



NFLA Older Adult Performance Standards

Aging Process
<p>Performance Standard #1</p> <p>The Older Adult Leader will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of the physiological, psychological and sociological effects of aging and its relationship to physical activity.</p>
<p>a. Knowledge of the difference between the terms chronological, biological, and functional aging.</p>
<p>b. An understanding of the myths, stereotypes and barriers associated with aging and physical activity participation in later life.</p>
<p>c. Knowledge of probable age-related changes to the systems that provide and support movement in the body including cardiovascular, respiratory, muscular, skeletal, proprioception (balance), vision, integument (skin), digestion (nutrition), immune system and brain function. And the effect of physical activity on these systems in terms of increased risk & benefit.</p>
<p>e. Knowledge of potential changes to multiple dimensions of well-being related to aging. (i.e. intellectual/cognitive, emotional, physical, vocational, social, spiritual, environmental)</p>
<p>f. Ability to identify the 5 levels of functional ability:</p> <p><u>Dependent</u> – cannot execute some of or all of the basic activities of living, including dressing, bathing, transferring, and toileting, feeding, and walking.</p> <p><u>Frail</u> – can perform activities of daily living but cannot perform some or all of the activities necessary to live independently due to some disease or condition</p> <p><u>Independent</u> – live independently, usually without some debilitating symptoms of disease and may still have low levels of fitness</p> <p><u>Fit</u> – exercise at least 2 times per week or have a physically demanding job or hobby</p> <p><u>Elite</u> – train almost daily for competition or to engage in a physically demanding job or hobby</p>
<p>f. Demonstrate an understanding of the biological theories of aging, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cellular Theory of Aging – change or deterioration that is happening during the aging process occurring at the individual cell level • Genetic Theory – role of specific genes in the aging process and the associated changes • Control Theory – changes in the systems of control e.g. endocrine, nervous or immunity



NFLA Older Adult Performance Standards

Performance Standard #2

The Older Adult Leader will have knowledge of common health challenges facing older adults and how these changes affect functional mobility and independence.

a. Knowledge of the etiology of common health challenges relating to the aging process, including but not limited to:

- cardiovascular disease
- stroke
- hypertension
- respiratory disorders
- obesity
- arthritis
- osteoporosis
- back pain
- diabetes
- balance and motor control deficits
- visual and hearing disorders
- dementia
- urinary incontinence
- joint replacement

b. Knowledge of contradictions for a given health challenge and factors that affect appropriate exercise selection and modifications. (i.e. use of medication or physical challenges)

c. Knowledge of where and how to access information on diseases and related exercise precautions (i.e. website; health associations).

d. Demonstrate knowledge of how exercise builds new neural connections and promotes continued brain health through life.



NFLA Older Adult Performance Standards

Leadership and Communication Skills

Performance Standard

The Older Adult Leader will conduct a safe and effective exercise program using a variety of leadership styles and communication techniques appropriate for older adults.

- a. Understand and apply the principles for developing a safe, friendly, and fun exercise environment.
- b. Explain the purpose of a given exercise and offer alternatives appropriate to the individual based upon their capabilities and goals.
- c. Demonstrate an awareness of participants' feedback during an exercise program by acknowledging individual differences, considering the heterogeneous older adult population (e.g., gender, ethnicity, education level).
- d. Identify potential challenges that leaders may experience in an exercise program and describe strategies for accommodating these situations for older adults (i.e. considering older adults with visual, hearing and cognitive impairment).



NFLA Older Adult Performance Standards

e. Understand the Role of Physical Activity in Life Stages and be able to explain them to the older adult participant.

Life Stage	Age	Role of Physical Activity
Infant	0-2	Mobility
Child	3-12	Mobility, developing identity, self-esteem, recreation, social interaction
Adolescent	13-17	Developing identity
Young adult	18-24	Self-esteem, recreation, social interaction
Adult	25-44	Recreation, self-esteem, social interaction
Mid-age	45-64	Self-esteem, <i>maintenance</i> (function, job)
Young-old	65-74	<i>Maintenance</i> (recreation, social interaction)
Old	75-84	<i>Mobility, BADL, (eating, bathing, dressing, walking), social interaction, IADL (cooking, washing clothes, etc.)</i>
Old-old	85-100+	<i>Mobility, ADL, independent living</i>

f. Identify behaviour modification strategies for motivating older adults based on the Transtheoretical Model of Behaviour Change (Stages of Change Theory) – Pre-contemplation; Contemplation; Preparation; Action; Maintenance)

Exercise Analysis and Risk Management

Performance Standard

The Older Adult Leader will demonstrate an understanding of methods that ensure safe and effective exercise programming for older adults.

a. Describe pre-screening strategies for safe program delivery for older adults and their participation in physical activity (e.g., PAR-Q+, informed consent, needs assessment, goal setting).

b. Knowledge of when to recommend an alternative program to participants or to recommend they seek medical advice before continuing in the program.

c. Knowledge of how to maintain updated information on participants and recommended ways that participants inform leaders of changes to their condition and medication.



