

# "Someone Like Me" !

Peer Mentors Promoting Physical Activity with  
Older People

*A national programme and a partnership  
between Ageing Well UK and the British Heart  
Foundation National Centre for  
Physical Activity and Health.*

Network update 3. December 2003



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**Welcome to the third network update for the  
“*Someone Like Me* Project !”**

**This is the third in a series of regular updates which will keep all those involved in the learning network up to date with the work of the programme.**

**In this update :-**

- 1. Senior Peer Mentoring and Physical Activity  
– what is it about ?**
  
- 2. Senior Peer Mentors – what do they do ?**
  
- 3. Details of future development activities and training events .**
  
- 4. Details of the British Heart Foundation National Centre Website and other Web pages**
  
- 5. Other useful information.**
  
- 6. Programme impact assessment and monitoring – can you help us ?**

## 1. Senior Peer Mentoring and Physical Activity – what is it about ?

**Someone Like Me !** is a National programme to recruit, train and support Senior Peer Physical Activity Motivators. Established through a National Partnership between Age Concern's ActivAge Project and the British Heart Foundation's National Centre for Physical Activity and Health at Loughborough University, the programme and has now been running for two years.

The programme is designed to establish methods of working in which older people (Seniors) learn to mentor other older people in the promotion of health enhancing physical activity and encourage their peers to become physically active. Evidence suggests that by involving older people themselves in health education and promotional activities with their peers there is the potential to deliver a health gain in partnership with large numbers of older people.

### Why “Someone Like Me” ?

Whilst it is recognized that older people recognize the importance and authority of their GP in providing health information and advising on the benefits of physical activity, Senior Peer Mentoring is built around the opportunities for older people to advise other older people. Older people are most likely to listen to “Someone Like Me” who can offer time to talk and display an understanding of the many barriers to physical activity as well as provide a positive and realistic role model.

### The **Someone Like Me !** Network

The network now comprises over 90 individuals and incorporates some 20 or more local programmes who are recruiting, training and supporting older volunteers to promote physical activity with their peers.

New local programmes.

Since the last update, over 60 professionals attended regional training events in April and June 2003 and new programmes are being established in Bramley in Leeds, Lincolnshire and Sutton in Ashfield, North Nottinghamshire and North Yorkshire. Kirklees and

Wigan are now training their second cohorts of Senior Peer Physical Activity Motivators and a further 5 local programmes are in the early stages of development.

## **2. What do senior peer mentors do ?**

Evidence from projects suggests that mentors can undertake a variety of roles and in addition to ***physical activity mentoring*** in the accepted 1 to 1 format, are also acting as

***Physical activity buddies*** - they accompany a hesitant beginner or an active partner, providing social support and friendship and :-

***Physical activity ambassadors*** (Champions is perhaps a bit overworked !) where they undertake visits to a variety of groups and places, giving presentations and talks about physical activity.

What else ?

We also know that Senior Peer Mentors also go onto further training and learning. Some become volunteer walk leaders, others go onto to undertake exercise group teaching.

## **3. Future development activities and training events**

National one day training courses

Designed for those developing local programmes, these events will cascade training to professionals who want to train their own Senior Peer Physical Activity Motivators.

### **Venues and dates**

**London and South - Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2004 (London)**

**South West and Wales – Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2004 (Bristol)**

**North and East Midlands – Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2004 (Sheffield)**

**North West – Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2004 (Manchester)**

For further details of these events and application forms contact Later Life Training at [www.laterlifetraining.co.uk](http://www.laterlifetraining.co.uk)

## May 2004 Evaluation seminars

Senior Peer Health Mentoring - does it work and how do we know ?

A one-day event that will look at the evaluation of local programmes, the range of indicators that might be used and methods of capturing such information.

### Venues and dates

London, Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2004  
Manchester Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Details and application forms for these events will be available in February 2004



#### 4. New on the BHFNC website

For more details of **Someone Like Me !** visit the training page of [www.bhfactive.org.uk](http://www.bhfactive.org.uk) and download copies of documents and programme materials.

New to the website this month is

**Making the Case for *Someone Like Me !***

How do you make the case for a local programme and establish local working relationships ? Some local partners may be unfamiliar with the concept of working with Senior Peer Health Mentors and volunteers and made need a little more convincing. In this section you will find materials (including a powerpoint presentation) designed for use with a range of local agencies with the purpose of encouraging them to become involved as partners to a local programme. Download and off you go !

## **5. Other useful information**

### **Chief Medical Officers Report on Physical Activity and Health.**

Additional information concerning the benefits of physical activity for older people is likely to be contained in the Chief Medical Officer's Report on Physical Activity, currently being drafted and due to be published in the Spring of 2004. It is anticipated that this document will strengthen the case for the promotion of physical activity with older people.

### **Health Development Agency**

The Health Development Agency has produced three separate briefing sheets for the NHS, local authorities and voluntary sector.

The different versions of ***Improving the health and wellbeing of people in mid-life and beyond: Making the Case***

can be downloaded via the links below.

