

Feedback from Tai chi leaders on participant recruitment

The British Lung Foundation asked TMW leaders for feedback regarding recruitment to the groups. Only two group leaders returned information which is provided below:

Leader 1

In summary, I approached many people, approximately 200 via community groups, local GPs etc. Only 2 or 3 people attended that I did not personally know through existing community groups. In other words if there was not already an established bond with me personally the uptake was very low. Of the people who attended, not already known to me, only 1 of them made it to the end.

I was surprised by the lack of response from GP's and Hospitals despite me doing live presentations for them. Whileis a big city there is no question that the location was suitable as I run community groups in those areas anyway with high retention. There is also a large catchment of people with COPD etc.

Yes, there are positive elements within such as for those who did turn up they relaxed but there is a question about sustainability going forward.

Leader 2

Here at... I had 12 participants with a respiratory condition join and participate in the evaluation.

9 completed the 12 weeks and 3 gave up before the end of the 12 weeks. It is absolutely impossible to say how many people were approached. Flyers were put up in our hospital respiratory department and the staff there were aware of the project and would have advised their patients. If you recall we didn't have long to promote the classes as we only completed the course and qualified at the end of November. The evaluation had to commence by the beginning of February and as I am sure you realise that winter time is not the best time health-wise for anyone managing a lung condition. It would have been better and more successful in gaining participants if the evaluation had started around Easter and ran through the summer months.

What I can say is that of the 9 participants who took part and completed the 12 weeks, 6 of them are still regularly attending Tai Chi TMW classes. They are enjoying the sessions and a couple of them regularly talk at the Breathe Easy Group or at Pulmonary Rehab Groups about the benefits and this helps to recruit others to the classes. I have to admit because we structure the classes and costs on a 6 week basis, quite a few do just the 6 weeks and then leave. A few have returned for further 6 week cycles. I am giving talks and taster sessions to Hospital Physios.

Recently, Falls Prevention Physios came to a Taster session and I am gaining participants from their patient groups. Also those living with Parkinson's and MS are also joining my classes. I now have a nice mix of participants with a variety of long term conditions. Early next year I am giving a Taster Session to the Respiratory Physios and Staff.

I hope this information is useful for the evaluation.