

# A group-based exercise and behavioural maintenance intervention for adults over 65 years with mobility limitations: the REACT RCT

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## Plain English summary

### The REACT RCT

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## Plain English summary

As people get older, they often find that walking, climbing stairs and doing their normal daily activities become more difficult. The REtirement in ACTion (REACT) study tested whether or not a group exercise programme run in local communities could reduce this decline in older adults, and whether or not it provided good value for money. The programme encouraged social interaction and fun, and provided support to find out about and get involved in other physical activities.

General practitioners in Bath, Bristol, Birmingham and Devon invited patients (aged  $\geq 65$  years) to join the REACT study, and 777 patients agreed to participate. In total, 411 participants were randomly chosen to join the REACT sessions twice per week for 12 weeks, then once per week for 40 weeks. The other 366 people attended three 'healthy ageing' education sessions over 1 year. All 777 participants completed physical tests and questionnaires at the start of the study and again at 6, 12 and 24 months. At 24 months, people who had attended the REACT sessions had significantly greater mobility than those who did not attend (8.08 vs. 7.59; scores out of 12). Only 19% of REACT study participants did not complete the study. Participants who attended the REACT group sessions enjoyed the REACT programme, felt more confident and reported better well-being. The REACT programme could help older adults at risk of mobility limitations to stay mobile and independent. REACT provides good value for money: the benefits outweighed the cost, resulting in a saving of £103 in health-care and social care costs per participant. Following some refinements, the REACT programme is ready for large-scale implementation.



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