



Occupational Standards  
PRE & POST NATAL  
INSTRUCTOR



## Contents

### The outcomes of these standards are:

- Unit 1 (E4) Understand professional roles and responsibilities for pregnant and postnatal participants
- Unit 2 (E4) Understand the anatomical, physiological and biomechanical changes during the pregnancy and postnatal periods
- Unit 3 (E4) Support health and well-being for pregnant and postnatal clients
- Unit 4 (E4) Collect and analyse information about pregnant and postnatal clients
- Unit 5 (E4) Plan exercise for pregnant and postnatal clients
- Unit 6 (E4) Instruct exercise session for pregnant and postnatal clients
- Unit 7 (E4) Evaluate and review exercise for pregnant and postnatal clients



# Unit 1 (E4) Professional roles and responsibilities when working with pre and postnatal clients

This standard covers working within professional role boundaries in relation to working with pre and postnatal clients and applying professional responsibilities when working with pre and postnatal clients

These standards cover

- » Understanding professional role boundaries in relation to working with pregnant and postnatal clients
- » Managing healthcare referrals
- » Understanding professional responsibilities

## Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

*Task 1: Understand professional role boundaries in relation to working with pre and postnatal clients*

- P1. Describe the place of the Pre and Postnatal Exercise Instructor in the healthcare system and the cooperation of a multidisciplinary task force of healthcare professionals
- P2. Explain the importance of understanding and respecting own professional role boundaries and limitations when working with pregnant and postnatal clients
- P3. Explain asymptomatic in relation to a pregnant and postnatal client
- P4. Describe the importance of working within the remit of the specific role being undertaken
- P5. Identify legislation, policies, guidance and ethical issues relating to the provision of exercise for pregnant and postnatal clients
- P6. Identify how to give guidance to encourage pregnant and postnatal clients to follow the key safety guidelines and to discourage them from anything deemed to be potentially hazardous/contraindicated to enable them to take part in sessions.
- P7. Identify sources of information and advice on working with pregnant and postnatal clients
- P8. Identify local or national initiatives to raise awareness of the importance of exercise during pregnancy and postnatal period

## Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

*Task 2: Manage healthcare referrals*

- P9. Describe when it may be appropriate to obtain written healthcare providers consent for a pregnant or postnatal client to exercise
- P10. Identify when it is appropriate to signpost or refer onto other healthcare professionals
- P11. Explain the benefits of working with other services to support the client

- P12. Explain the circumstances in which information may need to be exchanged with other healthcare professionals about a physical activity programme for pregnant and postnatal clients and consent from them
- P13. Summarise the importance of patient confidentiality and data protection
- P14. Explain the importance of dealing with sensitive information that may be emotive for the client

## Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

*Task 3: Understand professional responsibilities*

- P15. The importance for instructors to ensure they hold up-to-date first aid skills when working with pregnant and postnatal clients
- P16. Highlight the importance of engaging in regular Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in the area of pregnancy and postnatal within specialist areas
- P17. Identify where to source specific information to enhance practice or engage in further education/development
- P18. Explain how to ensure insurance policies cover their instruction of pregnant and postnatal clients
- P19. Summarise the importance of checking insurance arrangements where babies are present during exercise/physical activity

## Knowledge and Understanding

**Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

*Task 1: Understand professional role boundaries in relation to working with pre and postnatal clients*

- K1. The place of the PPEI in the healthcare system and the cooperation of a multidisciplinary task force of healthcare professionals (Gynaecologist, Midwife, Nutritionist, Exercise Specialist, Exercise Psychologist, Physiotherapist)
- K2. Professional role boundaries and limitations when working with pregnant and postnatal clients
- K3. The definition of an asymptomatic pregnant and postnatal client
- K4. The importance of working within the remit

- of the specific role being undertaken
- K5. Legislation, policies, guidance and ethical issues relating to the provision of exercise for pregnant and postnatal clients
  - K6. How to give guidance to encourage pregnant and postnatal clients to follow the key safety guidelines and to discourage them from anything deemed to be potentially hazardous/contraindicated to enable them to take part in sessions
  - K7. Where to find sources of information and advice on working with pregnant and postnatal clients
  - K8. International initiatives to raise awareness of the importance of exercise during pregnancy and postnatal period

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

#### **Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

##### *Task 2: Manage healthcare referrals*

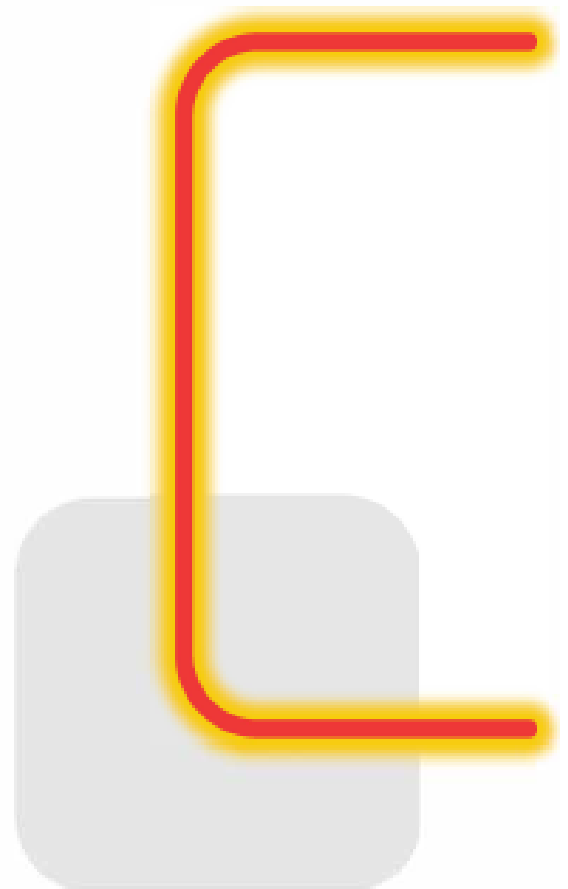
- K9. Know in which special circumstances, where appropriate, it would be good professional practice to obtain written healthcare providers consent for a pregnant or postnatal client to exercise
- K10. Know when it is appropriate to signpost or refer onto other healthcare professionals
- K11. Know the benefits of working with other services to support the client
- K12. Know the circumstances in which information may need to be exchanged with other healthcare professionals about a physical activity programme for pregnant and postnatal clients and to obtain consent from them
- K13. Know the importance of patient confidentiality and data protection
- K14. Know the importance of dealing with sensitive information that may be emotive for the client

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

#### **Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

##### *Task 3: Understand professional responsibilities*

- K15. Know the importance of having an up-to-date first aid qualification when working with pregnant and postnatal clients
- K16. Know the importance of engaging in regular CPD in the area of pregnancy and postnatal within specialist areas
- K17. Know where to source specific information to enhance practice or engage in further education/development
- K18. How to ensure insurance policies cover their instruction of pregnant and postnatal clients
- K19. Know the importance of checking insurance arrangements where babies are present during exercise/physical activity



## Unit 2 (E4) The anatomical, physiological and biomechanical changes during the pre and postnatal periods

This standard covers

- » Understanding the terms relating to pregnancy and postnatal
- » Applying knowledge of the anatomical, physiological and biomechanical changes to body's systems during pregnancy and postnatal period
  - the female anatomy
  - pelvic floor
  - changes to posture during pregnancy and postnatally
  - changes to abdominal and back muscles
- » Understanding childbirth
- » Understanding common problems and risks for exercise during pregnancy and postnatally

### Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

*Task 1: Understand the terms relating to pregnancy and postnatal*

- P1. Identify relevant terms relating to pregnancy and postnatal clients
- P2. Identify the weeks of pregnancy and their related trimester
- P3. Identify the stages of the postnatal period

### Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

*Task 2: Apply knowledge of the anatomical, physiological and biomechanical changes to body's systems during pregnancy and postnatal period. The female anatomy.*

- P4. Identify the relevant areas of the female anatomy
- P5. Identify specific changes to the breasts during pregnancy, postnatally and during breast feeding, including breast support for pregnant and postnatal clients
- P6. Explain the changes to the body's systems during pregnancy and postnatal period, to include:
  - » changes to the cardiovascular system
  - » changes to the respiratory system
  - » changes to the musculoskeletal system, including:
    - bone, tendon, ligaments and joints, the spine
    - the structure and anatomy of the pelvis
  - » changes to the muscular system
  - » changes to the metabolic system

- » changes to the nervous system
- » endocrine system

Explain the impact of hormones and the endocrine system during pregnancy and postnatally

- P7. Create a session to take into consideration the hormonal and postural changes that can take place during the pregnancy and postnatal periods
- P8. Identify the timeline of hormonal changes during pregnancy and postnatally
- P9. Explain why the physiological and biomechanical changes persist after pregnancy for weeks, months or even years

### Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

*Task 3: Pelvic floor*

- P10. Identify relevant areas of the pelvic floor, back and abdominal muscle anatomy
- P11. Describe pelvic floor muscle function during and after pregnancy
- P12. Describe the preparation of the perineum through exercises
- P13. Explain the importance of incorporating the preparation for birth into exercise programmes
- P14. Identify a range of different types of perineal trauma which can occur during birth and explain how these will impact on the individual's postnatal recovery
- P15. Relate the effects of high intensity or impact exercise on the pelvic floor to exercise session
- P16. Apply effects on joint alignment to exercise session
- P17. Apply effects on legs and feet to exercise session
- P18. Apply changes to postural alignment to exercise session
- P19. Include re-educating posture and joint alignment with postnatal clients

### Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

*Task 4: Changes to abdominal and back muscles*

- P20. Explain Linea Alba separation (Diastasis Recti) and the effects on the rectus abdominis for at least 12 months postnatal
- P21. Demonstrate how to check for Linea Alba separation (Diastasis Recti) postnatally

- P22. Demonstrate Transversus Abdominis muscle recruitment
- P23. Apply changes to the lower back muscles and ligaments during pregnancy and postnatal period to exercise session
- P24. Use suitable exercises for the abdominal, obliques, lower back and pelvic floor during pregnancy and postnatal exercise session

### Performance Criteria

#### Exercise professionals must be able to:

##### Task 5: Understand childbirth

- P25. Identify the relevant stages of childbirth
- P26. List the different types of births
- P27. List the different birth positions
- P28. List the benefits of:
  - » breathing exercises in childbirth
  - » visualisations during pregnancy and childbirth
  - » incorporating preparation for birth into exercise programmes
- P29. Describe certain conditions that have elevated risk during the first weeks post birth

### Performance Criteria

#### Exercise professionals must be able to:

##### Task 6: Understand common problems and risks for exercise during pregnancy and postnatally

- P30. Identify a range of common problems and risks during pregnancy relevant to physical activity participation and explain how to respond to them
- P31. Identify why pregnant women may be vulnerable to nausea, dizziness and fainting
- P32. Identify absolute and relative contraindications for pregnant and postnatal women and movements to avoid during exercise
- P33. Identify the reasons pregnant clients should stop exercising immediately
- P34. Identify any contraindications, risk factors, complications and prevalence of discomfort and health conditions with the client
- P35. Recognise and respond to emergency situations and to warning signs to terminate exercise
- P36. Identify complications/considerations affecting the resumption of exercise post birth
- P37. Make suitable adjustments to session structure, content and time, in line with considerations and risks
- P38. Consider the effects of lactation when planning a session for a client who is breastfeeding
- P39. Identify reasons why the client should be referred to other healthcare professionals before continuing exercise

### Knowledge and Understanding

#### Exercise professionals must know and understand:

##### Task 1: Understand the terms relating to pregnancy and postnatal

- K1. Various terms relating specifically to pregnancy and postnatal clients, to include:
  - » pregnant is also known as antenatal, prenatal, gestation
  - » postnatal is also known as postpartum,
  - » trimesters
  - » lactation
- K2. The weeks of pregnancy and their related trimester
  - » First Trimester: 0 – 13 weeks
  - » Second Trimester: 14 – 26 weeks
  - » Third Trimester: 27 – 40 weeks
- K3. The weeks covered by the postnatal period
- K4. Specific changes to the breasts during pregnancy, postnatally and during breast feeding, including breast support for pregnant and postnatal clients

### Knowledge and Understanding

#### Exercise professionals must know and understand:

##### Task 2: Apply knowledge of the anatomical, physiological and biomechanical changes to body's systems during pregnancy and the postnatal period

- K5. The female anatomy, to include:
  - » Anus
  - » Bladder
  - » Breasts
    - Mammary glands, lobules, milk producing glandular structures,
    - Lymphatic vessels, ducts, fat tissue,
    - Areola
  - » Corpus luteum
  - » Endometrium
  - » Fallopian tube
  - » Myometrium
  - » Ovarian ligament
  - » Ovaries
  - » Oviduct
  - » Perimetrium
  - » Placenta
  - » Pubic symphysis
  - » Rectum
  - » Uterus
    - Cervix of uterus
    - Body of uterus
    - Fundus of uterus
    - Uterus wall
    - Uterus lining
    - Uterine tube
  - » Urethra
  - » Vagina

- K6. The changes to the body's systems during pregnancy and postnatal period, to include:
- » changes to the cardiovascular system
  - » changes to the respiratory system
  - » changes to musculoskeletal system, including:
    - bone, tendon, ligaments and joints, the spine, the structure and anatomy of the pelvis
  - » changes to the muscular system
  - » changes to the metabolic system
  - » changes to the nervous system
  - » endocrine system
- K7. The impact of hormones and the endocrine system during pregnancy and postnatally
- K8. The timeline when these changes in hormones may start (from very early on in pregnancy and gradually become more significant as pregnancy progresses)
- K9. The hormonal and postural changes that can make pregnant and postnatal clients vulnerable to injury during exercise:
- » joint misalignment
  - » muscle imbalance
  - » motor skill decline (especially if they are genetically hypermobile)
  - » exercise implications and contraindications of stability
- K10. How the physiological and biomechanical changes persist after pregnancy for weeks, months or even years

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

#### **Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

##### *Task 3: Pelvic floor*

- K11. Pelvic floor, back and abdominal muscle anatomy
- K12. Pelvic floor muscle function during and after pregnancy
- K13. Preparation of the perineum through exercises
- K14. The importance of incorporating the preparation for birth into exercise programmes
- K15. Different types of perineal trauma which can occur during birth and how this will impact on the individual's postnatal recovery (to also include urinary and faecal incontinence)
- K16. The effects of high intensity or impact exercise on the pelvic floor during and after pregnancy

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

#### **Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

##### *Task 4: Changes to posture during pregnancy and postnatally*

- K1. The effects of pregnancy on joint alignment
- K2. Common changes to postural alignment in pregnant and postnatal
- K3. Changes to legs and feet to include:

- » dropped arches
- » oedema
- » over-active hamstrings and calf muscles, and how they contribute to changes in feet:
- » increased shoe size
- » changes to posture and the need for greater support during exercise (suitable footwear)

- K20. The importance of re-educating posture and joint alignment with postnatal clients

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

#### **Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

##### *Task 5: Changes to abdominal and back muscles*

- K21. Linea Alba separation (Diastasis Recti) and the effects on the rectus abdominis for at least 12 months postnatal
- K22. How to check for Linea Alba separation (Diastasis Recti) postnatally
- K23. Transversus abdominis muscle recruitment during pregnancy and postnatal
- K24. Changes to the lower back muscles and ligaments during pregnancy and postnatal
- K25. Suitable and non-suitable exercises for the abdominals, obliques, lower back and pelvic floor during pregnancy and postnatal

