

A swimmer is captured in a dynamic, forward-leaning stroke in a swimming pool. The swimmer is wearing a blue swim cap and goggles, and their body is partially submerged, creating a splash of water. The pool's lane lines are visible on the bottom, and the overall scene is bathed in a vibrant blue light. The text 'Happiness is..... A Weekly Dip in the Pool' is overlaid in white on the right side of the image.

Happiness is..... A Weekly  
Dip in the Pool

# Swimming and Health Commission Report



Swimming can boost your life expectancy

In a study of over 80,000 people, swimmers had a:

**28%**▼

lower risk  
of early death

**41%**▼

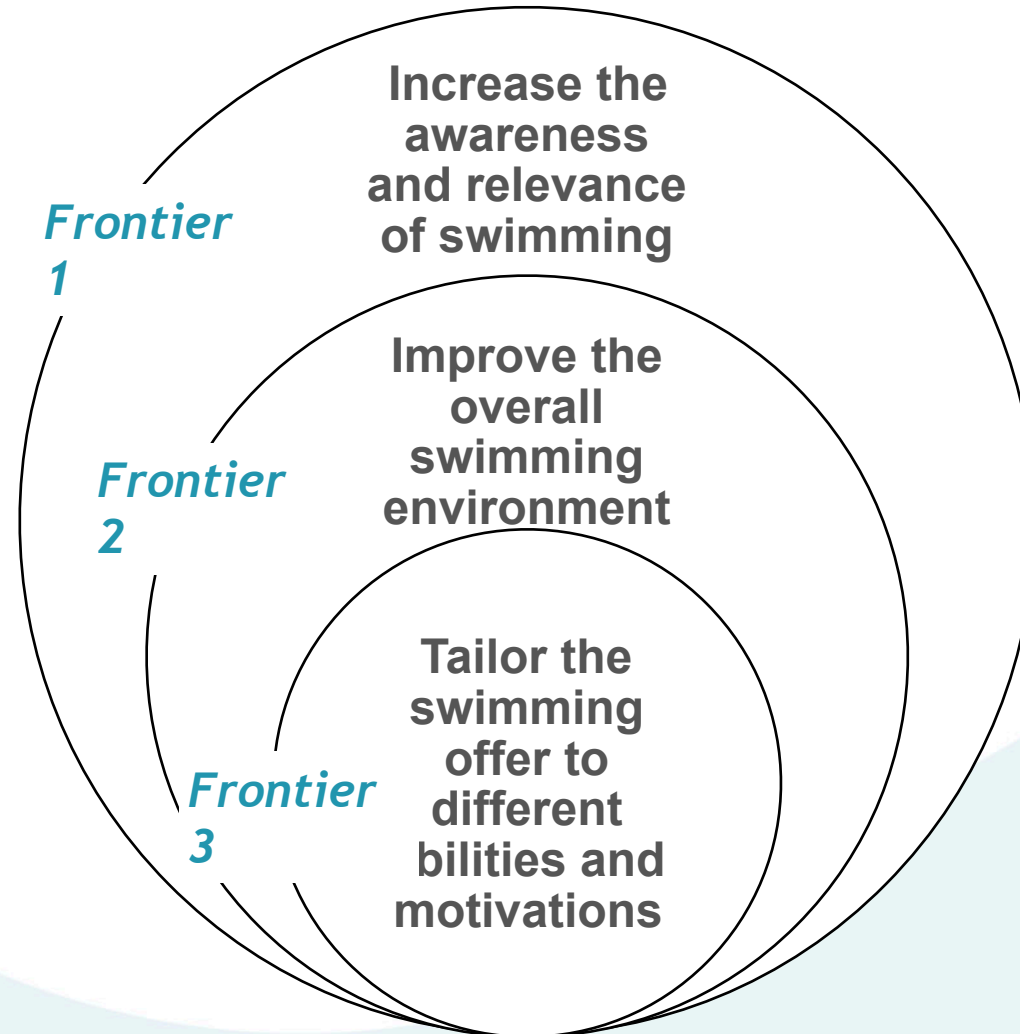
lower risk of  
death due to  
heart disease  
and stroke

# Analysis of swimming: broader outcomes



# Getting the offer right

- Each frontier represents an opportunity to convert the interest of people with long term health conditions into action.
- It is critical to address **all three frontiers** to bring in this new audience.



