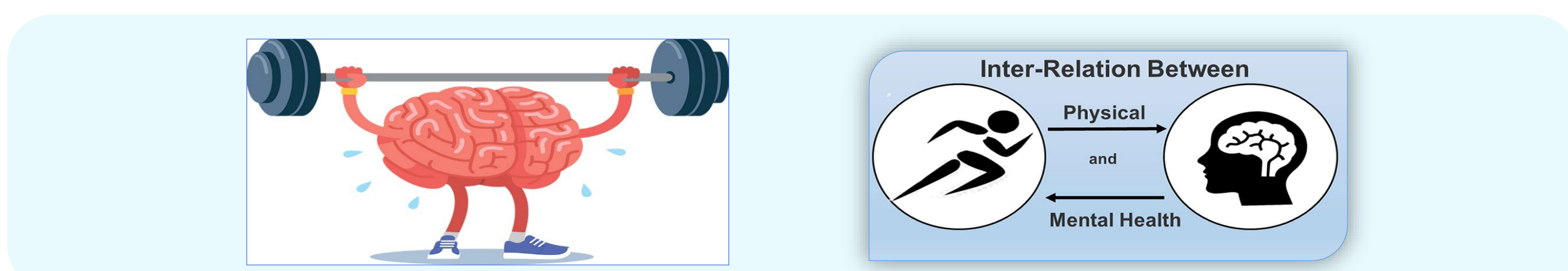


# Improving Engagement with Physical Activity and Therapeutic Exercise for Adult Inpatients with Serious Mental Illness within Royal Cornhill Hospital

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## Background

The benefits of physical activity and exercise for our physical health and mental wellbeing are well known. There is a strong correlation between improving mental health with physical activity. Other benefits are increased socialisation and social integration which are promoted within Public Health Scotland's pathway (2018). For the general adult population (19-64 years of age) there are recommended levels of physical activity (see diagram 1)



Increasing engagement with physical activity in adults with severe mental illness (SMI) who are receiving inpatient care in a mental health hospital is identified as an area for quality improvement as outlined in the Scottish Government's Mental Health Strategy, 2017-2027. The SMI population still have significant health inequalities compared to the general population

Exercise has the capacity to improve physical health, reducing secondary effects of SMI as well as increasing confidence, improving social connections and cognitive function (Stubbs et al, 2018). Yet, it is often overlooked as being a fundamental part of patient treatment and recovery. The World Health Organization in 2018 reported that working on behavioural change, in this instance to increase physical activity, must be aligned with a person-centred and integrated approach

## Method

A literature search was undertaken and data was collected from the past year which included, the amount and type of group exercise that took place and the patient attendance rates

Focus groups were facilitated by a physiotherapist with participation from the multidisciplinary team including physiotherapists, occupational therapists, nurses and medical staff, healthcare support workers and patients

### Focus Group Questions

- In what circumstances would you make a referral for exercise?
- What might stop you from making a referral for exercise?
- How can we all promote and encourage exercise for patients?

### Key Themes

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Education
- Patient-centred

### Patient Views

- "Like the community of people exercising together"
- "It's refreshing, the exercise makes you feel more aware"
- "It helps when people on the same ward exercise together, gives a spirit of togetherness" (with kind permission)

### What we did

- The physiotherapy team reviewed and revised the current exercise provision to the adult inpatient wards