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

#### **Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

##### *Task 6: Understand childbirth*

- K26. Childbirth, to include:
- » initial stages of labour
  - » labour and childbirth
  - » pain relief strategies
- K27. The different types of births to include:
- » Spontaneous vaginal birth
  - » Instrumental (ventouse/forceps)
  - » Caesarean Section
- K28. The different birth positions
- K29. The benefits of:
- » breathing exercises to childbirth
  - » visualisations during pregnancy and childbirth
  - » incorporating preparation for birth into exercise programmes
- K30. Certain conditions that have elevated risk during the first week post birth such as:
- » air embolism
  - » thrombosis
  - » haemorrhage

## Knowledge and Understanding

### Exercise professionals must know and understand:

#### Task 7: Understand common problems and risks for exercise during pregnancy and postnatally

- K31. Common problems and risks during pregnancy relevant to physical activity participation and how to respond to them, to include:
- » risks and symptoms of pelvic girdle pain
  - » including the hypermobile client
  - » postural imbalances
  - » knee, back and shoulder pain
  - » fatigue and interrupted sleep patterns
  - » coordination problems
  - » balance
  - » concentration and memory
  - » gestational diabetes
  - » high blood pressure
  - » pelvic floor (covered separately)
  - » supine and postural hypotensive syndromes
  - » carpal tunnel syndrome
  - » rib pain
  - » gastric reflux
  - » lower back pain
- K32. Why pregnant clients may be vulnerable to nausea, dizziness and fainting
- K33. Movements to avoid during exercise pre and postnatally:
- » exercising in the supine position after 16 weeks of pregnancy
  - » inclined position is also unlikely to be a successful alternative to flat supine
  - » exercising prone
  - » prolonged, motionless standing
  - » overhead resistance exercise
  - » leg adduction and abduction against a resistance
  - » isometric exercises
  - » loaded forward flexion
  - » rapid changes of direction or position
  - » uncontrolled twisting
  - » exercise with a risk of falling or abdominal trauma
  - » excessive and uncontrolled de-stabilisation techniques
  - » impact
  - » rapid, ballistic or aggressive movements
  - » 'sit up', 'crunch' or 'oblique cross-over' type exercises
- K34. Absolute and relative contraindications
- » Absolute:
    - haemodynamically significant heart disease
    - restrictive lung disease
    - incompetent cervix/cerclage
- multiple gestation at risk for premature labour
  - persistent second or third trimester bleeding
  - placenta praevia after 26 weeks gestation
  - premature labour during the current pregnancy
  - ruptured membranes
  - pregnancy induced hypertension
  - warning signs to terminate exercise when pregnant
  - vaginal bleeding
  - dyspnoea before exertion
  - dizziness
  - headache
  - chest pain
  - muscle weakness
  - calf pain or swelling (need to rule out thrombophlebitis)
  - preterm labour
  - decreased foetal movement
  - amniotic fluid leakage
- » Relative:
- severe anaemia
  - unevaluated maternal cardiac arrhythmia
  - chronic bronchitis
  - poorly controlled type I diabetes
  - extreme morbid obesity
  - extremely underweight (body mass index <12)
  - history of extremely sedentary lifestyle
  - intrauterine growth restriction in current pregnancy
  - poorly controlled hypertension/pre-eclampsia
  - orthopaedic limitations
  - poorly controlled seizure disorder
  - poorly controlled thyroid disease
  - heavy smoker
- K35. The reasons pregnant women should stop exercising immediately if they experience:
- » dizziness, faintness or nausea
  - » vaginal bleeding or leakage of amniotic fluid
  - » abdominal or contraction type pain
  - » unexplained pain in the back, pelvis, groin, buttocks or legs
  - » excessive shortness of breath, chest pain or palpitations
  - » dyspnoea before exertion
  - » headache
  - » muscle weakness



- » calf pain or swelling (need to rule out thrombophlebitis)
  - » preterm labour decreased foetal movement
- K36. Know the contraindications, risk factors, complications and prevalence of discomforts and health conditions associated with pregnancy and being postnatal
- K37. The importance of recognising and responding to emergency situations and to warning signs to terminate exercise (e.g. bleeding, dizziness, headaches etc.)
- K38. Complications/considerations affecting the resumption of exercise post birth, to include:
- » Involution of the uterus
  - » Placental site healing and lochia (bleeding)
  - » Secondary post-partum haemorrhage
  - » Air embolism
  - » Thrombosis
  - » Infection (breast/uterine/urinary tract/caesarean wound site)
  - » Pelvic floor trauma/sensation loss/dysfunction/prolapse
  - » Caesarean Section
  - » abdominal muscle separation (Diastasis Recti)
  - » back or coccyx pain
  - » pelvic torsion or instability
  - » knee pain
  - » Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
  - » anaemia
  - » establishment of breastfeeding
  - » postnatal anxiety/depression
  - » separation anxiety (from baby)
  - » extreme fatigue
- K39. Any possible effect on session structure, content and time, considering the following:
- » motor skills
  - » positions
  - » importance of pelvic floor exercises
  - » safe transition between exercise and components
  - » health and safety considerations
- K40. The effects of lactation and considerations when planning a session for a client who is breastfeeding
- K41. Why a woman should be referred to other healthcare professionals before continuing exercise if she is experiencing any of the following symptoms post birth:
- » stress incontinence or pelvic floor muscle weakness
  - » dragging pain or a feeling of heaviness in the lower abdominal or pelvic floor area
  - » groin, low back pain or difficulty walking, even if mild and intermittent
  - » abdominal muscle weakness
  - » excessive abdominal doming
  - » abdominal muscle separation or softness/sinking at the umbilical mid-line
  - » umbilical hernia
  - » postnatal anxiety/depression
  - » separation anxiety (from baby)
  - » extreme fatigue
  - » back or coccyx pain
  - » pelvic girdle pain
  - » pelvic torsion or instability
  - » involution of the uterus
  - » placental site healing and lochia (bleeding)
  - » secondary post-partum haemorrhage
  - » air embolism
  - » thrombosis
  - » infection (breast/uterine/urinary tract/caesarean wound site)
  - » pelvic floor trauma/sensation loss/dysfunction/prolapse

## Unit 3 (E4) Support health and well-being for the pre and postnatal clients

This standard covers the following:

- » Psychosocial aspects of exercise during pregnancy and postnatal
- » Promoting physical activity during pregnancy and postnatally
- » Communicating effectively with pregnant and postnatal clients
- » Providing information on healthy eating and hydration guidelines to pregnant and postnatal clients
- » Managing health and safety

### Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

*Task 1: The psychosocial aspects of exercise during pregnancy and postnatal*

- P1. Identify the psychosocial adaptations to pregnancy and postnatal
- P2. Identify signs of depression and anxiety in pregnant and postnatal clients
- P3. Identify when to refer or signpost a client to appropriate support networks/agencies
- P4. Respond effectively to a client who has experienced infertility problems/miscarriage/stillbirth (but also acknowledge that they may not wish to disclose this information)
- P5. Identify the potential signs that a client may be struggling and how to act on this
- P6. Explain how to respond if you think a client has a mental health problem and where to signpost them to
- P7. Apply motivational and behaviour change techniques for starting exercise or keeping adherence to exercise

### Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

*Task 2: Promote physical activity during pregnancy and postnatally*

- P8. Identify the evidence-based acute and long-term benefits of exercise at each stage of pregnant and postnatal periods
- P9. Identify the potentially preventative role of exercise in relation to other specific conditions of pregnancy and postpartum (e.g. macrosomia, diastasis recti, pelvic girdle pain, postpartum weight retention, coronary heart disease prevention postpartum, etc.)

