gym for all

Asking About Support Needs

Quick Start Guide for Exercise Professionals



Ask every time. Needs can change.

1. Check in

Start each visit with a short conversation.

- Ask about support needs at each visit.
- Start with: "How are you today?"
- Ask how they felt during and after the previous session.
- Use feedback to decide whether anything needs to be changed, adapted or progressed.
- Give the person time to explain what they need.

> "Ask me what I need today."



2. Ask what has changed

Find out what may affect today's session.

- Ask whether anything has changed since the last session.
- Ask about relevant changes to medication.
- Ask if pain, fatigue, balance, mobility or confidence are different today.
- Focus on information relevant to safe exercise and support.

> "Needs can change from day to day."

3. Agree the support for today

Decide together what will help.

- Ask what would help today.
- Ask whether they use any equipment, aids or strategies that help.
- Ask before providing physical assistance or touching the person.
- Agree what support they are comfortable with, where and when.
- Speak directly to the person, even if a supporter is present.
- If something is not safe, explain why and work together on an alternative.

> "Ask before helping or touching me."

! Avoid

- ✗ Assuming that what worked last time will work today.
- ✗ Starting with "No, you can't do that."
- ✗ Touching or assisting without agreement.
- ✗ Talking only to a supporter instead of the person.

Support should be agreed with the person, not decided for them.

Content for this quick start guide was developed with a co-design team. Illustrations were generated using artificial intelligence.