

A focus on physical activity interventions: Edinburgh 2019



A mixed methods investigation into the Barriers and Facilitators of Exercise Referral Scheme adherence: implications for enhancing participant experience

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Retrospective cohort study of the South Tyneside Exercise Referral Scheme 2009–14: predictors of dropout and barriers to adherence

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- 6894 participants. 37.8% (n=2608) drop out at 6/52. 50.03% (n= 3449) at 12/52.
- Gender: 46.7% of males and 52.2% of females dropped out*
- Age: Mean age of adherent participants significantly larger than dropouts 51.1±15.3 vs 45.7±15.6 years*

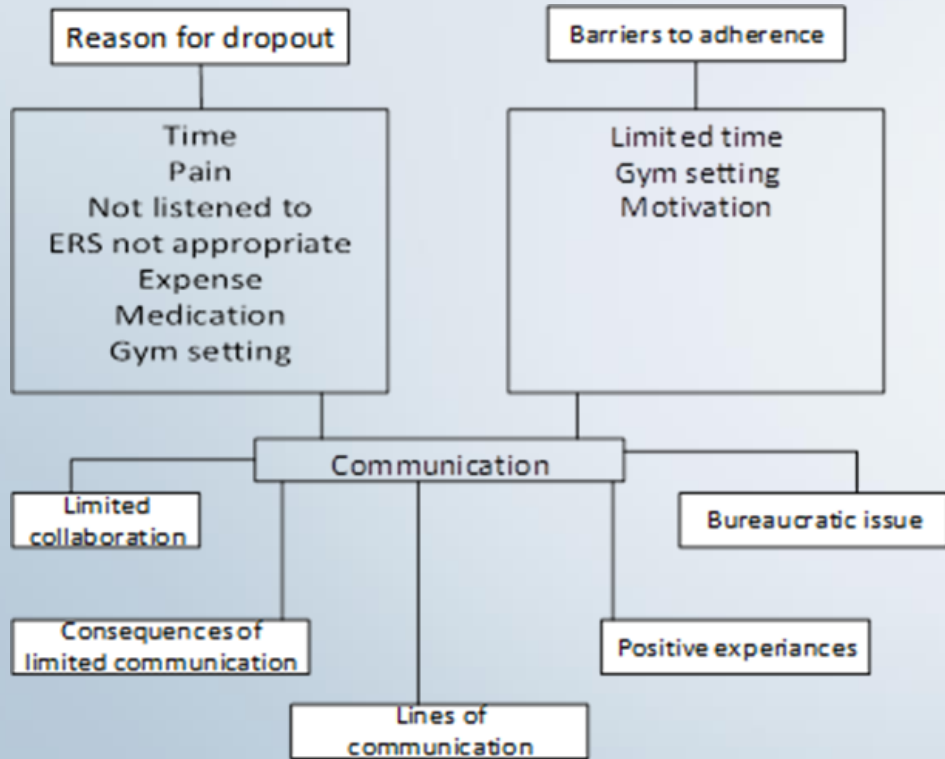
* Significant difference at $p < 0.001$

- The strongest predictors of dropping out were smoking (OR=1.58, 95% CI: 1.29-1.93) or being a Tier 3 referral (OR=1.47, 95% CI: 1.25-1.73).
- Increasing age (OR=0.98, 95% CI: 0.98-0.99), drinking alcohol (OR=0.82, 95% CI: 0.71-0.95), being a secondary care referral (OR=0.68, 95% CI: 0.52-0.90), having a lack of motivation (OR=0.81, 95% CI: 0.69-0.95), or a lack of childcare (OR=0.69, 95% CI: 0.50-0.95) decreased the likelihood of dropout.

Qualitative phase

Interviews (n=11)

- All Under 55 years, dropout within 6/52



Focus group (n=7)

- Successfully adherent (all Males over 64)

- Barriers and facilitators to adherence
 - Finance
 - Embarrassment
 - Motivation
 - Social interaction
- Keys to success and future recommendations
 - Effort/commitment/perseverance
 - Realistic goal setting & recognising objective markers/improvement
 - More information on nutrition and exercise.

- Knowledge & Autonomy

- More info on nutrition and exercise. In a tangible, take home format, with less reliance on the gym.

Future directions and/or Implications for policy and practice

- Should all individuals always be referred to ERS?
 - Participants recognise that “one size does not fit all”
 - Better to refer older, non-smokers, with less co-morbidities?
- Communication
 - Develop meaningful goals, involve participant, tailored plans, address anxieties or problems that individuals may envisage with the referral/attendance
- Knowledge/education
 - Adherent and non-adherent participants alike requested more information, keen to be more autonomous.