- P10. Identify the association of exercise with fertility, foetus development, birth outcomes and baby health
- P11. Identify stress management techniques e.g. relaxation exercises, breathing exercises, meditation and visualisation during pregnancy, birth and postnatally
- P12. Describe the specific benefits to the pelvic floor
- P13. Identify types of real and perceived barriers that pregnant and postnatal clients may have to physical activity and how to take these into account in the exercise session
- P14. Identify a range of postnatal barriers
- P15. List a range of myths that are associated with participating in physical activity during and after pregnancy
- P16. Identify ways in which barriers can be overcome
- P17. Provide advice on where clients can source relevant information on any fears they may have relating to pregnancy and exercise/activity
- P18. Identify methods to encourage individuals to attend physical activity and wellbeing initiatives

### Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

*Task 3: Communicate effectively with pregnant and postnatal clients*

- P19. Establish and maintain an effective rapport with pregnant and postnatal clients, considering possible emotional vulnerability and the need for empathy and sensitivity
- P20. Explain how motivation and other factors may assist pregnant and postnatal clients to take up and adhere to physical activity
- P21. Communicate with pregnant and postnatal clients in tasks related to the implementation of an exercise programme
- P22. Educate clients on pregnancy and postnatal physical activity and exercise
- P23. Promote pregnant and postnatal clients' engagement in specific exercise and health programmes
- P24. Manage the expectation of fitness gains during pregnancy
- P25. Listen to how the pregnant client feels on the day of exercise - through a verbal PAR-Q

- P26. Identify the care pathway that clients will go through for their maternity care and how this will impact on the individual's postnatal recovery
- P27. Identify key considerations when developing an effective working relationship with pregnant and postnatal clients

### **Performance Criteria**

#### **Exercise professionals must be able to:**

##### *Task 4: Provide information on healthy eating and hydration guidelines to pregnant and postnatal clients*

- P28. Identify where to find evidence-based information on healthy eating during pregnancy and postnatal periods
- P29. Demonstrate the importance of monitoring regular nutrition, hydration and dramatic or sudden weight change for pregnant and postnatal clients
- P30. Identify the dietary role and common dietary sources for macro and micro nutrients for the course of pregnancy and to support foetus development
- P31. Identify which foods, drinks and supplements to avoid during pregnancy and which to limit the intake of to a minimum in accordance with evidence
- P32. Identify which foods, drinks and supplements help to support a healthy pregnancy and birth
- P33. Identify the calorie requirements during the three trimesters and the postnatal period, with reference to the different requirements of breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding mothers
- P34. Give relevant advice to pregnant and postnatal clients on lifestyle

### **Performance Criteria**

#### **Exercise professionals must be able to:**

##### *Task 5: Manage health and safety*

- P35. Meet the national and local requirements and procedures for the working environment involving pregnant and postnatal clients
- P36. Identify ways and methods for dealing with emergencies accordingly and to internationally recognised procedures including providing first aid
- P37. Recognise the signs indicating that the participant should stop exercising immediately or requires medical attention
- P38. Explain the importance of extending the standard appropriate response to emergency situation

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

#### **Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

##### *Task 1: The psychosocial aspects of exercise during pregnancy and postnatal*

- K1. Know the psychosocial adaptations to pregnancy and postnatal
- K2. The signs of depression and anxiety in pregnant and postnatal clients

- K3. Know when to refer or signpost a client to appropriate support networks/agencies
- K4. Know how to respond effectively to a client who has experienced infertility problems/ miscarriage/stillbirth (but also acknowledge that they may not wish to disclose this information)
- K5. Know the potential signs that a client may be struggling and how to act on this
- K6. Know how to respond if you think a client has a mental health problem and where to signpost them to
- K7. How to apply motivational and behaviour change techniques for starting exercise or keeping adherence to exercise (cueing, voice modulation, stressing the goals of exercises, feedback on exercise performance)

### **Knowledge and Understanding Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

##### *Task 2: Promote physical activity during pregnancy and postnatally*

- K1. Know the evidence-based acute and long-term benefits of exercise at each stage of pregnant and postnatal periods, could include:
- » reduction in hypertensive disorders
  - » improved cardiorespiratory fitness
  - » improved muscular strength and endurance
  - » benefit to flexibility and neuromotor
  - » lower gestational weight gain
  - » reduction in risk of gestational diabetes
  - reduction of common pregnancy complaints (leg cramps, oedema, carpal tunnel syndrome, high/low blood pressure, constipation, haemorrhoids, varicose veins, hypertension and pre-eclampsia)
  - » increased maternal well-being (better sleep patterns, less anxiety and depression, improved ability to cope with stress)
  - » improved posture and body awareness
  - » improved self-esteem and mood
  - » better functional movement and pelvic floor muscle function
  - » possible reduction in upper and low back pain
  - » weight control
  - » maintenance and recovery of cardiovascular and strength fitness levels
  - » possible reduction of length of labour and birth complications

- » easier resumption of activity after pregnancy
  - » preventative for osteoporosis
- K9. The potentially preventative role of exercise in relation to other specific conditions of pregnancy and postpartum (e.g. macrosomia, diastasis recti, pelvic girdle pain, postpartum weight retention, coronary heart disease prevention postpartum, etc.)
- K10. The association of exercise with fertility, foetus development, birth outcomes and baby health
- K11. Benefits of stress management techniques e.g. relaxation exercise, breathing exercise, meditation and visualisation during pregnancy, birth and postnatally
- K12. The specific benefits of pelvic floor exercises to include:
- » possible prevention of pelvic-floor disorder
  - » improved pelvic floor function
  - » prevention of urinary incontinence
  - » assistance with birth
  - » re-education of pelvic floor muscles post birth
- K13. Know types of real and perceived barriers that pregnant and postnatal clients may have to physical activity and how to take these into account including:
- » concerns regarding the growing foetus
  - » medical diagnosis
  - » pelvic pain
  - » back pain
  - » body confidence
  - » skin condition
  - » structural (cost/time/location)
  - » nausea and sickness
  - » stress incontinence
  - » lack of motivation
  - » lack of self-esteem
- K14. Postnatal barriers, to include:
- » lack of time
  - » no childcare
  - » lack of motivation
  - » lack of energy
  - » low self-esteem
  - » postnatal depression
- K15. Know the myths that are associated with participating in physical activity during and after pregnancy
- K16. Ways in which barriers can be overcome
- K17. Providing advice on where clients can source relevant information on any fears they may have relating to pregnancy and exercise/activity
- K18. Know how to encourage individuals to attend physical activity and wellbeing initiatives
- Knowledge and Understanding**  
**Exercise professionals must know and understand:**  
*Task 3: Communicate effectively with pregnant and postnatal clients*
- K19. How to establish and maintain an effective rapport with pregnant and postnatal clients, taking into account possible emotional vulnerability and the need for empathy and sensitivity
- K20. How motivation and other factors may assist pregnant and postnatal clients to take up and adhere to physical activity
- K21. How to communicate with pregnant and postnatal clients in tasks related to the implementation of an exercise programme
- K22. How to educate clients on pregnancy and postnatal physical activity and exercise
- K23. How to promote pregnant and postnatal clients' engagement in specific exercise and health programmes
- K24. How to manage the expectation of fitness gains during pregnancy
- K25. The importance of listening to how the pregnant client feels on the day of exercise - through a verbal PAR-Q
- K26. The care pathway that clients will go through for their maternity care and how this will impact on the individual's postnatal recovery
- K27. Key considerations when developing an effective working relationship with pregnant and postnatal clients, to include:
- » allowing flexibility around session timings and slots
  - » managing the safety of mother and baby as the first priority
  - » encouraging activities of daily living (ADLs)
  - » encouraging a flexible activity programme to cater for daily changes
- Knowledge and Understanding**  
**Exercise professionals must know and understand:**  
*Task 4: Provide information on healthy eating and hydration guidelines to pregnant and postnatal clients*
- K28. Where to find evidence-based information on healthy eating guidelines during pregnancy and postnatal periods
- K29. Know the importance of regular nutrition, hydration and dramatic or sudden weight change for pregnant and postnatal clients

