Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin
Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

Scéim Atreorúcháin um Ghníomhaíocht Coirp

Physical Activity Referral Scheme

PARS Physical Activity Referral Scheme

HSC Public Health Agency

Project supported by the PHA



Ag freastal ar an Dún agus Ard Mhacha Theas
Serving Down and South Armagh

Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir, Mhúrn agus an Dúin
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What is the Physical Activity Referral Scheme?

PARS is a 12-week physical activity referral programme helping people with health conditions become more active in a safe, structured and supportive environment. If eligible, your GP or healthcare professional can refer you to your local leisure centre for discounted membership along with guidance on how to get started and stay active.

Delivered in partnership with Newry, Mourne and Down District Council and the Public Health Agency as part of the Be Active for Health initiative, **PARS** supports people who may benefit from prescribed physical activity, guided by qualified exercise professionals.

Regular physical activity has many proven health benefits, including reducing the risk and delaying the onset of certain conditions. **PARS** provides the support, structure and encouragement needed to help you take those first steps towards a more active lifestyle.







Who can join the Physical Activity Referral Scheme?

Anyone aged 18 and over, has a BMI between 25-40 and who currently has one or more of the following conditions:

- high blood pressure
- controlled diabetes or a strong family history of diabetes
- heart disease or related risk factors
- anxiety, stress, depression or other controlled mental health conditions
- overweight or obesity
- well-controlled respiratory conditions such as asthma, bronchitis or COPD
- mild to moderate joint or bone conditions such as osteoporosis
- any other condition that does not prevent participation in physical activity

The scheme can be accessed once every 12 months.

What can exercise do for me?

Regular physical activity has been shown to:

- reduce the risk of heart disease, some cancers and type II diabetes
- lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels
- help control weight
- help prevent or reduce osteoporosis
- improve mental wellbeing, confidence and energy levels
- help manage symptoms of long-term or painful conditions

What does the Physical Activity Referral Scheme include?

The **PARS** programme provides a 12-week health membership, including access to the fitness suite, swimming pool and 'Be Active' classes.

You will also receive supervised PARS classes, supported gym sessions and a personalised physical activity programme. Throughout the 12 weeks, you will be guided and supported by a qualified exercise professional.



Your journey with PARS

PARS is not just a short-term programme. It is a pathway designed to help you build confidence, improve your health and become more active for life.

- **Referral** - Access the programme via GP or healthcare professional referral
- **Guided Support (Weeks 1–6)** - Fully supervised sessions with instructor support and guidance
- **Building Confidence (Weeks 7–12)** - Increased independence, access to gym and taster 'Be Active for Life' Classes
- **Moving Forward (Post-PARS)** - Transition into 'Be Active for Life' classes or other suitable follow-on programmes

This pathway is designed to support long-term participation and progression into independent physical activity.





Taking the next step

Contact your GP or healthcare professional, who will assess your suitability for **PARS**.

If appropriate, they will complete an online referral through the Trust's CCG electronic referral system.

Your exercise professional will then contact you via the Council's text messaging system to arrange your first appointment and register you onto the programme.

Contact your local leisure centre: 0330 137 4026
or email PARS@nmandd.org.

The Physical Activity Referral Scheme is available in the following Leisure Centres:

Where is PARS available?

Newry Leisure Centre
Downpatrick Leisure Centre
Kilkeel Leisure Centre
Newcastle Centre

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