceptions of the role physical activity can play in relation to the treatment or rehabilitation of health conditions.
 - Views about the most appealing types of physical activity as part of the treatment or rehabilitation of certain health conditions.

Demographic characteristics

Demographics of respondents on joining the panel

Age	Number of respondents
16-24	18
25-44	73
45-64	59
65+	34

Gender	Number of respondents
Male	69
Female	115

Ethnicity	Number of respondents
White British	168
All other ethnic groups combined	16

Disability	Number of respondents
No disability, mental health condition or illness	68
Yes, but no substantial impact on daily life	27
Yes, has substantial impact on daily life	77
Prefer not to say	11

Main employment status	Number of respondents
Employee full-time	61
Employee part-time	24
Self-employed	9
Retired	38
Unemployed and seeking work	10
Student	10
Not in work and looking after home or family	17
Long-term sick	14
Other economic activity	1

Demographics of respondents on joining the panel

Income	Number of respondents
Low income	89
Other income	82
Unknown	9

Household composition	Number of respondents
One or more adults, no children	114
One adult with one or more children aged under 18	28
Two or more adults with one or more children aged under 18	41

In an original Active Communities area	Number of respondents
Yes	60
No	124

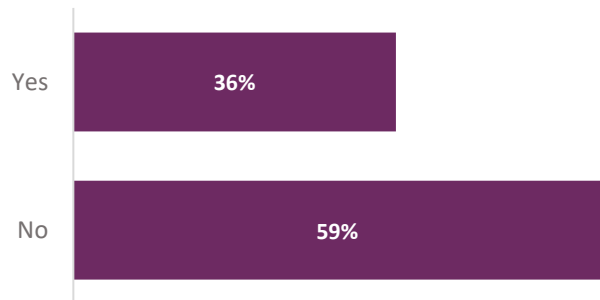
Physical activity level when joined the panel	Number of respondents
Physically inactive	48
Physically active at least once a week	136

**Awareness of the role
physical activity can
play in the treatment
or rehabilitation of
health conditions**

Information received about how physical activity can play a role in the treatment or rehabilitation of health conditions

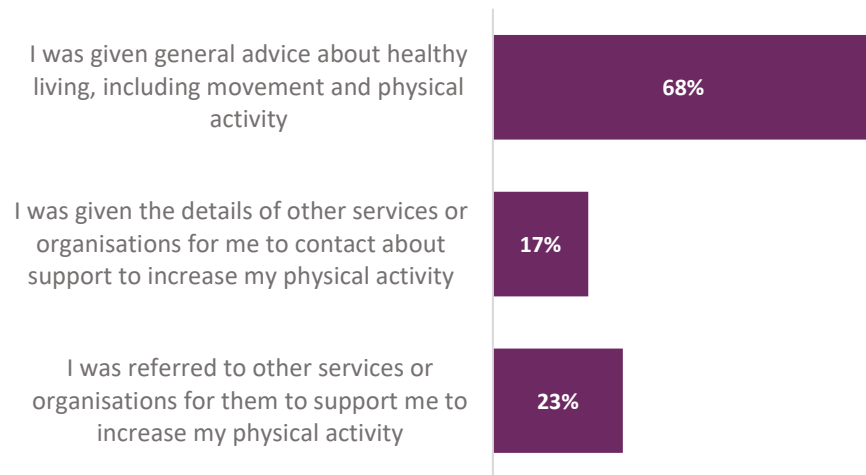
Experience of medical discussion

- More than **1 in 3** residents (**36%**) have had a conversation with someone at their doctor's surgery **about movement and physical activity**.
 - But this is significantly more likely if they have a **disability** that has a substantial impact on their daily life: only 18% of residents without a disability have had a conversation with a medical practitioner about movement and physical activity compared to 55% with a disability.



