

Clinically evidenced (PHISICAL study) to reduce the rate of falls, increase physical activity levels and improve wellbeing. Strength and Balance classes such as FaME are recommended by NICE, NHS England and Public Health England.

Strength and balance exercise programme derived from the Physical Activity Implementation Study In Community-dwelling Adults (PHISICAL) study which asked the questions:

1. Is FaME still effective and cost effective when commissioned routinely by public sector organisations?
2. Do the commissioned FaME programmes retain their quality and fidelity outside of the research setting?
3. What are the barriers and facilitators in relation to commissioning and delivering the FaME programme?

It ran in the seven districts of the East Midlands in collaboration with the 7 district leisure services within Leicestershire and Rutland County Council.

29 programmes we investigated, Return on investment of £2.28 for every £1 spent

The programmes are 24 weeks in duration with 45 min - 1 hour classes with an allocated time to socialise afterwards. This reached the 50 hours min threshold to be effective.

Classes are delivered by qualified Postural Stability Instructors (Active Devon or in the study by later life training). It can take months to be trained and need to be level 3 instructors to start training.

They followed the FaME tailored delivery model.

Classes held in village halls, sporting venues, leisure centres and a few in sheltered housing complexes.

Some classes were FOC and some were £3 per session.

None were offered transport to the classes

Participants referred by public sector services e.g. community falls rehab service, GPs Fire and rescue services, or local area co-ordinators.

Eligibility criteria based on ProAct65+ trial. Always

1. have detailed risk assessments for the venue and class to include for example: Access, lighting, temperature, floor surfaces, obstacles, distances to toilets, chairs available, emergency action procedures for venue
2. Ask about participants health at the beginning of each session
3. Constantly review class numbers
4. Be future proof and what equipment is available to allow progression e.g. weights, steps, band
5. Follow up non-attendance with a phone call and seek feedback
6. Have a cover instructor but do a handover
7. Review the location of the venue

8. Don't underestimate users determination to attend sessions
9. Make it social - tea/coffee shop nearby
10. Keep participants informed e.g. timetable, names and details of contacts, change of location
11. Give them homework to do in between classes

Providers met a few times a year to share learning and had co-produced solutions in a forum called the 'Community of Practice' Forum.

Outcome monitoring and quality assurance are essential.

