

# Ward-Based Group Physiotherapy Exercise (WBGPE) for Gynae-Oncology Patients: **A Collaborative Approach**

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## Introduction

Cancer-related fatigue is a significant side effect associated with cancer and its treatment. Patients reporting such fatigue often present with reduced lower limb strength, resulting in higher risk of falls. Exercise has been shown to improve cancer-related fatigue, strength and emotional well-being.

**Singapore Healthcare** 

Management 2019

# Result

100%

A total of 41 patients participated in WBGPE since the implementation in March 2018. There was a total of 37 sessions conducted with an average of 3.03 patients per session.

Significant improvement was seen in the patients BBS after the implementation of WBGPE, average of 10.4 per patient (Table 2 & 3). It was also observed to

1. To optimize patients physical and functional fitness while undergoing treatment.

2. Evaluate the effects of WBGPE on the incidence of falls during hospital stay.

# Methodology

Aims:

In March 2018, nurses and physiotherapists from the gynae-oncology (GYN-ONC) ward collaborated together to create a workflow that allows patients to be appropriately referred and seen for WBGPE. Initial functional screening is routinely done by nurses on admission. Identified patients who have a change in functional status are alerted to the ward doctors who subsequently refer them to the physiotherapists for assessment. The physiotherapists also collaborated with the nurses to identify other potential patients who are at risk of deconditioning and suitable for physical exercise to optimise their physical function (Table 1).

Patients who are referred to WBGPE are initially assessed using the Berg Balance Scale (BBS). A repeat assessment of the BBS is conducted after completion of three or more sessions to assess for improvement.

The incidence of falls 14 months before and after the start of WBGPE respectively.

have a reduction in the number of falls from three (Jan 2017-Feb 2018) to one (March 2018-March 2019). Verbal feedback from patients and family members was also encouraging for the team to continue the WBGPE (Table 4).

The WBGPE has positive impact on patient-centered care as it helps improve patients' physical and functional fitness and thereby having an improved quality of life despite their diagnosis. By doing so, it also reduces the incidence of falls during their hospital stay.



Table 2: Berg Balance Score per Patient

Table 3: Percentage Change in Berg Balance Score per Patient

Percentage Change of Patients Berg Balance Score



#### Figure 1:

Approach to Creating Awareness & Education on Exercise and Falls Prevention

2 Prong Approach to Falls Assessment

• Physiotherapy: Berg Balance

• Nursing: Morse Fall Scale



Table 4: Verbal Feedback from Patients who attended WGBPE

WBGPE Awareness & Education

Brochure

• Creating awareness for patient and family of the importance of exercise

Improved Workflow and Criteria for Patients Referred

• See Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria in Table 1

Table 1: Criteria to refer patients for physiotherapy and/or group exercise class

**Inclusion Criteria** Anticipated length of stay > 3 days (but not limited to) 2 High rick for falls or had a fall recent fall (< 6 months)

The exercises are easy to follow, can continue when I discharge

I felt more energetic after the exercise class

The physiotherapist are friendly and very patient



(but not limited to)	<ol> <li>High risk for fails of had a fail recent fail (&lt; 6 months)</li> <li>Impaired functional mobility</li> </ol>	
Exclusion Criteria	<ol> <li>Protective isolation (i.e. ANC <!--= 1)</li--> <li>Platelets <!--= 20K (But may be suitable for individual session)</li--> <li><!--= 1-2 day length of stay</li--> <li>Unstable medical status (active bleeding, unstable fractures, acute delirium etc.)</li> <li>Patients who are bedbound</li> <li>Patients identified with contact, droplet or airborne precautions</li> </li></li></li></ol>	
Relative exercise contraindications	Peripherally inserted central catheter (PICC)	Avoid heavy lifting (< 5kg) and repetitive arm movements around insertion site
	Mediport/Port-a-cath (not for activity on same day of insertion)	Avoid heavy lifting (< 5kg) 3-5 day after placement
	Chemotherapy	Able to perform exercises with close monitoring of patient's response to exercise. Avoid repetitive arm movements at infusion site
	Bone metastases	Spinal precautions Determine weight bearing status if lesion(s) are found in appendicular skeleton

I know exercise is good for Joining the exercise, I have the me and I am happy to join chance to meet other patient in the the class! ward. Its a form of socialization even when you are confined in a

We are glad that Mdm T joined the exercise. She is more cheerful and cooperative in her treatment.

### Conclusion

The collaboration among healthcare professionals is important in delivering seamless quality care to all our patients. The WBGPE has positive impact in promoting patient centred care, improve patients' physical and functional fitness and thereby having an improved quality of life in their cancer trajectory.

hospital:)

#### **PATIENTS AT THE HE**