

**Dance  
to health**

## **VOLUNTEER PEER MOTIVATOR ROLE DESCRIPTION**

### **Project Name**

Dance to Health

### **Project Overview**

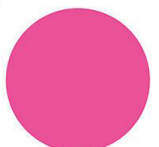
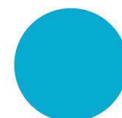
Dance to Health is a pioneering nationwide falls prevention dance programme for older people. Combining evidence and physiotherapy with the creativity, expression and energy of dance it reduces the risk of an older person suffering a fall.

Dance to health focuses on falls because:

- Falls represent the most frequent and serious type of accident in people aged 65 and over.
- 10% of ambulance calls are due to older people's falls.
- After a fall, an older person is 50% likely to have seriously impaired mobility and 10% will die within a year.
- Falls destroy confidence, increase isolation and reduce independence.
- Falls cost the NHS £2.3 billion per year.

The standard falls prevention exercise programmes have problems. Dance to Health has solutions.

- Recruitment is a problem. The programmes are 'dull as ditchwater' (Royal College of Physicians Clinical Falls Lead). Dance to Health has waiting lists.
- Only 40% who join standard falls prevention exercise complete the course. Dance to Health has achieved 73%.
- Only 38% use the evidence-based programmes which can reduce falls by 55%. Dance to Health uses these programmes.



- Maintenance programmes are rare and, without them, improvements are lost in 12 months. Dance to Health offers maintenance programmes at no cost to the health system.

Dance to Health offers a solution to problems with existing falls prevention programmes.

Dance to Health groups are led by trained Dance Artists who embed evidence based falls prevention physiotherapy exercise in creative, fun, sociable dance sessions for older people who have been suffering falls or are at risk of falling .

Each local Dance to Health programme has two elements:

**IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME** which uses evidence -based falls prevention exercise programmes, PSI/ FaME (primary prevention) and Otago (secondary prevention). The programme runs once a week over six months . Participants are also required to do at least 11 hours of homework over the six months. This enables them to complete 50 hours of activity in this period which is what the evidence requires .

**MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME:** following on from the improvement programme, a local ongoing Dance to Health group, which meets for one session per week and is part of the Dance to Health family. Participants who have completed the improvement programme continue to stay active – and other older people are welcome to join too.

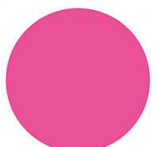
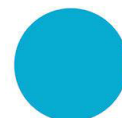
Peer Motivators are involved in supporting both the Improvement Programme and the Maintenance Programme

## **Role Title**

Peer Motivator

## **Role Description**

Every Dance to Health group includes Peer Motivators. These are volunteers aged 60+ with interest in or experience of dance or keeping active.



As a Peer Motivator you will participate in the dance sessions, offering encouragement and support to other group members. Peer Motivators are part of the dance team delivering the project and your help will ensure that all participants get the one-to-one support they need to maximise the benefits of taking part.

## **Where**

Dunkirk House, Taunton

## **When**

Dance to Health groups run weekly and each session lasts for 2 hours (90 minutes of activity and 30 minutes for refreshments and socialising). You need to be able to come to group sessions on a regular basis.

Days and times of groups tbc.

## **Main Duties**

Participate in Dance to Health group sessions, offering particular support, encouragement or one-to-one help to participants where required. For example, you may be asked to demonstrate seated options to less mobile participants.

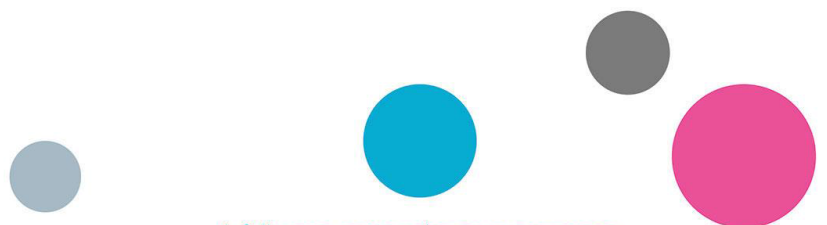
You will be part of the dance delivery team and the dance artist leading the sessions will direct you on how to help in each session.

You may also help with collecting monitoring information from group participants – including offering help to complete membership forms or evaluation questionnaires to those who need it.

## **Skills/Experience Required**

Previous experience of taking part in dance is useful but not essential. You do need to be fit enough to take part in Dance to Health sessions.

You need to be understanding, patient and empathetic, in order to be able to support group participants who need extra help and encouragement during sessions.



Confidence with completing forms and paper work would be an advantage to help with monitoring information.

### **General Information**

Peer Motivators receive full training, including a grounding in PSI/ FaME and Otago, the physiotherapy programmes underpinning Dance to Health. You should be available to complete this training (usually one full day) before the Dance to Health group sessions start.

You will receive ongoing support in your role from the Dance Artist leading your group sessions and the Dance to Health Programme Manager

Volunteers are reimbursed all reasonable out of pocket expenses. We appreciate your giving us your time, and don't expect you to give us your money too!

**This is initially a 6 month role which may be extended for a further year.**

### **Contact**

If you are interested in the Peer Motivator role, please contact Alison Lord  
[alison@takeart.org](mailto:alison@takeart.org)