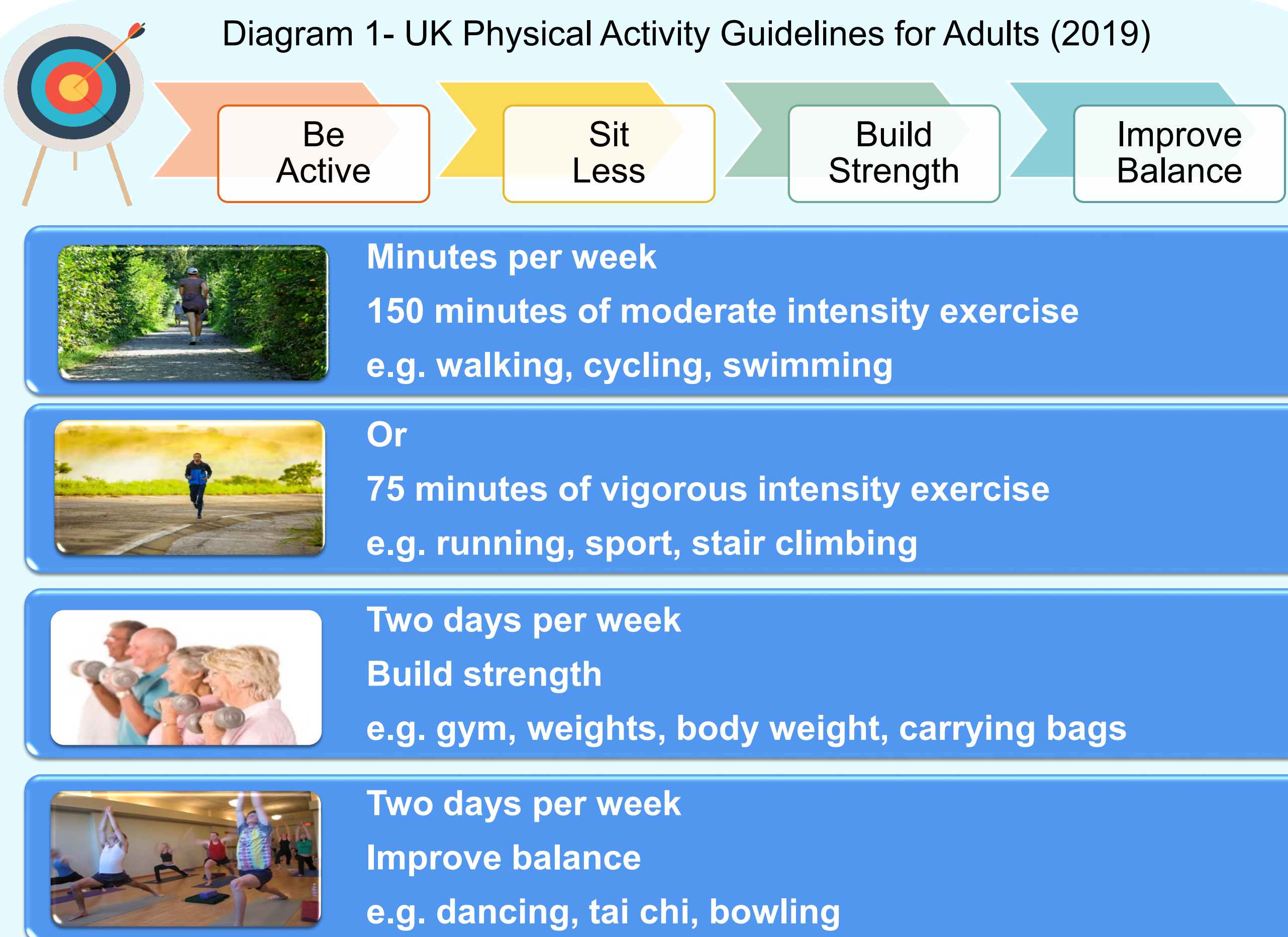
## Aims

Physiotherapy at Royal Cornhill Hospital (RCH) provide specialist exercise assessments and opportunities to support inpatients to be more active with the aim to improve physical fitness and provide therapeutic exercise interventions for SMI. Including, individualised exercise and/or group exercise on the ward, in the gym or technogym and walking

To evaluate current therapeutic exercise provision by physiotherapy

To increase physical activity/therapeutic exercise participation of adult inpatients in RCH