Type of advice received

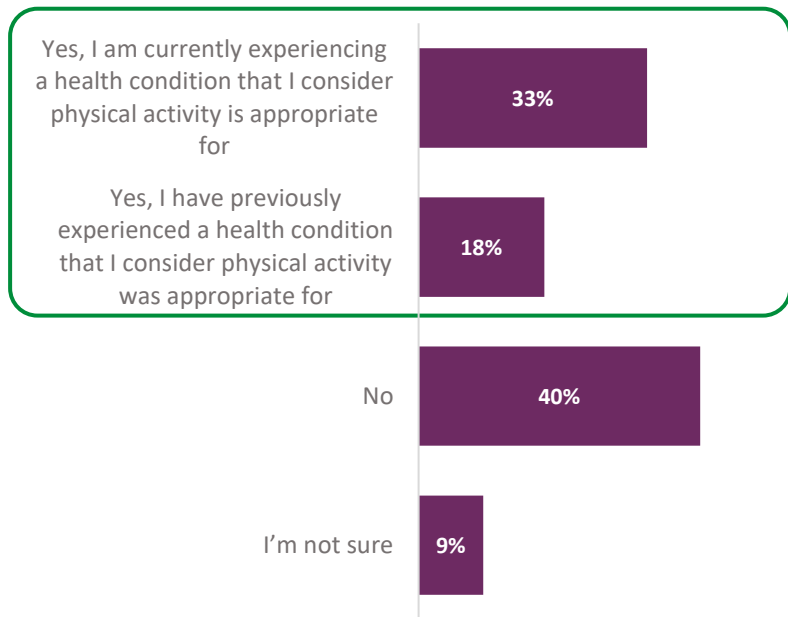
- For **two-thirds** of the residents (68%) who have had such a conversation this was in the context of **general advice about healthy living**.



Q1. Has anyone at your doctor's surgery, such as a doctor, nurse or physiotherapist, ever had a conversation with you about movement and physical activity? (n=184)

Q2. And what did this conversation involve? (n=65)

Experience of health conditions where physical activity may have aided treatment or rehabilitation, recovery and prevention

