Exercise and Fitness Training after Stroke: A Handbook for Evidence-Based Practice

Gillian Mead, Frederike van Wijck, editors

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Gillian Mead and Frederike van Wijck's *Exercise and Fitness Training after Stroke: A Handbook for Evidence-Based Practice* provides health and exercise professionals with the current state of evidence and guidelines to design and evaluate exercise programmes for people living with stroke. The book is intended for a broad readership that includes not only health and exercise professionals and students but also people living with stroke and their caregivers.

The book's four parts cover a broad range of topics related to exercise programming for people living with stroke. Part One, titled "Essentials of Stroke Care," provides a foundation of knowledge on stroke pathology, signs and symptoms, and neurological sequelae. An important feature for people with stroke and their caregivers, this section can also serve as a review for health and exercise professionals.

Part Two, "Foundations for Exercise and Fitness Training after Stroke," gives an excellent and comprehensive overview of the current state of knowledge in this area of practice, notably including a theoretical model of possible causes and factors contributing to lower fitness levels after stroke and the interrelationships between primary and secondary effects of stroke inactivity (Figure 4.4). The critical chapter "Evidence for Exercise and Fitness Training after Stroke" summarizes the empirical evidence to support training after stroke, making use of clearly presented and easy-to-read tables and figures.

Part Three, "Practical Applications of Exercise and Fitness Training after Stroke," includes another critical chapter, "Designing and Delivering an Exercise and Fitness Training Programme," which covers important principles and considerations in designing and executing exercise programmes for people living with stroke and is supplemented with excellent photos of exercise directions. Specific considerations for adapting exercise programmes for this population are discussed, including strategies

for working with people with very low fitness levels, hemiplegia, or sensory and perceptual difficulties.

Chapter 8, "One Stroke Survivor's Journey," is a first-hand account of the importance of exercise and physical activity after stroke, which provides insight into the benefits of exercise and fitness training for people living with the effects of stroke. John Brown's personal story will appeal not only to health care and exercise professionals but also to those with shared experience of living with stroke. Since each person's stroke experience is different, providing diverse perspectives from other stroke survivors, or even from the caregiver perspective, would have enhanced this chapter.

Finally, Part Four, "Exercise after Stroke: Service Design and Guidelines," considers post-stroke exercise programmes from a broader health and community services perspective. The authors explore current models of community exercise for people with stroke and pose questions for implementation and future service delivery—for example, Should programmes use new models or existing templates? Is any activity after stroke a good thing?

Each chapter concludes with "summary points" that provide key take-home messages. Furthermore, while many of the complex and technical concepts presented, such as epidemiological terms and research methods, may be unfamiliar to lay readers who do not have a strong research background, the authors make an effort to mitigate this problem by using less technical language throughout; a glossary of terms is also provided at the end of the book.

Exercise and Fitness Training after Stroke is an excellent resource for health care and exercise professionals implementing exercise programmes for people living with stroke, as well as for stroke survivors and their caregivers. The purpose and intended audience are consistently emphasized throughout, and the content is comprehensive, practical, easy to follow, and well organized. The text is supplemented with figures, tables, and photographs, and "key points" summarize take-home messages from each chapter.

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