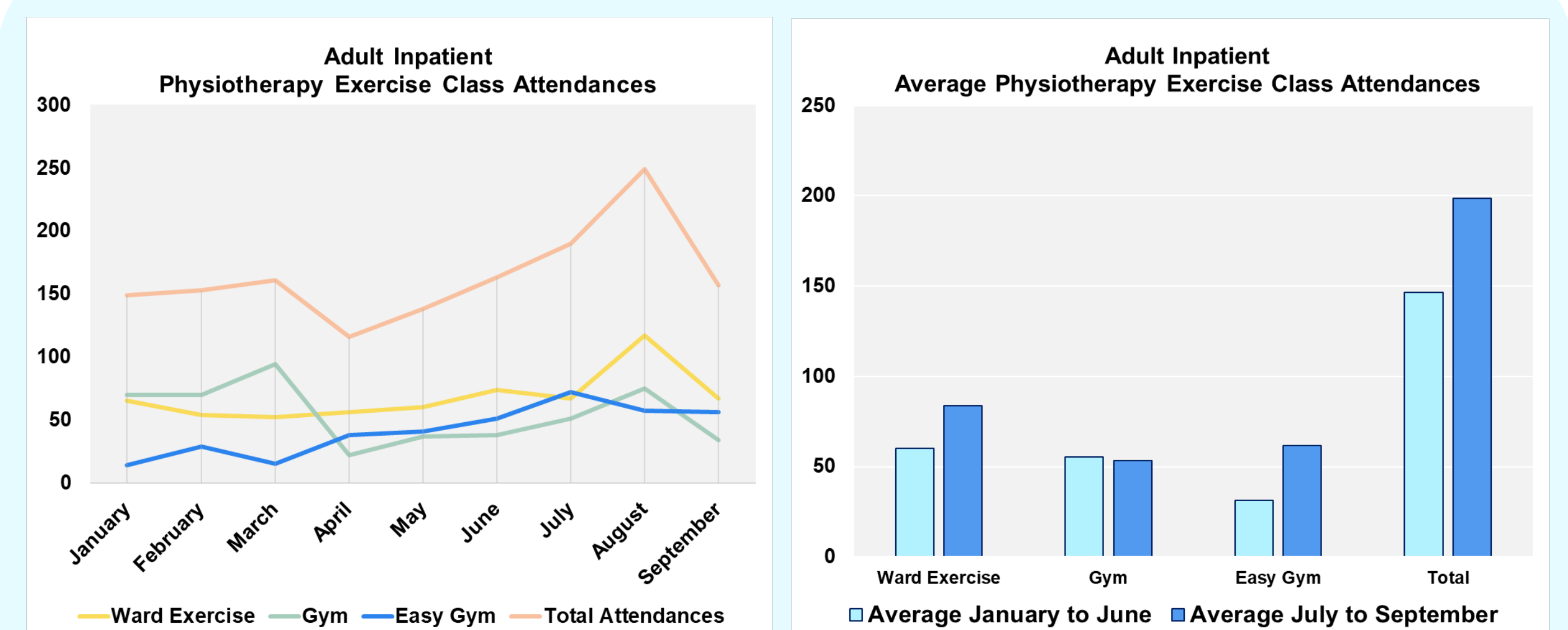
Diagram 1- UK Physical Activity Guidelines for Adults (2019)



## Results

In July the physiotherapy team increased ward based exercise classes from five to nine classes a week without additional resources

Each adult ward now has two ward based exercise classes per week, while maintaining established access to the physiotherapy gym, the technogym and walking groups



Exercise Class Type	Ward	Gym	Technogym	Total
Percentage Change in Attendance	↑ Increase of <u>39%</u>	↓ Decrease of <u>3.5%</u>	↑ Increase of <u>97%</u>	↑ Increase of <u>35%</u>

## Next Steps

The Physiotherapy team will continue to provide opportunities for physical activity and therapeutic exercise for adults with SMI who are receiving inpatient care at RCH. Supporting individuals to increase their activity levels and to help them work towards meeting the national guidelines on physical activity. There will be regular reviews of the amount/type of group exercise offered and patient attendance rates

A multidisciplinary working group has already been established to carry out the second phase of the project which is to increase collaboration with the wider staff groups in implementing some of the themes which arose from the focus groups using quality improvement initiatives

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