

MAKING WAVES IN THERAPY

AQUATIC Therapy

Community Aquatic Therapy was designed in 2008, as an interdisciplinary treatment program, bringing together recreational therapy and physical therapy for community clients with disabilities and chronic conditions to improve physical, social and leisure functioning.

At the time there was no available aquatic exercise program safe enough to meet the needs of the client population experiencing constraints to their leisure engagement.

Clients are assessed by a Recreation Therapist and a Physical Therapist and complete a 12 week session in either individual or group exercise treatment.

After the 12-week Community Aquatic Therapy, clients have the opportunity to join AquaLite. This low intensity aqua exercise was developed to sustain client progress. Post -discharge clients were not joining a community pool exercise program due to its fast-paced and overwhelming environment. Therefore, to continue to provide inclusive aquatic services, the Therapeutic team collaborated with Recreation Excellence

(contracted to manage the pool facilities in the City of Lethbridge) to offer clients an adapted water exercise at a low cost. Developed in 2013, AquaLite promotes client transition and leisure independence.

Targets for Change:

- Improved strength and mobility
- Pain relief
- Relaxation and stress reduction
- Improved range of motion and flexibility
- Better coordination and balance
- Increased motivation and exercise adherence
- Increased self-efficacy



The social health benefits of participation in Community Aquatic Therapy are best shared by the clients. Being a part of aquatic exercise...

- Provides me with a safe activity that I can do with others.
- Motivates me to get out of the house.
- Helps me make new friends.
- Makes me feel important.
- Makes me feel like I am a part of a group.

“I added a ‘joy rating’ because I felt so proud of myself that I entered the pool and participated in water walking.”
- Client

“As a psychiatrist I feel this is an excellent program which has proven to provide clients with an opportunity to break with social isolation and become more involved with others in their community... a real life saver!”
- Dr. Madelene Kellerman

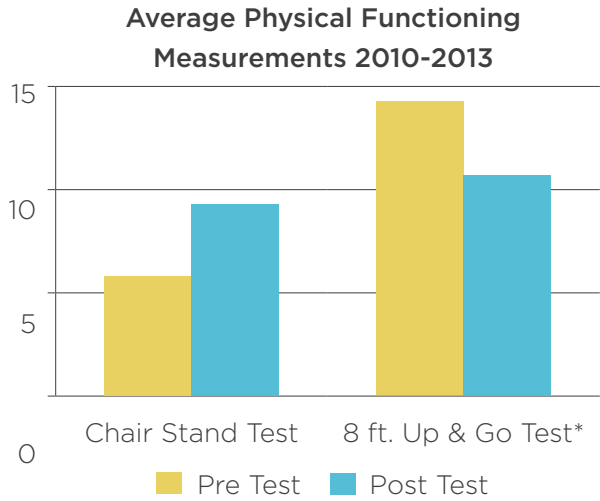


Outcomes

Clients participate in Community Aquatic Therapy 1 x q week for 12 weeks. Outcomes are measured through Chair Stand Test, 8 Foot Up & Go Test, and Aquatic Experience Questionnaire.

Baseline to post-intervention change resulted in...

- improved lower extremity strength
- improved functional mobility
- improved social engagement



- 34% improvement in lower extremity strength as measured by the Chair Stand Test
- 23% improvement in functional mobility as measured by 8 Foot Up & Go Test

**note: the improvement is seen in clients taking less time to travel 8 feet*

Aquatic Experience Questionnaire (AEQ)

This questionnaire measures client’s subjective experience from 0 to 9, “9” being the highest positive experience. AEQ measures elements of flow through challenge/skill ratio, anxiety & boredom, focused attention, and intrinsic motivation. It also measures social and activity enjoyment. Sample n=86, found AEQ measured 8.1 out of 9.