

4b6

Nomination Rights

Do

Health or care services obtain the right to say who can occupy certain seats or places in the group, or nominate a number of places at a reduced cost.

Story

One Primary Care Trust has linked up with local Leisure Services to fund an Exercise Promotion Officer. She does individual interviews for people referred by GPs and then offers twelve sessions in mainstream leisure centres at subsidised cost. Graduates can then join the

ordinary leisure centre membership scheme at a reduced cost, hence reducing the risk of withdrawal after the twelve sessions are over. This means that the subsidies are split between the first transition (joining the exercise referral group) and the second transition (moving from the group to mainstream participation).

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Hints & Hazards

There may be a feeling of ‘safety in numbers’ for those on the scheme. The free admission may not be enough to overcome the person’s anxiety and they may need other supports too in order to attend. Design the nominated activity so that it maximises the chance to make a personal connection with a member of the public who chooses to use the same setting.

Accepting and using nomination rights may actually act to promote discrimination by implying that people using them do not have the same rights as other community members. Ask yourself – what right does the activity provider have to judge or limit people’s participation?

If representatives of the leisure centre or other community organisation are trained too (e.g. with 4a5: Inclusion Training) then this might help them to respond well to the people who are nominated.

In addition to exercise referral, there are also GP referral schemes to education and arts – sometimes generally called ‘social prescribing’. But does this mean that exercise becomes somehow ‘owned’ by the healthcare system, rather than people undertaking it for its own sake? Is the GP using his or her power in an appropriate way to influence the patient beyond the traditional role of medicine and into wellbeing and lifestyle issues?