Swim England

**Dementia Friendly Swimming  
Project**

# Dementia Friendly Swimming

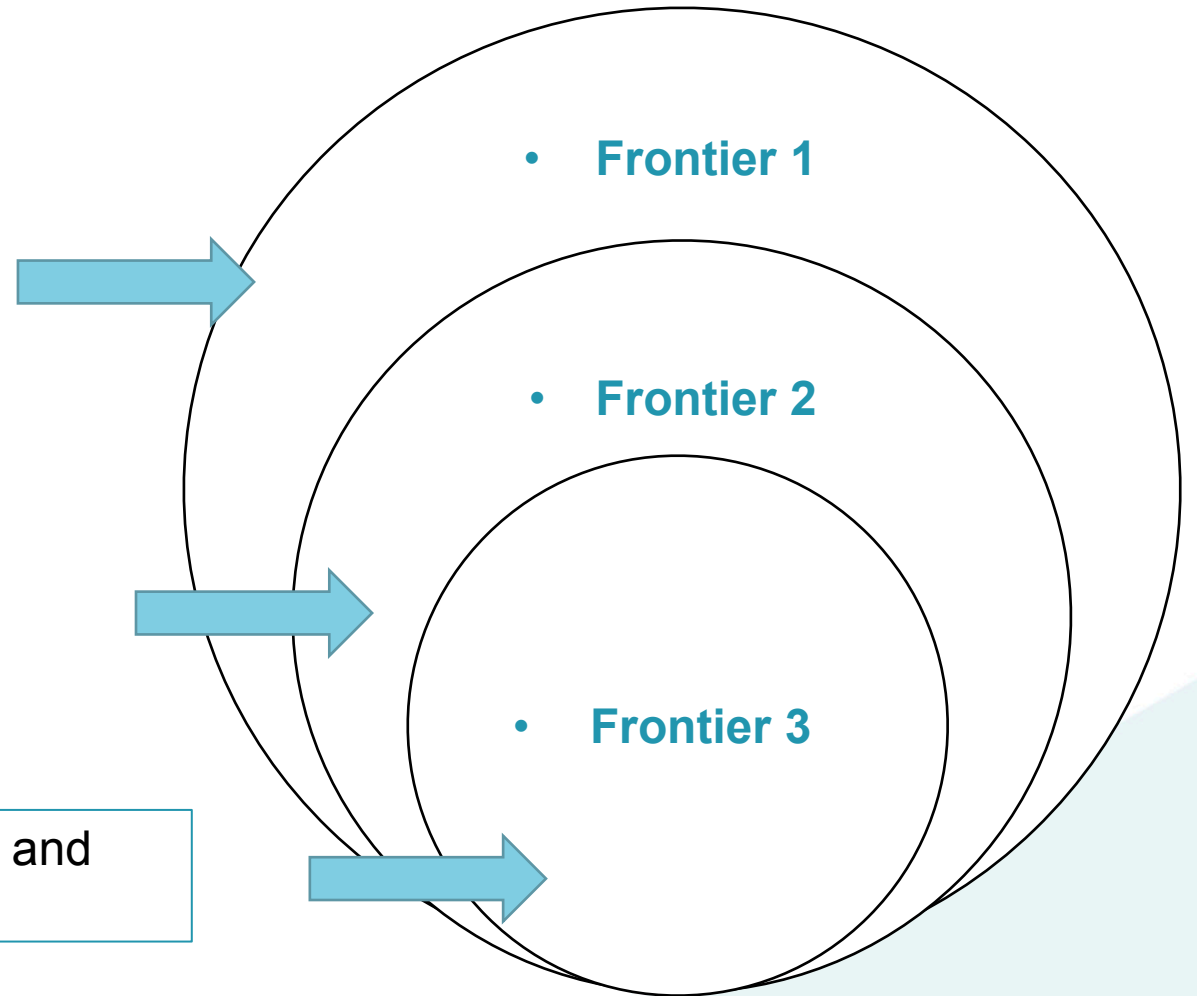
Development of key partnerships to drive recruitment.