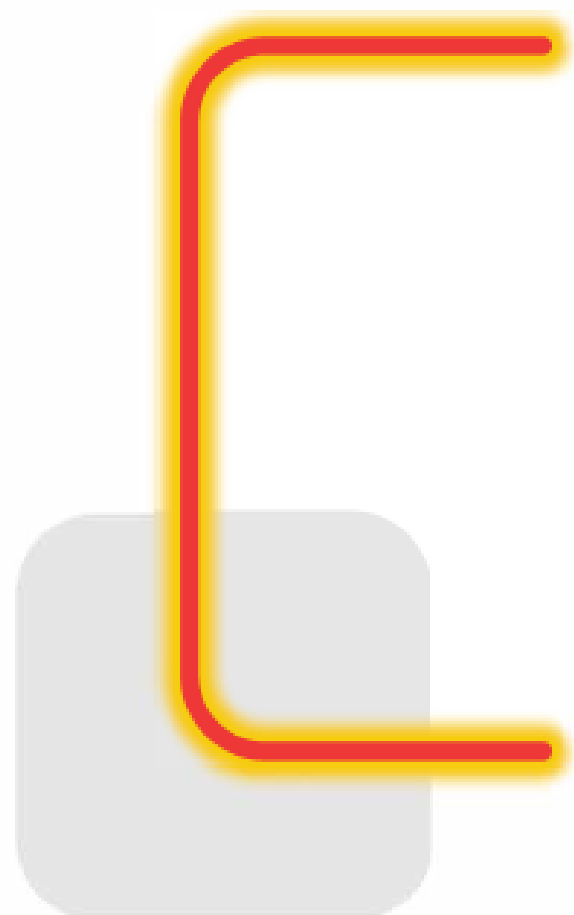
- K30. The dietary role and common dietary sources for macro- and micro-nutrients (carbohydrate, fat, protein, vitamins, minerals, water) for the course of pregnancy and to support foetus development
- K31. Know which foods, drinks and supplements to avoid during pregnancy and which to limit the intake of to a minimum in accordance with evidence
- K32. Know which foods, drinks and supplements help to support a healthy pregnancy and birth.
- K33. Know the calorie requirements during the three trimesters and the postnatal period, with reference to the different requirements of breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding mothers
- K34. The importance of advising pregnant and postnatal client on lifestyle, including the use of tobacco, alcohol and caffeine, sleep and rest patterns and avoiding stress

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

#### **Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

##### *Task 1: Manage health and safety*

- K35. The national and local requirements and procedures for the working environment involving pregnant and postnatal clients to include:
- » Completing risk assessments
  - » Identifying risk and procedures to reduce them
- K36. Ways and methods for dealing with emergencies according to internationally recognised procedures including providing first aid
- K37. How to recognise the signs indicating that a participant should stop exercising immediately or requires medical attention
- K38. The importance of extending the standard appropriate response to an emergency situation, for example
- » accompany home
  - » telephone follow up and support
  - » reassurance for other clients
  - » establishment of a specific emergency action plan with and for pregnant and postnatal clients



# Unit 4 (E4) Collect and analyse information about pre and postnatal clients

This standard Covers collecting relevant information and screening.

This standard covers the following:

- » Collecting relevant information
- » Screening
- » Identifying client's goals

## Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

### *Task 1: Collect relevant information*

- P1. Collect relevant information from the client
- P2. Record and interpret information about pregnant and postnatal clients using safe and suitable methods
- P3. Gain consent from clients prior to participating in the physical activity sessions
- P4. Follow the legal and organisational procedures of screening and collecting client information

## Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

### *Task 2: Screening*

- P5. Use a suitable range of screening tools for pregnant and postnatal clients
- P6. Use suitable methods for assessing participants' readiness to participate
- P7. Explain the importance of waiting until the client has had the postnatal 6 to 8 week check before beginning exercising post birth and/or have received the permission of their other healthcare professionals
- P8. Identify the types of medical conditions that will prevent instructors from working with pregnant clients including absolute contraindications and relative contraindications
- P9. Describe complications/considerations affecting the resumption of exercise post birth
- P10. Know how and when to recommend referral to appropriate medical or health professionals

## Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

### *Task 3: Identify client's goals*

- P11. Explain how goals for pregnant clients may differ from postnatal clients
- P12. Plan and agree SMART short, medium and long term goals
- P13. Review and analyse the client's level of development and motivation to inform goal-setting and session outcomes
- P14. Identify the importance of goal-setting and regular attendance of physical activity sessions for

pregnant and postnatal clients

- P15. Plan exercise for pregnant and postnatal clients with a range of goals

## Knowledge and Understanding

**Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

### *Task 1: Collect relevant information*

- K1. The client information that should be obtained, could include:
  - » informed consent/PAR-Q
  - » lifestyle factors
  - » medical history
  - » pregnancy and postnatal history
  - » physical activity history
  - » attitude and motivation
  - » exercise preferences
  - » stage of readiness
  - » barriers to exercise (perceived or actual)
  - » current level of fitness
  - » health status and any contraindications
  - » injury status and any specific recommended adaptations, if appropriate
  - » any other precautions identified during client consultation
- K2. The purpose of collecting information on participant's expectations and motivation, level of previous exercise participation and current level of ability
- K3. Suitable methods of collecting client information, could include:
  - » physical activity readiness questionnaire (PAR-Q)
  - » consultation
  - » interview
  - » questionnaire
  - » physical assessment
  - » observation
- K4. Purpose of the adapted pre-screening paperwork for pregnant and postnatal clients
- K5. Legal and organisational procedures for gaining consent from clients prior to participating in the physical activity sessions

- K6. The legal and ethical implications and responsibilities of screening and of collecting client information, to include:
- » data protection
  - » storage of documentation
  - » confidentiality of client information
  - » instructor's duty of care to respond appropriately
  - » to client's information
- Knowledge and Understanding**  
**Exercise professionals must know and understand:**  
**Task 2: Screening**
- K7. Suitable screening tools such as PAR-Q & You, Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (ACSM, 2013), the PARMED-X for pregnancy, Physical Activity Readiness Medical Examination for Pregnancy (CSEP, 2013); and the ACSM Health Status & Health History Questionnaire (ACSM, 2013), to assess safety or possible contraindications to exercise
- K8. Safety considerations in exercise testing for pregnant women
- K9. How to safely perform health and fitness assessments related to pregnant and postnatal clients' exercise participation, to include:
- » body circumferences
  - » body fat distribution markers and other body indexes
  - » heart rate and blood pressure during rest and exercise
  - » cardiorespiratory tests (e.g., Astrand, Rockport, 6 minutes walking test, Balke and Bruce tests using a treadmill or cycle ergometer)
  - » Static and dynamic tests to assess posture, functionality and overall autonomy in pregnant women
- K10. Physical activity and lifestyle assessment (e.g., pedometers, accelerometers, and/or questionnaires such as: the 7-day PAR - 7-day Physical Activity Recall inter-view (Sallis et al., 1985; Craig et al., 2003); the PPAQ - Pregnancy Physical Activity Questionnaire (Chasan-Taber et al., 2004); the SF-36 - Medical Outcomes Study (MOS) 36-item Short Form Health Survey (Ware & Sherbourne, 1992; McHorney et al., 1993;1994); or others
- K11. The added importance of pre-activity screening a postnatal client including relevant information relating to:
- » Have they had a 6 week postnatal check
  - » The relevance, incidence, timing and benefits of the postnatal check
  - » Guidance or information advised from a specialist
- » Type of birth
  - » Complications
  - » Still bleeding
  - » Pelvic floor e.g. incontinence, pelvic organ prolapse
  - » Diastasis recti diagnosis, to include how to advise and how to check for this
  - » Lactation
- K12. The importance of waiting until the client has had the postnatal 6 to 8 week check before beginning exercising post birth and/or have received the permission of their other healthcare professionals
- K13. Types of medical condition that will prevent instructors from working with pregnant clients, could include:  
 Absolute contraindications:
- » haemodynamically significant heart disease
  - » restrictive lung disease
  - » incompetent cervix
  - » multiple gestation at risk for premature labour
  - » persistent second or third trimester bleeding
  - » placenta praevia after 26 weeks' gestation
  - » premature labour during the current pregnancy
  - » ruptured membranes
  - » pregnancy-induced hypertension
- Relative contraindications:
- » severe anaemia
  - » unevaluated maternal cardiac arrhythmia
  - » chronic bronchitis
  - » poorly controlled type I diabetes
  - » extreme morbid obesity
  - » extreme low weight (body mass index <12)
  - » history of extremely sedentary lifestyle
  - » intrauterine growth restriction in current pregnancy
  - » poorly controlled hypertension/ pre-eclampsia
  - » orthopaedic limitations
  - » poorly controlled seizure disorder
  - » poorly controlled thyroid disease
  - » heavy smoking
- K14. Complications/considerations affecting the resumption of exercise post birth, which could include:
- » involution of the uterus
  - » placental site healing and lochia (bleeding)

