

# Return to Sport/ Physical Activity for Older People



Please follow Government  
Guidelines regarding Covid-19

[www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie)

**Older people can take part in non-contact sport or physical activity outdoors from 10th May 2021 in pods of 15 people or less**



## **CONFIDENCE BUILDING**

Work with older people to set specific goals around their return to recreational sport and physical activity to ensure a sense of ownership and purpose. Invite older people to co-design a return to activity plan with you, for themselves or their group.

## **OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES**

Work with older people to set specific goals around their return to recreational sport and physical activity to ensure a sense of ownership and purpose. Invite older people to co-design a return to activity plan with you, for themselves or their group.

## **DESIGNATED TIMES**

Choose a specific time for the initial return to activity which is exclusively for older people. Knowing the initial session will be carefully managed will help limit any apprehension of returning.

## **SMALL GROUP SIZES**

Accommodating smaller group sizes will help older people to return to activity as there will be less apprehension regarding large crowds and their ability to socially distance.



## SOCIAL ASPECT

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For many older people, the social element of their activities is just as important as the exercise. Care should be taken that a cuppa and a chat outdoors post-activity are not dismissed as being unnecessary when redesigning programmes.

## RE-ORIENTATION EVENTS

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A 'welcome back' event, day, time slot or publication could be created specifically for older people. This may provide an opportunity to visit your facility or location in order to provide reassurance that all appropriate measures have been put in place regarding their safe return.

## OBTAIN FEEDBACK

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Allow for some time pre and post-session to address any concerns that older people may have. This feedback from the participants themselves will be very useful in order to continue adapting your return to sport procedures. Ensure to conduct ongoing informal feedback during sessions, perhaps at break times.



## MENTORING

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A specific older peoples' mentor could be nominated across your facility or sports organisation. This would give older people a specific individual contact who could answer any new or ongoing concerns relating to themselves or their groups. This could also be handed down to a member of that group then, once people are happy and settled back in.

## BUDDY SYSTEM

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A buddy system could be put in place where older people are linked in with other members of your facility or organisation to assist with their return. Friends may be slower to return to use the facility and having an identifiable support person, even for their initial visit, may increase their likelihood to return. This could also help to promote intergenerational solidarity.





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SPORT IRELAND



**Age &  
Opportunity**