Development of persuasive information describing the benefits.

Appraisal of the facilities using a checklist

Training for all leisure staff

Creation of supportive, enjoyable and safe swimming and aquatic exercise opportunities.



# Dementia Friendly Swimming



## Making swimming accessible for people with dementia:

The Swim England Dementia Friendly Swimming Project

Final Report December 2017



## Contents

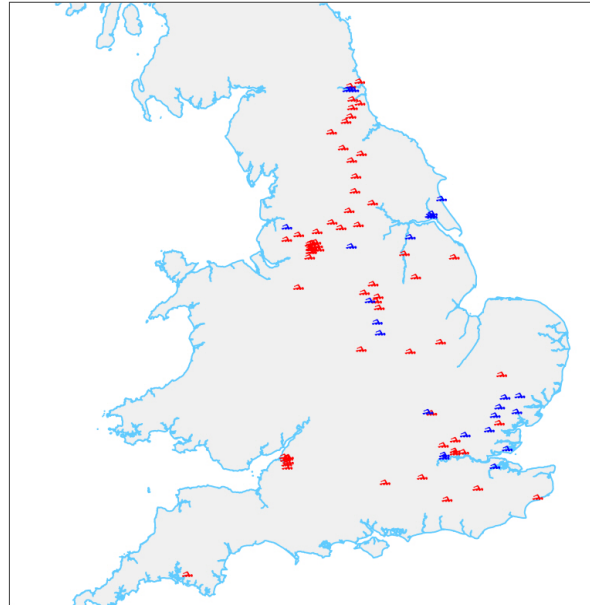
<b>Executive Summary</b>	2
<b>Introduction</b>	8
1. Project approach	9
2. Research approach	11
3. Data collection and analyses	15
<b>Section A: Creating a Culture for Change</b>	17
1. Dementia Friendly Training	18
2. Improving the swimming environment	20
3. Provision of central resources and support for Dementia Friendly Swimming	22
4. Establishing partnerships and outreach	24
5. Developing marketing and recruitment strategies	25
6. Tailoring provision	29
7. Shared recognition and publicity	31
<b>Section B: Growth of Dementia Friendly Swimming</b>	32
1. Growth in number of schemes	32
2. Numbers of Dementia Friendly Swimming people recruited	34
3. Characteristics of people with dementia and carers participating in the project	36
4. Motives and initial beliefs among people with dementia and carers	41
5. Attendance at Dementia Friendly Swimming sessions	42
<b>Section C: Benefits of DFS</b>	47
1. Perceived benefits for people with dementia and their carers	47
2. Illustrative case studies of beneficiaries	52
3. Benefits to leisure operators	55
4. Benefits to partnered organisations	56
<b>Section D: Taking Dementia Friendly Swimming into the future</b>	59
1. Choosing a model of delivery	59
2. Costs and sustainability	61
3. Key achievements of Dementia Friendly Swimming	64
4. Swim England's future plans	65
<b>References</b>	68

# Dementia Friendly Swimming: Delivery



**895 leisure staff** received dementia training and **64 cascade trainers** developed.

**286 additional people** trained to become **Dementia Friends**.



Dementia Friendly Swimming - Spatial Distribution of Facilities



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2017  
Contains Royal Mail data © Royal Mail copyright and database right 2010