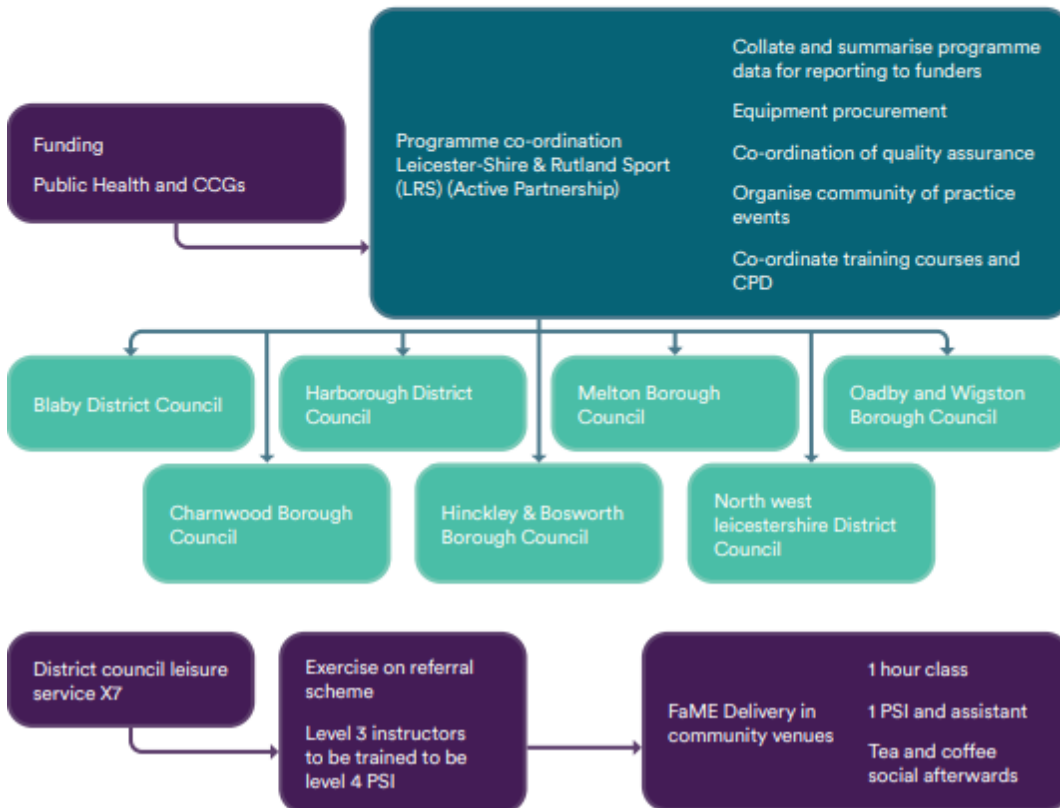
Example delivery models

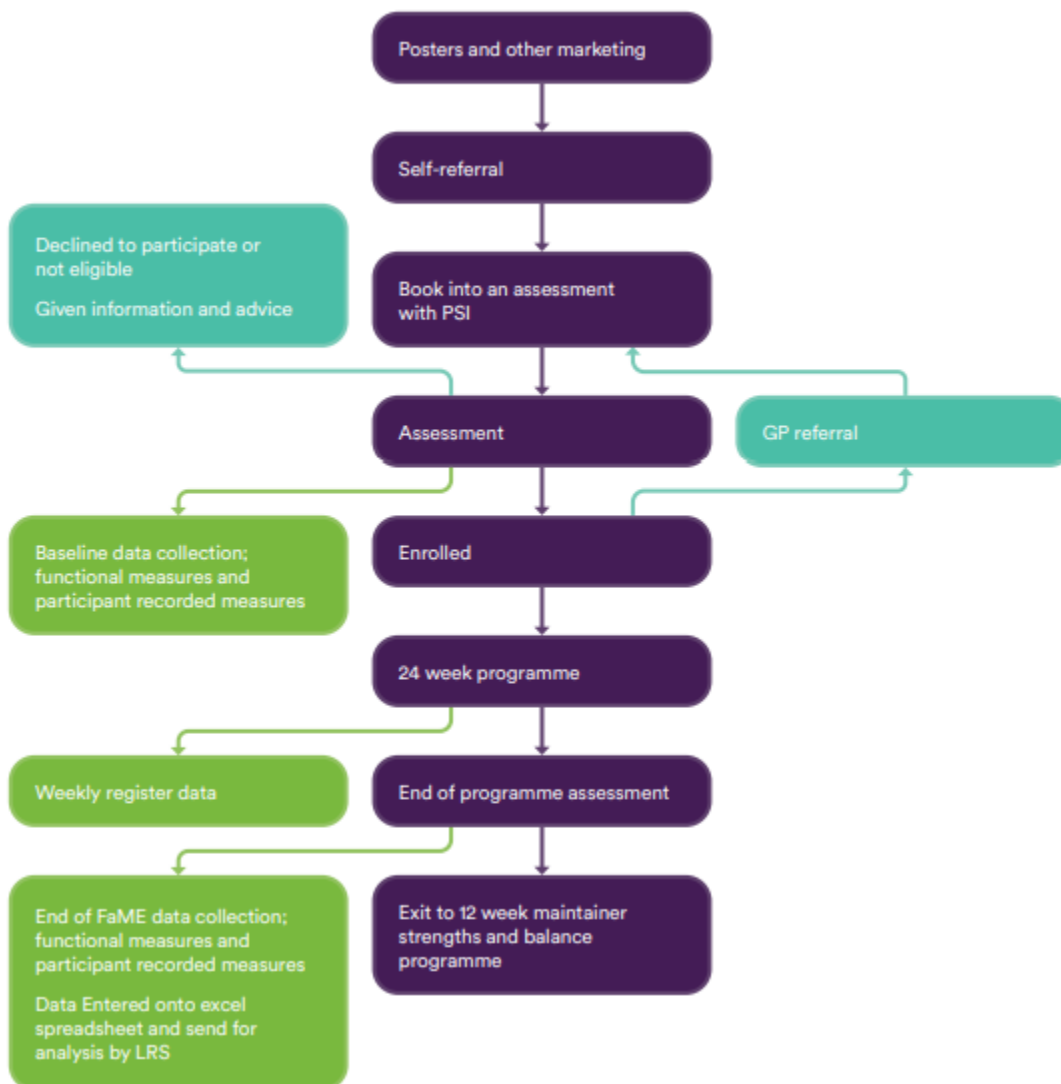
The report 'Raising the bar on strength and balance: the importance of community-based provision' by the Centre for Ageing Better and University of Manchester's Healthy Ageing Research group presents the models of delivery, issues, barriers and innovative solutions of community-based strength and balance programmes. The report is full of downloadable documents and videos from programmes across England that illustrate good and innovative practice.

The figure below illustrates the FaME programme in Leicestershire (locally called Steady Steps) examined in the PHISICAL study.



www.ageing-better.org.uk/publications/raising-bar-strength-balance





Joining the FLEXI (FaLLs Exercise Implementation) N-Fit study they are looking at the use of FaME in different areas and are asking these questions:

We aim to:

- 1) Understand how best to increase availability of FaME in two new areas and assess the role that the toolkit plays in this. Using the toolkit we will work with local experts to promote FaME to organisations that decide what health services should be funded locally.
- 2) Study the delivery of FaME in the new areas and see if programmes work in these populations by measuring improvements in participating individuals.

3) Test ways of maintaining the quality of FaME programmes over time. Working with Later Life Training, a national not-for-profit organisation with expertise in FaME, we will measure the quality of programmes and test what works to make them better.

We will use this information to improve the implementation toolkit and develop plans to support national implementation of FaME.

So we could be part of this FaME evaluation to assess the effectiveness of implementation