Chapter 14
Aftercare and Wellness Group Programming

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In this chapter, our emphasis will deviate from the one-to-one relationship of therapist and patient and shift to group classes, both for the therapy graduate and for the fitness enthusiast. At the completion of the chapter, the aquatic professional will be able to:

1. Identify statistical trends in the popularity of aquatic exercise, including a profile of the "typical" aquatic exercise participant.
2. Recognize the safety and programming logistics which must be considered when working in water with specific diagnostic groups (e.g. arthritis, cardiopulmonary compromise, Parkinson's disease, etc.).
3. Locate educational and certification options for aquatic instruction of diagnostic-related groups.
4. Locate educational and certification options for aquatic instruction of the healthy wellness or fitness enthusiast.
5. Identify the most common barriers which prevent individuals from transitioning from therapy to after-care aquatics.

THE POST-REHAB AND FITNESS CLIENT

There comes a day when one-on-one therapy must cease. The patient is handed a set of exercises (mildly damp, tucked in a Ziploc® bag), advised on group class options, and pointed to the door. The moment of truth arrives: *Shall I continue on?* she ponders. *Is it worth the effort?* For there is no mistaking it. Attending an aquatic class -- whether as a therapy graduate or as a walk-in – requires more than a tangible belief in the power of the pool. It requires a singular devotion to the idea that aquatic exercise is worth the effort. Therapists need witness but one client with rheumatoid arthritis tugging in vain to remove her vacuum-sealed swimsuit to understand. And yet, aquatic exercise continues to be a very popular option for many post-rehab and fitness enthusiasts.

STATISTICS ON AQUATIC EXERCISE PARTICIPATION

Non-swimming aquatic exercise grew in popularity in the United States by almost 8% between 1998-2007 (Table 14-1)[1] This is in stark contrast to other popular exercise options, including fit-