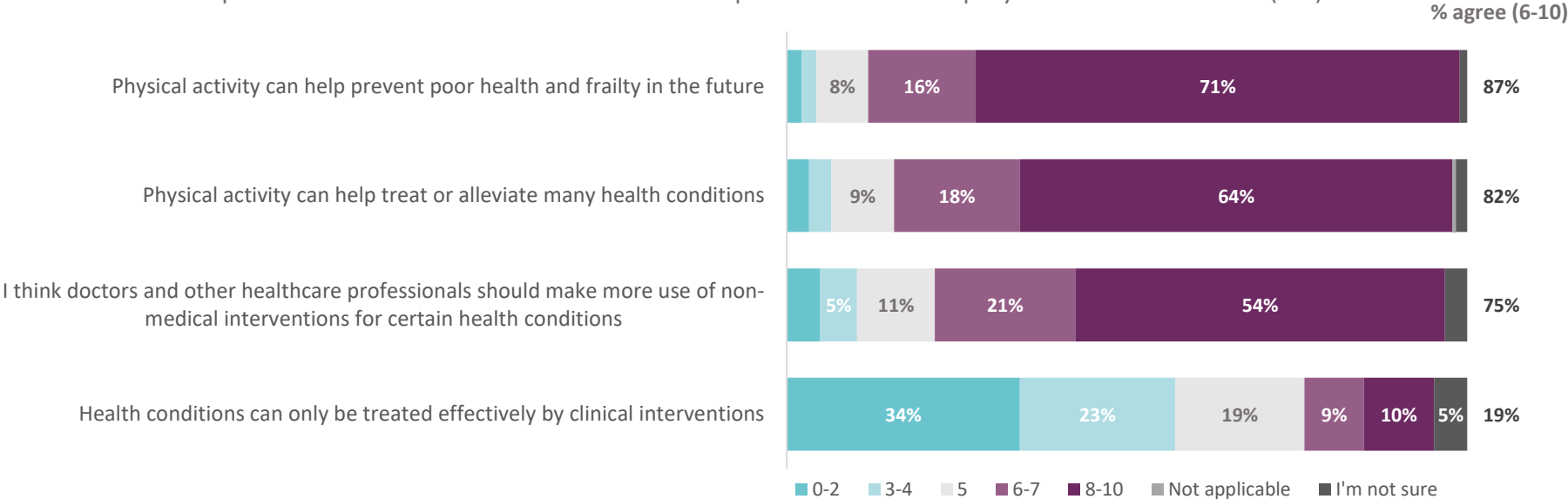


- **Half (51%)** currently experience or have previously experienced a **health condition** which they believe **could be helped by physical activity**.
 - 80% of residents with a disability that has no substantial impact on their daily life believe that physical activity could be appropriate as part of treatment or rehabilitation (as part of a current or previous health condition); this decreases marginally to 78% for those with a disability that significantly affects their daily life. Only 24% of residents without a disability report a health condition that could be aided by physical activity.
 - As residents get older, a higher proportion report a health condition that could be helped by physical activity (as part of a current or previous health condition): 18% for 18-24-year-olds compared to nearly two thirds (61%) for those 65+.
 - Nearly half (48%) who live as a single adult in a household with children are currently experiencing a health condition that could be improved by physical activity, compared to just 14% for residents living in two adult households with children.

Views about the role physical activity can play in the treatment or rehabilitation of health conditions

Views about how health conditions can be treated

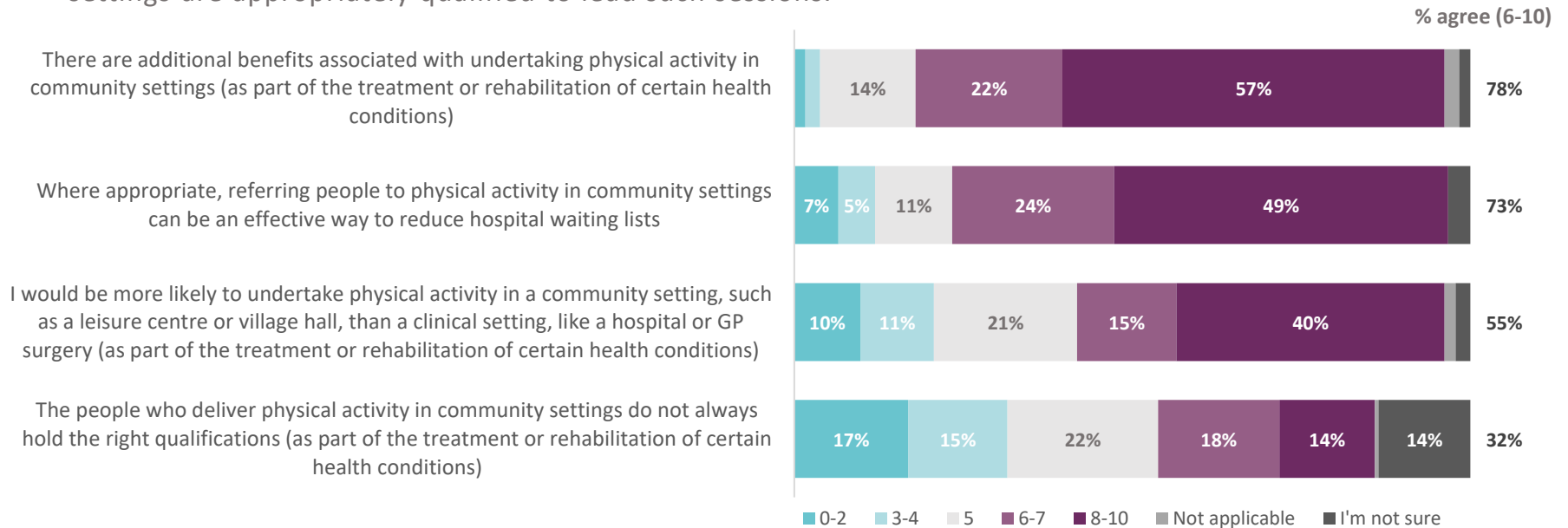
- The importance of physical activity for health is understood by most residents. Over **four in five** believe that it can help **prevent** (87%) and/or **treat** (82%) health conditions. Three quarters (75%) of residents consider that medical professionals should promote non-medical interventions, including physical activity. Just 19% believe that health conditions can only be effectively treated by clinical interventions.
 - A higher proportion of those currently not working due to long term sick (28%) disagreed that physical activity can help treat or alleviate health conditions compared to those employed in full-time work (5%).



Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about physical activity? (n=184)

Perceptions about undertaking physical activity in community settings as part of treatment or rehabilitation of health conditions

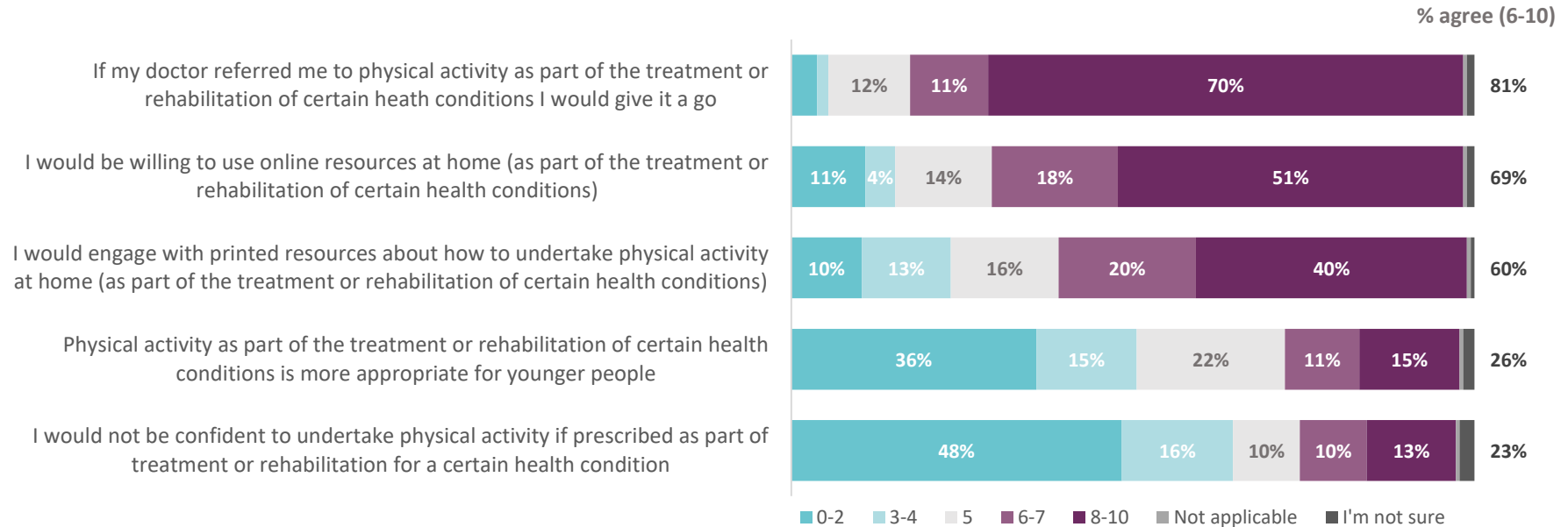
- Overall, residents are positive about the benefits of physical activity in community settings – bringing both additional benefits to individuals and helping to reduce waiting lists. **Over half** (55%) of residents would be more likely to undertake physical activity in a **community setting compared to a clinical setting**.
- However, barriers remain. Only **one-third** (32%) believe that people who lead physical activity in community settings are appropriately qualified to lead such sessions.



Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about physical activity? (n=184) Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about how physical activity as part of treatment or rehabilitation, recovery and prevention is delivered? (n=184)

Willingness to consider physical activity as part of treatment or rehabilitation of health conditions

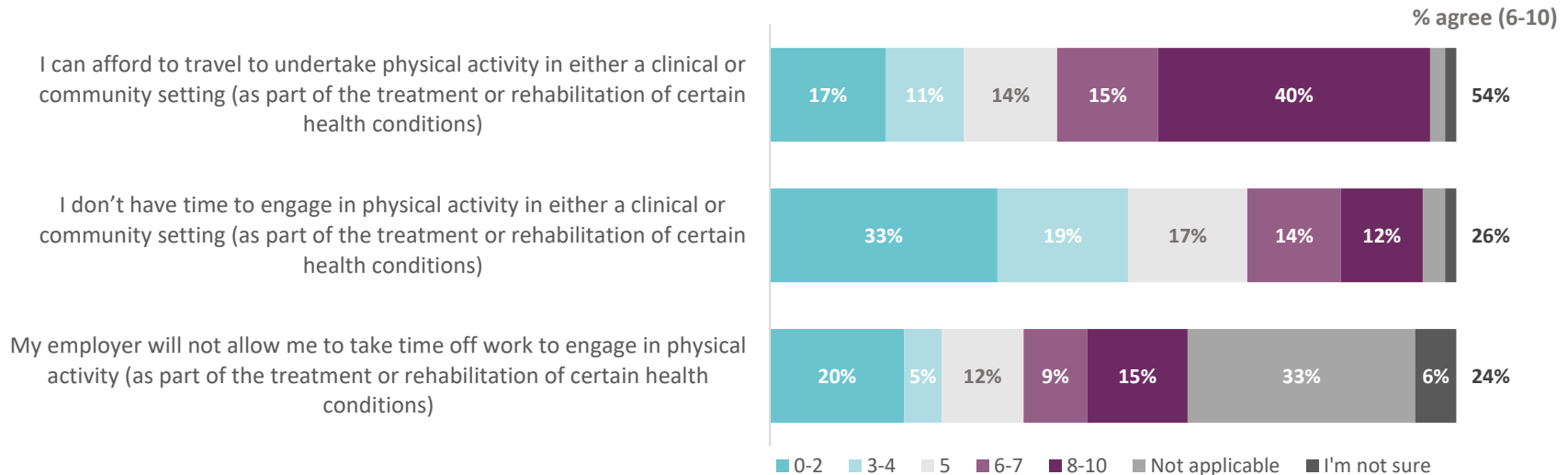
- **81%** would take part in physical activity if they were **referred by a doctor**. However, **one-quarter (23%) would not feel confident** to undertake a prescribed physical activity treatment programme.
 - Over three quarter of female residents (76%) strongly agree that they would take part in a prescribed physical activity programme compared to less than two thirds of male residents (59%).



Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about physical activity? (n=184) Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about how physical activity as part of treatment or rehabilitation, recovery and prevention is delivered? (n=184)

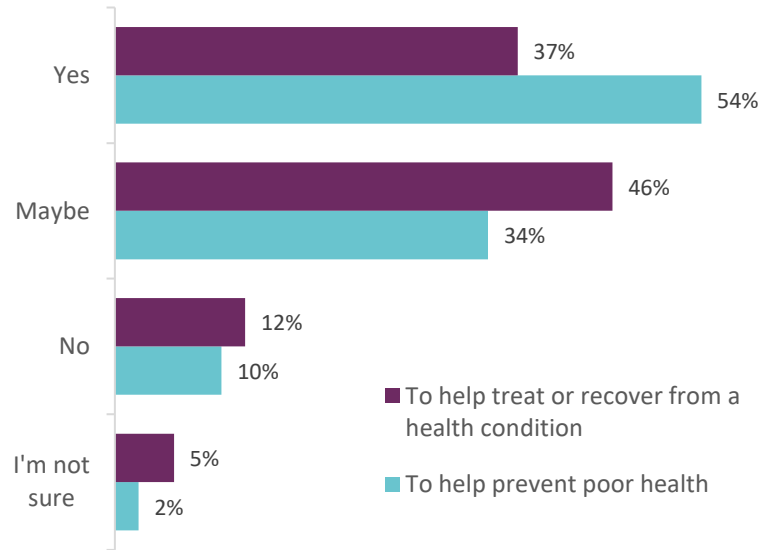
Potential barriers to undertaking physical activity as part of treatment or rehabilitation of health conditions