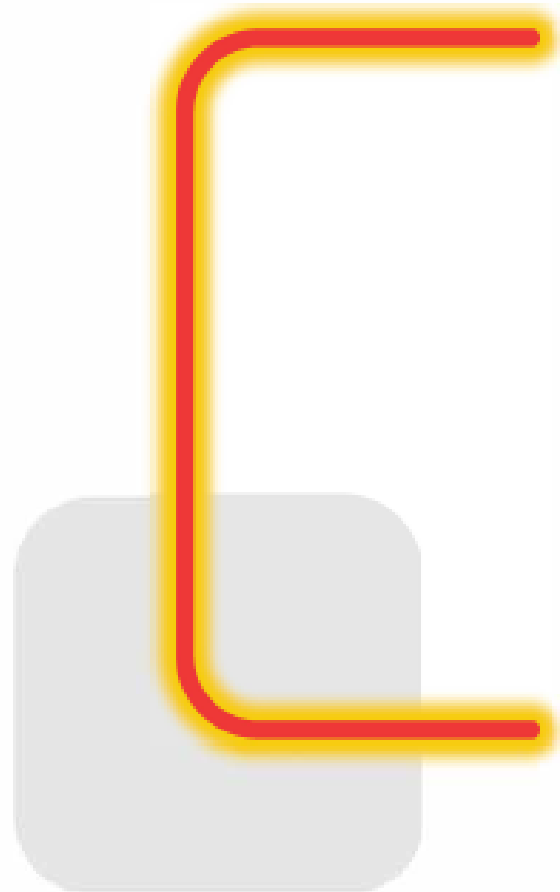
- » secondary post-partum haemorrhage
- » air embolism
- » thrombosis
- » infection (breast/uterine/urinary tract/  
Caesarean wound site)
- » pelvic floor trauma/sensation loss/  
dysfunction/prolapse
- » Caesarean Section – shouldn't prevent  
instructors from working with client, but  
requires extra considerations
- » abdominal muscle separation
- » back or coccyx pain
- » pelvic girdle pain
- » pelvic torsion or instability
- » knee pain
- » carpal tunnel syndrome
- » anaemia
- » breastfeeding
- » postnatal anxiety/depression
- » separation anxiety (from baby)
- » extreme fatigue

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

#### **Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

##### *Task 3: Identify client's goals*

- K15. How goals for pregnant clients may differ from postnatal clients
- K16. How to plan and agree SMART short, medium and long term goals
- K17. The importance of reviewing your analysis of the client's level of development and motivation to inform goal-setting and session outcomes
- K18. How to plan exercise for pregnant and postnatal clients with a range of goals including:
- » maintenance of cardiovascular fitness
  - » maintenance of functional muscular strength and endurance
  - » improved posture, pelvis and spine stability
  - » improved motor skills
  - » balance and coordination
  - » pelvic floor muscle education and improved strength and function
  - » resumption of appropriate safe and effective exercise post birth





## Unit 5 (E4) Plan exercise for pre and postnatal clients

This standard covers:

- » Plan how to manage risks in exercise sessions for pregnant and postnatal clients
- » The recommended guidelines for exercise for pregnant and postnatal clients
- » Plan a suitable programme for pregnant and postnatal clients
  - Considerations for planning during pregnancy
  - Considerations for planning postnatal exercise

### Performance Criteria

#### Exercise professionals must be able to:

##### *Task 1: Plan how to manage risks in exercise sessions for pregnant and postnatal clients*

- P1. Plan movements for safety and effectiveness
- P2. Identify the risk factors and prevalence of discomforts and health conditions associated with pregnancy and postnatal periods
- P3. Identify environmental risk factors for complications of pregnancy and postnatal periods
- P4. Explain the issues with accommodating a pregnant or postnatal client into a mainstream studio, aqua or gym session
- P5. Explain why in most cases exercise is safe for both mother and baby
- P6. Explain why exercise at appropriate intensity for the client concerned is not associated with an adverse pregnancy outcome
- P7. Explain the importance of not exercising to exhaustion during pregnancy
- P8. Assess, monitor and manage the risks to pregnant and postnatal clients during physical activity
- P9. Explain why pregnant clients should avoid hot and humid conditions when exercising
- P10. Explain the need to risk assess exercise/physical activity where babies are present
- P11. Identify the key signs and symptoms of when to advise the client to withdraw from physical activity
- P12. Plan for the key implications of the effects of pregnancy on exercise programming related to the stages of pregnancy
- P13. Respond to common pregnancy problems

- relevant to exercise participation
- P14. Demonstrate safe and effective use of exercise equipment for pregnancy and postnatal clients to include fitballs, barbells, bands etc.

### Performance Criteria

#### Exercise professionals must be able to:

##### *Task 2: The recommended guidelines for exercise for pregnant and postnatal clients*

- P15. Source evidence-based recommended guidelines for physical activity for previously active and previously inactive clients during pregnancy and postnatally up to 12 months after childbirth, to include:
    - » frequency, intensity, type and duration
    - » appropriate stretching for pregnant clients
  - P16. Most recommended sports and exercise choices during pregnancy and postnatally
  - P17. Explain why the guidelines are in place and the importance of keeping up to date
  - P18. Identify types of physical activity that should be avoided during pregnancy and recovery from pregnancy and the reasons for avoiding these
  - P19. Basic rules for the use of music (rhythm and cadence)
  - P20. Identify the dose-response relationship between physical activity and health for the pregnant and postnatal period
  - P21. Include in the session appropriate activities for the different stages of pregnancy and the postnatal period
- ### Performance Criteria
- #### Exercise professionals must be able to:
- ##### *Task 3: Plan a suitable programme for pregnant and postnatal clients. Considerations for planning during pregnancy*
- P22. Plan safe and effective modifications/adaptations and alternative activities for pregnant clients when working within a one-to-one and group exercise setting to meet the need of the individual client
  - P23. Identify the different considerations that need to be accounted for when planning physical activity sessions for pregnant clients

