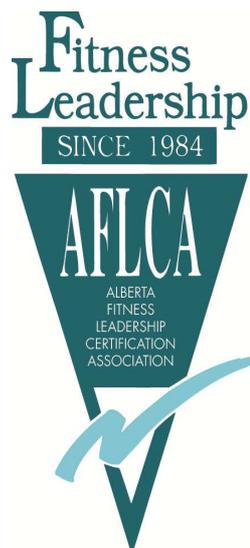# National Fitness Leadership Alliance

Older Adult
Performance Standards
2015

National Fitness Leadership Alliance
Older Adult Leader
Performance Standards

An Older Adult Exercise Leader demonstrates the necessary skills to design and implement safe and effective exercises for older adults.

Older Adult Leader Performance Standards build on the NFLA Exercise Theory Prerequisite Knowledge Base.

Health-Related Benefits of Physical Activity for the Older Adult

Performance Standard #1
The Older Adult Exercise Leader describes the benefits of group exercise classes.

Competencies
1. Defines group exercise
2. Explains current trends and factors that influence the popularity of group exercise
3. Describes and explains the benefits of group exercise

Performance Standard #2
The Older Adult Exercise Leader applies knowledge of the physiological, psychological, and sociological effects of aging and its relationship to physical activity.

Competencies
1. Differentiates among the terms chronological, biological, and functional aging

2. Describes the myths, stereotypes, and barriers associated with aging and physical activity participation in later life
3. Identifies probable age-related changes to the systems that provide and support movement in the body, including cardiovascular, respiratory, muscular, skeletal, proprioception (balance), vision, integument (skin), digestion (nutrition), immune system, and brain function, and the effect of physical activity on these systems in terms of increased risk and benefit
4. Explains potential changes to multiple dimensions of wellbeing related to aging
5. Describes the five levels of functional ability as identified in the World Health Organization Health-Fitness Gradient: dependent, frail, independent, fit, and elite

Performance Standard #3
The Older Adult Exercise Leader recognizes common health challenges facing older adults and how these challenges affect functional mobility and independence.

Competencies
1. Identifies the etiology of common health challenges relating to the aging process, including but not limited to:
   - cardiovascular disease
   - stroke

- hypertension
- respiratory disorders
- obesity
- arthritis
- osteoporosis
- back pain
- diabetes
- balance and motor control deficits
- visual and hearing disorders
- dementia
- urinary incontinence
- joint replacement
2. Chooses modifications and/or selects appropriate exercise for given health challenges and factors that face participants
3. Indicates where and how to access information on diseases and related exercise precautions

Leadership and Communication

I Leadership

Performance Standard #1
The Older Adult Exercise Leader identifies and demonstrates qualities, strategies, and skills of effective leadership appropriate for Older Adult exercise.

Competencies
1. Identifies professional qualities of leadership
2. Identifies the skills of effective Older Adult exercise leaders
3. Recognizes leadership strategies in the delivery of Older Adult exercise classes
4. Describes effective leadership styles and motivation techniques
5. applies the principles for developing a safe, friendly, and fun exercise environment
6. Identifies potential challenges that leaders may experience in an exercise program and describes strategies for accommodating various older adults

II Communication

Performance Standard #2
The Older Adult Exercise Leader recognizes and demonstrates a variety of effective communication techniques appropriate for Older Adults.

Competencies
1. Distinguishes between verbal and visual cueing
2. Describes how to enhance verbal cueing and visual cueing
3. Explains effective communication skills
4. States forms and techniques of giving and receiving feedback
5. Responds to participants' feedback during an exercise program, acknowledging

individual differences and considering the heterogeneous older adult population
6. Identifies techniques to reduce voice injury

III Working with Groups

Performance Standard #3
The Older Adult Exercise Leader demonstrates knowledge of group dynamics.

Competencies
1. Explains how to create a supportive, participant-centred environment
2. Identifies challenges in leading group exercise classes
3. Explains the stages of group development
4. Identifies behaviour modification strategies for motivating older adults based on the Transtheoretical Model of Behaviour Change (Stages of Change Theory)

Professional Practice

Performance Standard

The Older Adult Exercise Leader demonstrates knowledge of professional conduct in a group exercise setting.

Competencies
1. Acts in accordance to the scope of practice
2. Adheres to the code of conduct
3. Acts as an informed resource to colleagues and class participants
4. Maintains accreditation
5. Demonstrates commitment to continued education and professional development

Program Planning

I Exercise Analysis

Performance Standard #1
The Older Adult Exercise Leader selects safe and appropriate exercises for the goals and objectives of a group exercise class.

Competencies
1. Identifies the process of movement analysis
2. Describes the principles of movement analysis
3. Explains the intended purpose of a given exercise, analyzes its potential risks, and provides modifications
4. Defends exercise selection for appropriate use
5. Identifies common exercise modifications

6. Identifies how to progress exercise for a given muscle group
7. Explains the importance of proper body alignment, posture, and core stabilization
8. Identifies ways to correct errors in technique

II Class Design

Performance Standard #2
The Group Exercise Leader designs an effective program using established methods and training principles.

Competencies
1. Identifies the steps in class design for an older adult exercise class
2. Describes the components of an exercise class
3. Explains the purpose and demonstrates variations of a given component of fitness for an older adult exercise class
4. Demonstrates ways to execute the exercise selections for participants abilities
5. Applies the FITT formula to an exercise class
6. Applies principles of conditioning to a variety of group exercise programs
7. Identifies and differentiates methods to monitor exercise intensity
8. Describes ways to evaluate the effectiveness of class design
9. Lists and describes functional fitness skills in an appropriate class setting
10. Describes use of a variety of training methods and types

III Use of Music

Performance Standard #3

The Older Adult Exercise Leader selects music appropriate to both the class format and audience.

Competencies

1. Lists reasons for using music in classes
2. Explains uses of music in an exercise setting
3. Identifies music appropriate for different class formats, styles, and pace
4. Identifies safe music and microphone volumes
5. Acknowledges music copyright laws

IV Use of Equipment

Performance Standard #4

The Older Adult Exercise Leader demonstrates how to use equipment to enhance training for various participants and class types, ensuring that it is both safe and effective.

Competencies

1. Describes the purpose of different pieces of portable exercise equipment
2. Describes advantages and disadvantages of using a piece of equipment
3. Identifies when it is or is not appropriate to use equipment
4. Designs appropriate exercises and alternatives using various pieces of equipment
5. Demonstrates the application of ability-appropriate equipment
6.

V Risk Management

Performance Standard #5

The Older Adult Exercise Leader leads classes in such a way to minimize and manage risk.

Competencies

1. Identifies the importance of health screening
2. Assesses and addresses potential environmental safety issues through the demonstration of the effective use of space to account for safety issues and needs of participants with visual, hearing, or cognitive impairments
3. Assesses and addresses potential equipment safety issues
4. Recognizes the implications of legal issues
5. Identifies common emergency procedures and the exercise leader's role in response to emergencies
6. Knows emergency action plan requirements, including safety issues related to but not limited to floor surfaces, proper footwear, lighting, acoustics, telephone, ventilation, and accessibility to water, washrooms, facility emergency procedures, and exits