



# **A Community Model to Promote Accessible Fitness Facilities**

**Karen Luken**

**NC Office on Disability and Health**

**FPG Child Development Institute**

**CB 8185, UCN-CH**

**Chapel Hill, NC 27599-8185**

**919-966-0881**

**[www.fpg.unc.edu/~ncodh](http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ncodh)**



# NC Office on Disability and Health

- **Partnership** between NC Division of Public Health and UNC-CH
- **Core funding** from CDC
- **Mission:** to improve health status, health behaviors and preventive health service use of persons with disabilities and activity limitations



# Community Training Model

- **Goal:** create environments that are accessible, safe, supportive and accommodating of persons of all abilities
- **Process:** provide training for fitness and recreation providers, advocates and community residents; offer technical assistance and mentoring



# Community Training Process

---

- Community gatekeeper identifies fitness site
- Initial meeting with administrative staff
- Agency conducts self-evaluation to identify training needs and in-house resources
- NCODH conducts on-site training, including accessibility survey of site
- Agency develops a plan of action
- Follow up contacts and technical assistance



# Fitness Training Outline

---

- Overview of ADA and Universal Design
- Customer Service
- Equipment and Facility Space
- Accessibility Survey of Facility
- Plan of Action
- Resources



# Facility Accessibility Survey Tool

- Customer Service
- Parking
- Path of Travel
- Signage
- Elevators
- Rest rooms,  
locker rooms
- Exercise  
Equipment
- Pool Areas
- Emergency  
Procedures
- Summary



# Training Resources

---

- Cross-disability training team
- **Removing Barriers to Fitness Facilities**
- NCPAD materials
- ADA Accessibility stick
- Door pressure gauge
- Rolatape measure
- **Means ADA Compliance Pricing Guide**



# Sample Plan of Action

Desired Change	Necessary Steps	Persons Responsible	Timeline
Immediate: cardio workout space, carpets	Rearrange space, re-label maps, secure carpet mats	Fitness Supervisor, Facilities mgr	2 weeks
Mid-range: Alternate formats Staff training	Select forms & brochures, Identify topics	Reception desk staff, program services supervisor,	2 months 4 months
Long Term: Power door	Budgeting, identify contractor	CEO, facilities mgr, fund raising comm.	9 months



# Sample Community Sites

Site & Partner	Assets	Changes
YMCA & ADA network gp.	Staff knowledge, administrative support, roomy locker and rest rooms	Painted curb cut, installed power door, rearranged equipment, staff training
Senior Center & ADA network gp	New space, indoor signage, path of travel, administrative support	Equipment placement, RELAY training, bathroom grab bars, parking lot signage



# Sample Community Sites

Site & Partner	Assets	Changes
Hospital Rehab & Wellness Ctr & local ADA network gp.	New space, staff, budget, administrative support,	Rearranged exercise equipment, secured carpets, registration desk, increased links to support groups
YMCA & VR/IL office and clients	Pool lift, disability experience, administrative support	Pending (heavy doors, staff training, interpreters)



# Successes

---

- Sites have implemented low and moderate cost changes
- Development of university course lecture and student assignment
- Targeted focus for local ADA network groups
- Requests for follow-up training
- Expanded community partnerships



# Challenges

- Mentoring of local advocates so they can offer follow up assistance and conduct training at new sites
- Agency constraints: limited budgets, staff availability
- Time required to carry out entire process
- Agency staff turn over
- Evaluating impact