**48 leisure operators**

**102 leisure centres**

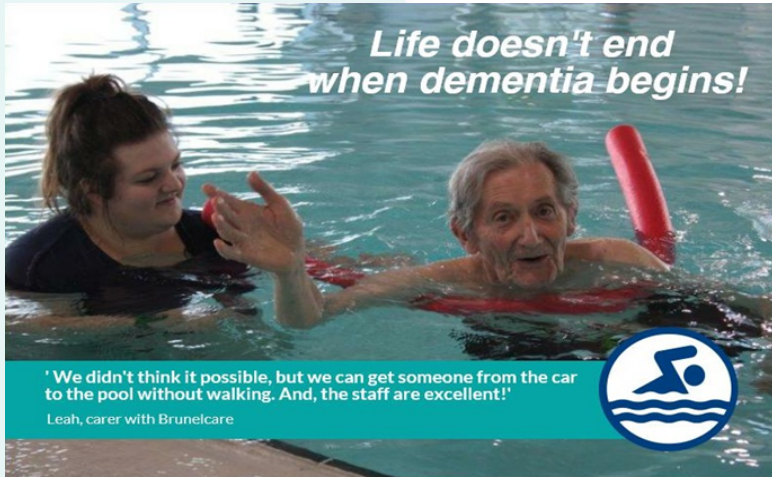


At least **1,276 people with dementia/health conditions** and **335 carers** involved in the project.

**531 people with dementia** participated in additional **dry side opportunities**



# Dementia Friendly Swimming: Outcomes



Staff better able to **support customers**



**Strong partnerships** forged with wider groups.



Widespread **site improvements**

# Participant Improvements

“I always **feel a lot better after a swim**. As if all my **joints had been oiled.**”

“When she started she wouldn't move ...now she does 12 widths. **The confidence she's built is amazing**

“The water just feels great...I **don't feel the pain in the water**...when I'm in the swimming pool, I don't feel any pain.”



- **Activity levels.**
- **Water confidence and swimming Mental health,**
- **Confidence,**
- **Feelings of being more alert and mentally stimulated,**
- **Ability to concentrate**

Swimming was a new outlet for my illnesses. I sometimes got fed up with life but my new interests got me out of the doldrums. **My self worth has improved and my confidence has improved.** It's just a simple swim but it has changed my life. So give it a go – it's great fun! Thank you and go for it!

“One (motivation) is to actually **get myself out of the house, meet people**, as well as get some physical exercise ....if I was to stay at home, I'd disappear into my own world ... and I don't want that.”

# Benefits to Partners

## Leisure services

- Contributes to the community mission of leisure trusts
- Raises their profile with public health, CCGs and health charities
- Improves accessibility and provision for people with health conditions
- Staff more confident, capable and motivated

## Partners

- Shares the load for dementia provision
- Increases awareness of the leisure/pool service offer
- Return on Investment estimated to be £1.42 per £1 invested. If carers £2.19.



# Water Wellbeing



Water Wellbeing

## Tailored Recruitment -

- Targeted marketing/messaging
- Right recruitment partners
- Outreach

Case studies/  
partnerships and  
peer approach

## Create a menu of opportunities

- Learn to swim
- Exercise referral
- Good Boost

## Referral/Signposting Routes

GP /secondary care  
Self-referral  
Private healthcare  
Third sector

**UNDERSTAND MOTIVATIONS AND NEEDS, PROVIDE BRIEF ADVICE AND FIND THE RIGHT OPPORUNITY**



## Upskill staff

- Aquatic Activity For Health (AAFH)
- Creating Positive Customer Experiences
- Swim Teachers Adult Framework
- Volunteer Peer training

## Get the Environment Right

- Checklist
- Case studies

**Developing a local solution to delivery in partnership with leisure centres**

# Partners



# For Further Information

- Health Commissioning Report - [www.swimming.org/swimengland/health-and-wellbeing-benefits-of-swimming](http://www.swimming.org/swimengland/health-and-wellbeing-benefits-of-swimming)
- Dementia Friendly Swimming Report and resources - <http://www.swimming.org/dementiafriendly/>
- For further information email: [health@swimming.org](mailto:health@swimming.org)

