

The UK Cystic Fibrosis and Exercise Network: An update from national meetings

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Objectives: Exercise is integral to cystic fibrosis (CF) care, and because roles and responsibilities of CF teams in providing exercise are not yet defined, continued training of staff for exercise testing and prescription is warranted. A network of health care professionals with interest in exercise provision in CF has previously been established through national meetings since 2016 (1). An update on the network and 2018 meeting is provided.

Methods: 40 delegates from 27 institutions in the UK (NHS Trust = 19, University = 5, Other = 3) attended a study day and meeting in 2018, consisting of talks, discussion groups and workshops. Delegates completed a survey (1) using Likert scales, categorical and open answers for quantitative and qualitative data – focusing on clinical practice and meeting evaluation.

Results: Respondents found the meeting useful (96%) and stated it will inform future practice (88%). Physiotherapists (48%) and exercise technicians (30%) were primarily responsible for exercise testing and prescription in their centres in 2018 – a change from 79% and 16% respectively in 2017. Exercise is discussed with patients at every (54%) or at least every other (27%) clinical visit. 75% of respondents are ‘confident’ in discussing exercise with patients – an increase from 2017 (67%). Delegates stated further training, qualifications and guidance would be beneficial. Delegates from 2016 also attended in 2017 ($n = 5$), with 23 attending both 2017-18.

Conclusion: Continued development of the network highlights a need to support and share best practice to inform the role of exercise in CF care. Emergence of exercise technicians within CF offers the potential to relieve physiotherapy workload whilst enhancing exercise provision. Exercise is valued by clinical staff, regularly discussed, and with increasing confidence, although further resources are needed to improve exercise provision in CF care.

Reference:

- 1.Tomlinson et al. (2018). *Eur J Person Centred Health*, 6, 196.