- P24. Plan essential exercises to perform in the immediate and late postnatal period, regarding the mode of delivery
- P25. Consider typical postnatal discomforts and barriers influencing the clients' participation in physical activity programmes
- P26. Provide suitable adaptations of exercise for breastfeeding clients
- P27. Explain the importance of resuming postnatal activity on an individual, gradual and progressive basis according to evidence-based guidelines
- P28. Considerations for exercising with the baby (indoor and outdoor, including aquatic activities) and exercise programme adaptation to the baby's rhythm
- P29. Know the key implications of the effects of pregnancy on exercise programming to include:
  - » effects on motor skills
  - » current physical activity levels
  - » implications of exercising in the supine position after 16 weeks (advise on exercising in this position and possible implications)
  - » the need to preferentially re-educate the pelvic floor and transversus abdominis post birth
  - » weakening/widening of the rectus abdominis diastasis
- P30. Give client advice on safe and functional transitions in everyday living
- P31. Plan exercise according to women's condition, each trimester of pregnancy and/or postnatal period, following evidence-based guidelines and physicians' recommendations, including:
  - » safe and functional transitions between exercises
  - » suitable exercise positions
  - » tailored to the needs of pregnant and postnatal clients
- P32. Plan for a physical activity session that is safe, effective and engaging for pregnant and postnatal client(s), to include:
  - » cardiovascular fitness
  - » muscular fitness
  - » flexibility
  - » core stability
  - » relaxation
- P33. Plan and agree goals that are appropriate for pregnant and postnatal clients and their level of physical ability
- P34. Plan and prepare objectives, activities and teaching styles that are appropriate to the clients' goals
- P35. Know the importance of the relationship between programme design and activity delivery in engaging pregnant and postnatal clients
- P36. Explain the importance of pelvic floor exercises, and ways to incorporate pelvic floor exercises into the session
- P37. Select exercises and techniques relevant to client's well-being, functional readiness and the course of pregnancy and postnatal
- P38. Use appropriate methods for monitoring heart rate and exercise intensity during pregnancy
- Knowledge and understanding**
- Exercise professionals must know and understand:**
- Task 1: Plan how to manage risks in exercise sessions for pregnant and postnatal clients*
- K1. How to accommodate appropriately screened asymptomatic pregnant and postnatal clients within a mainstream studio, aqua or gym exercise session
- K2. The risk factors and prevalence of discomforts and health conditions associated with pregnancy and being postnatal, to include:
  - » gestational diabetes
  - » overweight and obesity
  - » oedema
  - » low back pain
  - » hypertension
  - » pre-eclampsia
  - » musculoskeletal disorders
  - » diastasis recti abdominis
  - » stress urinary and faecal incontinence and other pelvic-floor disorders
  - » stress and anxiety
  - » oral health
  - » sleep disorders
  - » headache
  - » digestive disorders such as constipation
  - » hemorrhoids
  - » varicose veins
- K3. Considerations for the exercise environment including:
  - » temperature
  - » trip hazards
  - » ventilation
  - » group size
  - » choice/safe use of appropriate equipment
  - » type of activity for the environment
- K4. Why in most cases exercise is safe for both mother and baby
- K5. Why exercise at appropriate intensity for the client concerned is not associated with adverse pregnancy outcome
- K6. The importance of not exercising to exhaustion, to include:

- » the effect it could have on the unborn baby
  - » the effect it could have on the mother
- K7. Why pregnant clients should avoid hot and humid conditions when exercising
- K8. The need to risk assess exercise/physical activity where babies are present
- K9. The key signs and symptoms of when to advise the client to withdraw from physical activity
- K10. Key implications of the effects of pregnancy on exercise programming related to the stages of pregnancy
- K11. Common pregnancy problems relevant to exercise participation and how to respond to them including:
- » the hypermobile woman
  - » knee, back and shoulder pain
  - » risks and symptoms of pelvic girdle pain
  - » fatigue and interrupted sleep patterns
  - » effects on co-ordination, balance, concentration and memory
- K12. How to safely and effectively use exercise equipment for pregnant and postnatal clients to include fitballs, barbells, bands etc.

### **Knowledge and understanding**

#### **Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

##### *Task 2: The recommended guidelines for exercise for pregnant and postnatal clients*

- K13. How to source evidence-based recommended guidelines for physical activity for previously active and previously inactive clients for pregnancy and postnatal to include:
- » frequency, intensity, type and duration
  - » appropriate stretching for pregnant clients
- K14. Most recommended sports and exercises during pregnancy and postnatally (e.g. walking, low-impact aerobics/step exercise, water exercise, swimming, indoor cycling, strength training, pelvic-floor muscle training, stretching)
- K15. Adaptation of risky sports (e.g. skiing, skating, scuba diving, basketball, off-road cycling, etc.)
- K16. The structure of the session (e.g. warm up, aerobic part, strength training, pelvic-floor muscle training, stretching, relaxation, preparation to birth exercises)
- K17. Why the guidelines are in place and the importance of keeping up to date
- K18. Types of physical activity that should be avoided during pregnancy and recovery from pregnancy and the reasons for avoiding these
- K19. The appropriate activities for the different stages of pregnancy and the postnatal period
- K20. Basic rules for the use of music (rhythm and

- cadence)
- K21. The dose-response relationship between physical activity and health for the pregnant and postnatal periods

### **Knowledge and understanding**

#### **Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

##### *Task 3: Planning a suitable programme for pregnant and postnatal clients. Considerations for planning during pregnancy*

- K22. How to plan safe and effective modifications/adaptations and alternative activities for pregnant clients when working within a one-to-one and group exercise setting to meet the need of the individual client
- K23. The different considerations that need to be accounted for when planning physical activity sessions for pregnant clients to include:
- » regular nutrition
  - » consume adequate calories
  - » maintaining adequate hydration during exercise
  - » the avoidance of fatigue
  - » dramatic or sudden weight change
  - » wearing appropriate clothing and footwear
  - » adaptation of exercises (modification)
  - » using the correct technique
- K24. The importance of resuming postnatal activity on an individual, gradual and progressive basis according to evidence-based guidelines
- K25. Essential exercises to perform in the immediate and late postnatal period, regarding the mode of delivery (physiological birth vs Caesarean Section or operative vaginal delivery, perineum condition, and mother well-being)
- K26. Typical postnatal discomforts and barriers influencing the clients' participation in physical activity programmes
- K27. Adaptations of exercise while breastfeeding
- K28. Exercising with the baby (indoor and outdoor, including aquatic activities) and exercise programme adaptation to the baby's rhythm
- K29. The key implications of the effects of pregnancy on exercise programming to include:
- » Effects on motor skills
  - » Current physical activity levels
  - » Implications of exercising in the supine position after 16 weeks (advise on exercising in this position and possible implications)
  - » The need to preferentially re-educate the

- » pelvic floor and transversus abdominis post birth
  - » weakening/widening of the rectus abdominis
  - » diastasis recti
- K30. The importance of safe functional transitions between exercise both within a physical activity setting and everyday activities e.g. getting in and out the car
- K31. The pros and cons of different exercise positions to take into account:
- » supine and postural hypotensive syndromes
  - » pelvic girdle pain
  - » carpal tunnel syndrome
  - » rib pain
  - » gastric reflux and low back pain
  - » the standing position for functionality, balance and optimal pelvic floor muscle function
- K32. The importance of exercises tailored to the needs of pregnant and postnatal clients including the importance of:
- » functional activities
  - » observation
  - » monitoring and cueing skills to ensure safe exercise intensity
  - » toilet and hydration breaks
  - » technique correction (reinforcement of posture, joint alignment)
  - » speed of instruction
  - » safe transitions
  - » pelvic floor awareness
- K33. How to plan exercise according to the client's condition, each trimester of pregnancy and/or postnatal period, following evidence-based guidelines and physicians' recommendations
- K34. How to plan and agree goals that are appropriate to pregnant and postnatal clients and their level of physical ability
- K35. How to design an appropriate exercise programme based on information obtained during the screening
- K36. How to plan and prepare objectives, activities and teaching styles that are appropriate to the clients' goals
- K37. The importance of the relationship between programme design and activity delivery in engaging pregnant and postnatal clients
- K38. The importance of pelvic floor exercises, and ways to incorporate pelvic floor exercises into the session
- K39. How to develop a plan for a physical activity session that is safe, effective and engaging for pregnant and postnatal client(s), and relevant to their goals, medical history and the exercise environment to include:
- » cardiovascular fitness
  - » muscular fitness
  - » flexibility
  - » core stability
  - » relaxation
  - » type of exercise
  - » intensity of exercise
  - » duration of the sessions
  - » weekly frequency of sessions
  - » progression of exercise (if suitable)
- K40. Selection of exercises and their techniques with regards to clients' well-being, functional readiness and the course of pregnancy and postnatal, in particular the appearance of pregnancy and postnatal discomforts (e.g. back pain, stress urinary incontinence)
- K41. The best method for monitoring heart rate and exercise intensity during pregnancy. Clients should be advised to exercise according to how they are feeling and encouraged to use the talk-test to monitor appropriate, individual intensity