NFLA Older Adult Performance Standards

d. Demonstrate ability, for a given exercise, to analyze its intended and actual purpose, potential risks to joint structures and modifications or alternative exercises considering older adults functional ability.

e. Demonstrate the use of space effectively to account for safety issues and needs of participants with visual, hearing or cognitive impairments.

f. Knowledge of Emergency Action Plan requirements, including safety issues related to but not limited to floor surfaces, proper footwear, lighting, acoustics, telephone, ventilation, and accessibility to water, washrooms, facility emergency procedures, and exits.

Program Planning

Performance Standard

The Older Adult Leader will design an effective program using established methods and training principles. The Older Adult Leader will be capable of evaluating programs using measurable outcomes to ensure effective and appropriate programming.

a. Describe methods for continued monitoring of older adult exercise intensity.

b. Describe methods to assess the effectiveness of an older adult exercise program.

c. Demonstrate an understanding of effective design and delivery for older adult exercise programming.

d. Demonstrate an awareness of which tools are appropriate for measuring functional outcomes related to physical activity programming. Examples include:

- Senior Fitness Test : includes muscular strength, aerobic endurance, flexibility, agility & balance, body mass index
- Fullerton Advanced Balance Test
- Berg Balance Scale

e. Demonstrate an awareness of which tools to use for measuring adherence to an exercise program. Examples include:

- SMART goal setting and understanding the application of this model to older adults
- Attendance sheets
- Program evaluations
- Follow up on absentees



NFLA Older Adult Performance Standards

Program Organization Skills
Performance Standard #1
The Older Adult Leader will design and conduct a safe and effective older adult exercise program using a variety of formats. The Older Adult Leader will have the ability to adapt programming to meet the needs of participants using available resources.
a. Prepare an effective lesson plan for an older adult program.
b. Demonstrate continuity of movements, progressions and compatibility with participants' abilities.
c. Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate exercises for strength, muscular endurance, balance, agility, flexibility, posture, and cardio-respiratory fitness for older adults.
d. Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate exercise selection and the relationship of the following to reducing falls: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Centre of Gravity• Base of Support• Power training• Eccentric loading• Agility training• Reaction time training• Multi-tasking training
e. Demonstrate and describe the components of older adult program design, including lengthened warm up and cool down, gradual aerobic progression, flexibility, muscle conditioning and relaxation.
f. Describe the common methods used to monitor exercise intensity for each fitness component and discuss the relevance of using these methods with older adults.
g. Knowledge of principles of exercise prescription (specificity, progressive overload, FITT)



NFLA Older Adult Performance Standards

h. Demonstrate the use of ability-appropriate equipment based on identified or implied needs of the participant.

Performance Standard #2

The Older Adult Leader will demonstrate knowledge of Canada's Food Guide & recommended supplements in the guide.

a. Describe how portion control can be used to help those with reduced caloric needs and the increased need for quality nutrition.

b. Explain how both wellness and activity can be affected by dietary choices.

Use of Music

Performance Standard

The Older Adult Leader will demonstrate an understanding of the reasons for using music (or not) in an older adult exercise program.

a. State or list reasons for using music (or not) in an older adult exercise program.

b. Identify the relationship between music and motivation for older adults.

Ongoing Personal Professional Development and Marketing Strategies

Performance Standard

The Older Adult Leader will demonstrate an understanding of their scope of practice and how to pursue continuing education related to fitness leadership in the older adult field. The Older Adult Leader will develop strategies for marketing their older adult programs.

a. Identify resources for the enhancement of professional skills including research and continuing education opportunities relevant to the older adult field.

b. Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of a fitness leaders' code of conduct and scope of practice, including legal liability and insurance coverage.

c. Demonstrate an understanding of where and how to market older adult programs.