**A Guide for Referrers**

**Why refer your patients/clients to a FaME programme?**

**(Falls Management Exercise programme)**

Falls and fractures are costly, to the NHS, to social care and to the individual and their families or carers. In Cardiff and Vale, reducing the number of injurious falls and improving quality of life is a priority. FaME is a cost-effective evidence-based intervention, it has been commissioned by Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and provided by Elderfit, a community interest company with specialist qualified exercise instructors.

**What is FaME?**

* FaME is a structured exercise programme that in clinical trials has been shown to **prevent or reduce falls, reduce the fear of falling and increase habitual physical activity and fitness**. It has efficacy in adults who live independently (not in a care or nursing home).
* The FaME programme is led by a Postural Stability Instructor (PSI) with specialist training for working with older people at risk of falling. They have the ability to tailor the structured exercises and progressions to suit an individual’s medical conditions and functional ability. They will do their own health and function assessment of the person on the first visit.
* FaME is delivered over 24 weeks in weekly 1-hour group exercise classes (approximately 10-14 participants per class) plus directed home exercises to ensure effective dose and get quicker functional gains. Elastic resistance training bands and small items of equipment and mats are used throughout the programme.
* The evidenced based elements of the programme include:
  + Functional leg muscle strengthening and balance retraining that progress in difficulty
  + Functional progressive trunk and arm muscle strengthening
  + Bone loading targeted prime fracture sites
  + Endurance/cardiovascular training (including walking) and flexibility training
  + Functional floor skills and skills to rise from floor (preventing long lies)
  + Adapted Tai Chi

**Who is FaME for?**

FaME is ideal for older adults aged 65 or over who:

* + are at risk of falling
  + have a fear of falling
  + have fallen but do not need medical investigations (patients who need further investigations should be referred to appropriate services/ GP)\*
  + are becoming concerned about their balance/stability or are more cautious towards activities they used to enjoy

*\*Please note: Patients who have had recurrent falls in the last year should be referred to their GP first in order to rule out any medical causes for their falls.  They may then be able to book onto FaME following appropriate assessment and rehabilitation.*

**Contraindications to FaME exercise**

Very few conditions are contraindicated for taking part in the FaME programme and are in line with usual **medical contraindications** to any exercise programme. These are:

* **Uncontrolled** angina
* Resting Systolic BP> 180 mmHg or resting Diastolic BP > 100 mmHg
* Tachycardia >100 bpm
* Significant postural hypotension
* Acute systemic illness (e.g. acute cancer-related problems, pneumonia)
* Visual or vestibular disturbance
* **Unstable** or acute heart failure
* Recent **injurious** fall **without** a medical examination
* **Unable** to maintain seated upright posture due to neurological deficits
* **Impaired cognition** where simple movement instructions cannot be followed
* People who place themselves or others at risk

**How do I direct patients to the programme?**

* If you have a FaME information flyer for participants, please let them have a copy and talk through the questions on the flyer with them. Refer to the details above in order to consider suitability for the programme.
* If you and the patient feel that they would benefit from taking part in FaME, encourage them to contact Elderfit and self-refer through the contact details on the flyer in their own time or whilst you are with them, [gareth.elderfit@gmail.com](mailto:gareth.elderfit@gmail.com) 07731 382 224
* Elderfit will contact the patient and arrange the best class (time and date) for them to attend for their baseline assessment with the PSI and to check they have no medical contraindications to exercise.

*Please note that participants do have to pay a small fee of £2.50 per session to take part in this programme. This ensures both the programme sustainability and the engagement of participants into longer term exercise options once FaME has ended.*

For further information about falls prevention, visit the Keeping Me Well website:

[Falls - Keeping Me Well](https://keepingmewell.com/services/what-is-physiotherapy/falls-prevention/)

