

Case study: Guy's and St Thomas NHS Trust

The Walking Group inspired by Guys and St Thomas' Patient Skills Programme

Following attendance at Guys' & St Thomas' Patient Skills Programme, Mohammed set himself the goal of revitalising a walking group for Asian elders that he had previously initiated.

This group now meets weekly and attracts approximately 10 people, mostly males of retirement age who have weight problems and have diabetes (or are at risk of this); many also have cardiovascular problems. They walk for about 40 minutes and stop at an agreed point so that people can go at their own pace.

Mohammed says that they always spend 15 minutes or so chatting at the end and having a joke – he sees this as an important part of the health benefit:

‘I got this idea from the course. People need to be absorbed in such a way that they forget for a while their own problems and completely relax.... Tension causes part of the problem, such as high blood pressure and depression....’

Mohammed feels that older people are far more likely to be interested in this kind of exercise, as gyms do not feel like welcoming places to them, plus his walking group provides a really valuable social element for those people who do not go out much.