- **Over half (54%)** indicated that they **can afford to travel to undertake physical activity** treatment programmes.
 - A higher proportion of single parents (47%) disagreed that they could afford to travel to undertake physical activity programmes compared to adults without caring responsibilities (26%) or parents in a multi-adult household (22%).
- Time was not identified as a key barrier to residents engaging in a physical activity treatment programme. However, a greater proportion of non-British-white residents (37%) identified their own personal time as a barrier compared to white-British residents (25%).



Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about how physical activity as part of treatment or rehabilitation, recovery and prevention is delivered? (n=184)

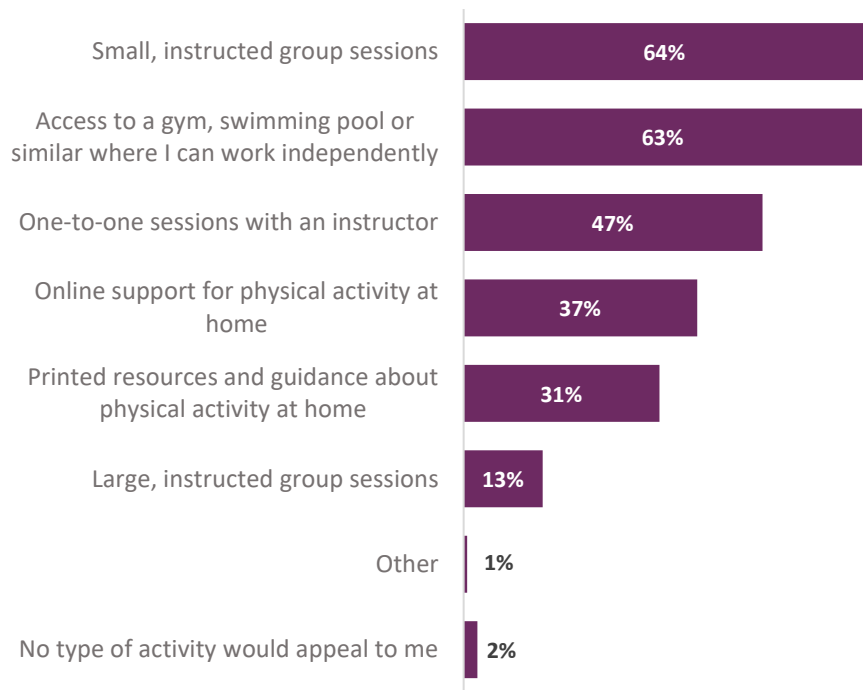
Likelihood to independently seek opportunities to do physical activity to help treat or prevent health conditions



- Only **one-third** (37%) of residents are likely to **independently seek opportunities** to do physical exercise to help treat or recover from a health condition, although this increases to 54% to help prevent poor health and frailty in the future.
 - A higher proportion of young people aged 16-24 (28%) would not independently look for opportunities for physical activity to treat or recover from a health condition compared to adults aged 65+ (3%).
 - A higher proportion of females (60%) would independently look for physical activity opportunities to prevent poor health and frailty in the future compared to males (43%).
- Only **one-third** of residents (34%) **know where to find information** about physical activity opportunities in Doncaster that could help or rehabilitate them from a health condition.
 - 81% of non-White British residents do not know where to find information compared to 38% for White British residents.

