

The RSCDS Health Strategy

The RSCDS Health Strategy has been developed in response to the increasing evidence of the positive health benefits of regular, moderate and intense activity. The Strategy utilises the scientific findings which point to the benefits of Scottish country dancing and endorses the Scottish Government's National Physical Activity Strategy "*Let's make Scotland more active*" (Feb. 2003) and the five-year review of February 2009. The RSCDS Health Strategy supports the government's target of 50% of adults undertaking 30 minutes of intensive activity most days of the week and links with the "*Get Scotland Dancing*" campaign launched in October 2010 by the Minister of Culture, Fiona Hyslop. Further research carried out by Strathclyde University in Glasgow, led by Dr Paul Dougall, confirms the evidence that Scottish country dancing is an effective recreational exercise for particular types of fitness, with extensive measurable benefits for older people.

The RSCDS emphasises the three elements of fitness, fun and friendship which Scottish country dancing provides and is uniquely placed to deliver these benefits through its worldwide network of Branches and Affiliated Groups.

The main aims of the Strategy are:

- To encourage those with a range of health issues to be active and to participate in Scottish country dancing
- To increase the regular attendance of those with a range of health issues at RSCDS local Branch and Affiliated Group classes and related dance events
- To increase local Branch, Affiliated Group and RSCDS membership to safeguard Scottish country dancing for future generations

The Strategy will be implemented by:

- Providing information to health service providers, local councils, other relevant agencies in the public and voluntary sector and self-help groups to encourage their support and direct engagement with the strategy
- Providing information to local media to increase public awareness and to enlist their support and direct engagement with the campaign
- Providing information to local councillors and parliamentarians to encourage their support and promotion of the campaign
- Widely publicising the benefits of Scottish country dancing through the strategic distribution of targeted posters, publicity and other recruitment materials in key areas and centres

The impact of the Strategy will be assessed by:

- Systematic Branch and Affiliated Group monitoring and recording of all contacts and agencies actively supporting the campaign along with all outlets and places used to display posters and distribute information, and completion of short questionnaires for all new enquiries and expressions of interest in Scottish country dancing
- Evaluation at the end of the 2012/13 dancing year, when all recorded information, feedback and other relevant comment should be sent to the RSCDS Marketing Officer at marketing@rscds.org for analysis at the end of the dancing year.