

Information for patients and carers

**Cancer Prehabilitation at Your Local
Leisure Centre: Preparing for Treatment**

What is prehabilitation?

Prehabilitation, or *prehab*, is the process of using the time between diagnosis and treatment to optimise your general health. This can help improve your recovery and overall quality of life.

Prehab focuses on three key areas:

- **Exercise**
- **Nutrition**
- **Mental wellbeing**

Our service, delivered in local leisure centres, will concentrate on the **exercise** element of prehab.



Why has it been recommended for me?

Your cancer team has advised that you will need treatment, which may include surgery and/or systemic therapies such as chemotherapy, radiotherapy, or immunotherapy. Evidence shows that increasing your activity before surgery and during cancer treatment can improve your outcomes

Benefits of prehab before surgery:

- Reduced length of hospital stay
- Lower risk of readmission
- Faster recovery
- Improved quality of life

Benefits of prehab before and during chemotherapy:

- Reduced fatigue
- Reduced nausea and vomiting
- Increased tolerance to treatment
- Improved function and independence

If your treatment is not listed above, don't worry—being more active still offers significant benefits, and these sessions remain important.

Why staying active is important

Exercise is one of the most powerful tools you have to prepare for cancer treatment. Even small increases in physical activity can make a big difference. Here's why:

- **Boosts strength and stamina** – helping you cope better with treatment and daily activities.
- **Supports your immune system** – making your body more resilient.
- **Improves mood and reduces stress** – exercise releases feel-good hormones that can help you feel more positive.
- **Speeds up recovery** – fitter patients often recover faster after surgery or treatment.
- **Reduces treatment side effects** – such as fatigue, nausea, and loss of independence.

You don't need to be an athlete—every step counts. Our prehab sessions are designed to be safe, supportive, and tailored to your needs.

Where will it take place?

We have partnered with **Preston**, **Chorley**, and **South Ribble** councils to deliver prehab outside the hospital setting. You will be referred to the leisure centre closest to your home.

Preston City Council leisure centres are managed by GLL (Greenwich Leisure Limited), and sessions will take place at the 'Better' **West View Leisure Centre**.

South Ribble and Chorley Borough Councils operate their own leisure centres, and you will be seen at one of the following sites:

- **South Ribble**
 - Bamber Bridge Leisure Centre
 - Leyland Leisure Centre
 - Penwortham Leisure Centre
 - South Ribble Tennis & Fitness Centre
- **Chorley**
 - All Season Leisure Centre
 - Clayton Green Sports Centre

What will be involved?

- A member of your hospital team will complete an online referral to your nearest leisure centre.
- You will then be contacted by the leisure-centre based prehab team to arrange a **one-to-one assessment** (up to one hour), covering your medical history and current activity levels.

- The assessment will take place in a leisure centre local to you. If you cannot come to the leisure centre, we can make adaptations, but it might impact the quality of the assessment. For example, we can arrange a telephone appointment instead of an in-person appointment.
- You can bring someone with you to this appointment if you feel it would be beneficial to you.
- Following this, you will be invited to attend group **exercise classes designed specifically for cancer prehab patients**.
- The sessions will be guided, and exercises will be adapted to suit you. The aim is to increase your heart/breathing rate to a moderate level; you can still hold a conversation but feel your breathing is more laboured.
- If required, you may be seen on a one-to-one basis. When you feel more confident the intention will be to bring you into the group session. This has shown to improve mental wellbeing and social support.
- You can bring someone along for support; however, they won't be able to take part in the exercise.
- After your treatment, you will be offered a period of rehabilitation to support your recovery and help you gradually return to the activities that matter to you. Rehabilitation sessions will run the same way as the prehab sessions and last up to 12 weeks.

Is this part of my treatment?

Prehab is not a hospital-based treatment, but its benefits are well recognised. Your cancer team recommends this service to support your recovery and wellbeing.

Participation is **completely voluntary**—the decision to attend is yours.

Your referral information will be shared securely with the prehab staff member at your local leisure centre. Identifiable information will be stored in a secure locked cabinet or on a lthtr server. If you prefer not to

attend a leisure centre, you can choose to be seen at **Chorley District Hospital** or **Royal Preston Hospital** by a member of the physiotherapy prehab team.

This is a **one-year pilot project**. We will share anonymous service data with **Lancaster University** to help us understand how fair and effective the Cancer Prehab in Leisure Centres programme is. Your data will not include your name or any details that could identify you. If you would prefer not to share this anonymous information, please let us know.

We plan to conduct a small number of interviews as part of this evaluation, and we are interested in talking to patients who take part in prehabilitation, and those who do not. If you are willing to be contacted by a researcher to discuss whether you would be interested to be interviewed, please let us know by contacting Susan Saul (see details below).

Contact details

For further advice or information, please contact:

Susan Saul

Macmillan Clinical Lead Physiotherapist for Prehabilitation

 07925 348585

 susan.saul@lthtr.nhs.uk

Sources of further information

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk

www.nhs.uk

www.accessable.co.uk

www.patient.co.uk

www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/veteran-aware

<https://bepartofresearch.nihr.ac.uk/>

www.southribbleleisure.com

www.chorleyleisure.com

<https://www.better.org.uk/leisure-centre/preston/>

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www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets

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If you want to stop smoking, you can also contact Smokefree Lancashire on Freephone **08081962638**.

Please ask a member of staff if you would like help in understanding this information.

This information can be made available in large print, audio, Braille and in other languages.

Our patient information group review our leaflets regularly, if you feel you would like to feedback on this information or join our reading group please contact on email address:

patientexperienceandinvolve@LTHTR.nhs.uk

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