## Unit 6 (E4) Instruct exercise session for pre and postnatal clients

The following standard covers:

- » Instructing the session, meeting the needs of the pregnant and postnatal client
- » Ending the session

### Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

*Task 1: Instructing the session, meeting the needs of the pregnant and postnatal client*

- P1. Deliver a planned or pre-designed session to a group or individual that is safe, effective and enjoyable
- P2. Provide clear instructions and use questions to confirm participants' understanding
- P3. Correctly demonstrate exercises, techniques and equipment to participants relevant to the exercise discipline i.e. gym based, group exercise, one-to-one
- P4. Monitor participation and performance to identify signs of exercise intolerance or poor technique
- P5. Regress or adapt exercises to enable participants to achieve correct posture and body alignment, range of motion, control, timing and form for all fitness exercises in a session
- P6. Use suitable teaching skills for participants
- P7. Modify session as required considering basic mechanics, safety and fitness outcomes
- P8. Respond to participants experiencing difficulties and answer questions as required
- P9. Provide a range of intensity and impact options
- P10. Select equipment according to a participant's needs
- P11. Manage risks as they arise in the session
- P12. Recognise signs that indicate that exercise should be discontinued immediately
- P13. Supervise exercise according to client's condition, each trimester of pregnancy and/or postnatal period, following evidence-based guidelines and physicians' recommendations

### Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

*Task 2: End the session*

- P14. Giving feedback to participants regarding their performance
- P15. Using appropriate questions to gain relevant information from participants
- P16. Putting equipment away and assessing safety for future use

- P17. Leaving environment in safe condition for future use
- P18. Informing or agreeing with participants the time, location and content of future sessions
- P19. Ensuring participants leave the fitness environment safely

### Knowledge and understanding

**Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

*Task 1: Instructing the session, meeting the needs of the pregnant and postnatal client*

- K1. The importance of giving clear instructions and confirming participants' understanding of the instructions
- K2. How to correctly demonstrate exercises, techniques and equipment to participants relevant to the exercise discipline i.e. gym based, group exercise, one-to-one
- K3. How to monitor and observe participation and performance and how to identify signs of exercise intolerance or poor technique
- K4. How to regress or adapt exercises to enable participants to achieve correct posture and body alignment, range of motion, control, timing and form for all fitness exercises in a session
- K5. Suitable teaching skills for participants to include use of:
  - » visual and verbal instruction
  - » cueing
  - » observation
  - » speed of instruction
  - » ensuring safe transitions
  - » movement analysis
  - » specific adaptation
  - » communication skills
  - » listening and response skills
  - » motivation
- K6. How to modify the session as required considering basic mechanics, safety and fitness outcomes
- K7. The importance of responding to participants experiencing difficulties
- K8. Why it is important to allow questions as required without it distracting or impacting the session
- K9. How to provide a range of intensity and impact

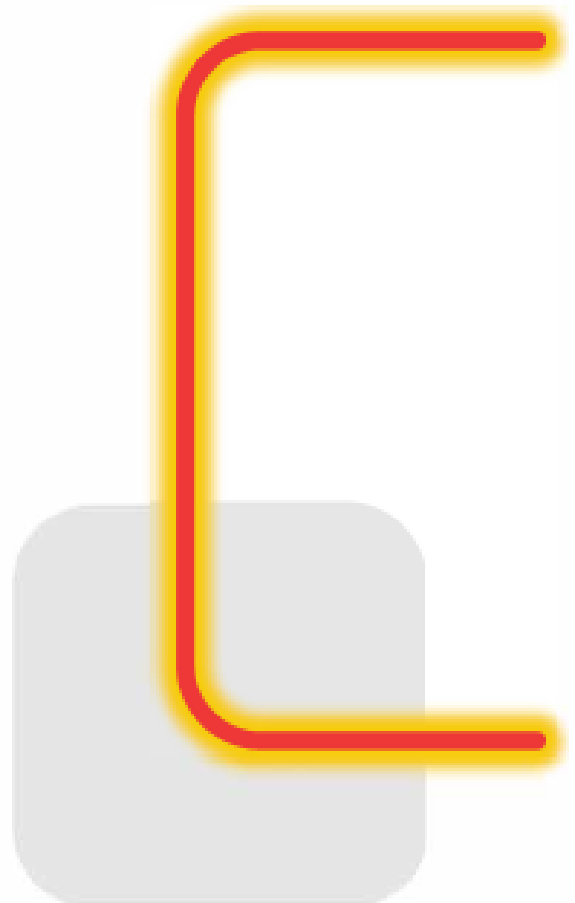
- options
- K10. How to select equipment according to a participant's needs
- K11. How to manage risks as they arise in the session and how to address them to prevent injury to clients
- K12. How to develop a safe, effective, enjoyable and pregnant and postnatal friendly exercise and physical activity environment to include:
- » use of suitable equipment
  - » suitable music
- K13. How to recognise signs that indicate that exercise should be discontinued immediately and/or medical consultation sought
- K14. How to supervise exercise according to client's condition, each trimester of pregnancy and/or postnatal period, following evidence-based guidelines and physicians' recommendations

### **Knowledge and understanding**

#### **Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

##### *Task 2: End the session*

- K15. The importance of giving feedback to participants regarding their performance
- K16. How to use appropriate questions to gain relevant information from participants
- K17. The importance of putting equipment away and assessing safety for future use
- K18. The importance of leaving the environment in safe condition for future use
- K19. The importance of informing or agreeing with participants the time, location and content of future sessions
- K20. Why it is important to ensure participants leave the fitness environment safely



## Unit 7 (E4) Evaluate and review exercise for pre and postnatal clients

This standard covers the following:

- » Evaluating session

### **Performance Criteria**

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

#### *Task 1: Evaluate session*

- P1. Monitor and evaluate exercise session at appropriate intervals throughout the session
- P2. Evaluate exercise session according to participant's feedback, professional judgement and outcomes of sessions.
- P3. Gather information from participants to improve personal performance
- P4. Use opportunities to collate and use feedback from:
  - » participants
  - » managers
  - » coordinators
  - » colleagues
- P5. Review own performance and identify areas needing improvement

### **Knowledge and understanding**

**Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

#### *Task 1: Evaluate session*

- K1. The importance of monitoring and evaluating exercise session at appropriate intervals throughout the session
- K2. How to evaluate exercise session according to participant's feedback, professional judgement and outcomes of sessions
- K3. The importance of gathering information from participants to improve personal performance
- K4. Different opportunities to collate and use feedback from:
  - » participants
  - » managers
  - » coordinators
  - » colleagues
- K5. The benefits of reviewing own performance and identifying areas needing improvement