NHS leaflet [http://www.hda-online.org.uk/documents/midlife\\_nhssector.pdf](http://www.hda-online.org.uk/documents/midlife_nhssector.pdf)

Local authorities leaflet

[http://www.hda-online.org.uk/documents/midlife\\_localauth.pdf](http://www.hda-online.org.uk/documents/midlife_localauth.pdf)

Voluntary sector leaflet

[http://www.hda-online.org.uk/documents/midlife\\_volunsector.pdf](http://www.hda-online.org.uk/documents/midlife_volunsector.pdf)

The ***ACTIVE for LATER LIFE*** Resource

Published by the British Heart Foundation in June 2003, the ***ACTIVE for LATER LIFE*** Resource provides a comprehensive guide to the promotion physical activity with older people of all ages.

It has been designed to be used :-

- As an advocacy tool with managers and commissioners of health services and those who work in their strategic development of programmes for older people
- As a guide to planning for a range of providers to help increase opportunities for older people

- and includes summaries of evidence and physical activity recommendations, policy and strategic connections and well as a series of working papers and practical ideas on programming physical activity opportunities for older people.

Copies of the ***ACTIVE for LATER LIFE*** Resource are available for a suggested donation of £20.00. To order your copy, please contact the

BHF order line Tel 01604 640016 or email [ds-bhf@mail.dataforce.co.uk](mailto:ds-bhf@mail.dataforce.co.uk) and quote reference G152

## **National Mentoring Network**

The National mentoring Network was set up in 1994 and is funded by membership fees and support from the DfES and the Home Office.

The Network promotes the development of mentoring, offers advice and support to those wishing to set up or develop mentoring programmes and set up a forum for the exchange of information and good practice.

For further details contact  
National Mentoring Network, First Floor, Charles House,  
Albert Street, Eccles, Manchester M30 0PD  
Tel 0161 787 8600  
Email [natment@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:natment@globalnet.co.uk)  
[www.nmn.org.uk](http://www.nmn.org.uk)

## **Older Learner Awards**

Are you particularly proud of the work of your Senior Peer Physical Activity Programme and your local volunteers ? Then why not enter for an Older Learner Award ?

Supported by NIACE, each year Adult Learners' Week recognizes the achievements of individual and groups of adult learners. If you know someone who could inspire and motivate others, why not nominate them ? The closing dates for entries for 2004 is 9<sup>th</sup> January 2004

Adult learners Week will be celebrated from 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> May in 2004 and may provide the ideal springboard for local publicity and promotion of your own local scheme

Nomination forms and further information available for NIACE at [www.niace.org.uk?alw](http://www.niace.org.uk?alw)

## **Ageing and Physical Activity Resources**

Human Kinetics have published a summary of resources for exercise and health professionals who work with older people. This includes details of joining ISAPA (the International Society for Aging and Physical Activity) an international not for profit society promoting research, clinical practice and public policy initiatives on the area of ageing and physical activity and subscribing to the Journal of Aging and Physical Activity.

For more information visit  
[www.HumanKinetics.com](http://www.HumanKinetics.com) or Tel 0113 255 5665 and  
[www.isapa.org](http://www.isapa.org)

### **The CHAMPS programme**

For details of the US Community Healthy Activities Model Programme for Seniors (CHAMPS) programme involving seniors in promoting physical activity with other seniors visit:

<http://www.ucsf.edu/champs/resources/publications/>

### **6. Programme impact assessment and monitoring – can you help us ?**

Following two years of joint working, the BHF National Centre for Physical Activity and Health at Loughborough University and the ActivAge Unit, Age Concern England wish to assess the impact of the Senior Peer Health Mentoring programme.

The purpose of this impact assessment is to

- a) establish the number, status and scope of local programmes
- b) Assess the impact of different local programmes
- c) enhance the knowledge of those in the Someone Like Me ! information network

with the purpose of sharing information and identifying future training and development needs and establishing the case for future development

## Gathering the evidence

Senior Peer Health Mentoring and the training and support of Physical Activity Motivators has the potential to make a significant impact upon older people's health. However, future developments and sustainability will remain dependent upon the accumulation of **sufficient and different** types of evidence that will continue to persuade service managers and funders that such programmes can make an impact upon the health of older people and in this case, motivate and encourage older people to become physically active

We are aware of the impact that such programmes can have upon the quality of lives of volunteer Senior Health Mentors but in answering the question **Does it work ?** we also need to capture more **evidence of successful mentoring** which has **turned theory into robust practice**.

This request for information is being sent to all those local partnerships and professionals who

- a) have undertaken Senior Peer Physical Activity Motivator cascade training
- b) are part of the Someone Like Me learning network

We would be grateful if you could take time out to complete and return the request for information. Which is attached as a separate email to this update and also featured at the following websites

[www.bhfactive.org.uk](http://www.bhfactive.org.uk)  
and [www.laterlifetraining.co.uk](http://www.laterlifetraining.co.uk).