Q6. Without a doctor or healthcare professional recommending it, would you independently look for opportunities to do physical activity to help treat or recover from a health condition? (n=184). Q7. Without a doctor or healthcare professional recommending it, would you independently look for opportunities to do physical activity to help prevent poor health and frailty in the future? (n=184) Q8. Do you know where to find information about physical activity opportunities in Doncaster that could help treat or rehabilitate you from a health condition? (n=184)

Residents' preferred physical activities for the treatment or rehabilitation of health conditions



- If referred to physical activity as part of the treatment or rehabilitation of certain health conditions, residents are **most attracted** to facilities where they can do: **small instructed groups** (64%), **physical activity on their own** (63%), or **one-to-one sessions** with an instructor (47%).
 - Three quarters of non-white British residents (75%) identified they were attracted to one-to-one sessions compared to less than half of white-British residents (45%).
 - Only one-third (35%) of older residents aged 65+ would prefer access to a gym or swimming pool where they could work independently compared to 25-44-year-olds (73%) and 45-64-year-olds (66%).
- Approximately **one-third** of residents would find **online** (37%) and **printed resources** (31%) appealing.
 - A higher proportion of females would prefer online (46%) and printed resources (37%) compared to male residents (22% for each).

Key insights

So, what does this mean?

- There is significant potential for physical activity to be used as part of the treatment or rehabilitation of health conditions in Doncaster. Half of all residents were currently experiencing, or had previously experienced, a health condition which they believe could be helped by physical activity. The overwhelming majority recognise the benefits of physical activity in terms of helping to prevent poor health and frailty in the future and treating or alleviating health conditions. Importantly, they believe that healthcare professionals should make more use of non-medical interventions and challenge the view that health conditions can only be treated effectively clinically. 4 out of 5 residents indicated that they would give physical activity a go if prescribed as part of treatment.
- However, only a minority have had a conversation with someone at their doctor's surgery about physical activity. Most of these conversations are generalised advice about healthy living rather than specifically given information about where to do physical activity. This suggests that progress has been made getting physical activity into medical care pathways, but more needs to be done to embed this and ensure residents are getting consistent messages about the importance of being physically active. Encouraging healthcare professionals to signpost or refer residents to physical activity should be prioritised as these messages are likely to be positively received by residents.
- There is broad support for the delivery of physical activity in community settings, with residents recognising the additional benefits that physical activity can bring, such as helping to reduce isolation and loneliness, and perceive it to be an effective way to help reduce waiting lists. Barriers including the cost and time associated with travelling to physical activity are evident, but not to the extent anticipated. Instead, barriers centre on confidence engaging in physical activity and concerns about whether individuals delivering physical activity in community settings are appropriately qualified. This suggests that a focus of future work should be ensuring exercise leaders are fully qualified and communicating this to residents to increase their trust in community-based approaches.

So, what does this mean?

- Residents are more likely to independently seek information about physical opportunities to help prevent poor health and frailty in the future compared to helping to treat or recover from a health condition. This suggests that the importance of physical activity is more closely associated with health prevention – a finding reinforced by the marginally higher rate of agreement to the statement ‘physical activity can help prevent poor health and frailty in the future’ when compared to ‘help treat and alleviate health conditions’ more broadly.
- However, only one-third know where to find information about physical activity opportunities in Doncaster that can help with rehabilitation from a health condition. This suggests that more work is needed to promote opportunities to residents. In particular, a much higher proportion of non-white-British residents did not know where to find information, indicating more targeted advertising and messaging may be needed for different ethnic groups.
- These findings mask differences based on demographic characteristics that are important to understand:
 - A higher proportion of **younger adults** (16-24) would not independently look for physical activity opportunities to recover from a health condition compared to older adults (65+). A higher proportion of younger adults (16-44) would prefer to access a gym or swimming pool where they could work independently, compared to older adults (65+).
 - A higher proportion of **females** would independently look for physical activity opportunities to recover from a health condition compared to males. A higher proportion of females also identified they would prefer online or printed resources for physical activity compared to males. A higher proportion of females also strongly agreed that they would take part in a prescribed programme of physical activity compared to males.
 - A higher proportion of **non-white-British residents** identified they would prefer one-on-one physical activity sessions compared to white-British residents. Non-white-British residents were also more likely to identify time as a barrier than white-British residents.
- These highlight the importance of tailor community-based opportunities to their specific needs and barriers.