

Looking for a way to stay active and give back to your community?

Become trained as a leader in an evidence-based health and wellness program. Evidence-based programs offer proven ways to promote health and keep active. Leaders go through an intensive training, either online or in-person, and become an expert at providing a set curriculum to participants.

Walk With Ease is an example of an evidence-based program looking for leaders. It is a six-week walking program designed to increase physical activity and reduce joint pain. Ellen, certified *Walk With Ease* leader, shared: "I have always had a passion for anything related to fitness. I have volunteered for programs in my community, such as the Red Cross, and worked in different fitness-related fields. For me it was an obvious next step when an opportunity came up to get more involved in the community and lead *Walk With Ease*."

Doug, an Olli member and participant in the *Walk With Ease* program, describes it as being "a very useful program and learning experience."

Why would you want to become a trained leader?

Leading evidence-based programs is a way to continue using skills and aptitudes, stay engaged and connected to the community, and help others stay healthy. Leaders are trained on the program details, and given the materials and activities for each session of the program. You can hold a program at a location of your choice and recruit participants from your community.

For example, Rose, certified *Walk With Ease* leader, loved the walking program and realized that there wasn't anything like it offered in her community. She went on to become trained and now provides programs at her Black Mountain senior center and was recognized by the Arthritis Foundation for her work.

What are the leader requirements and characteristics?

Desirable qualities of lay leaders include having empathy toward people with chronic health conditions such as arthritis, gained through personal or professional experience, as well as experience teaching or leading groups. A strong belief in the value of health and wellness and helping empower individuals with self-care tools is also beneficial, along with the ability to follow a curriculum. -

Does this interest you? To become a leader in the Walk With Ease program

Walk With Ease is a six-week program designed to increase physical activity and reduce joint pain and stiffness. This program is designed for people with arthritis and those who have not been physically active. The program provides tools and techniques to manage symptoms and to build a safe and successful walking program.

To become a leader in *Walk With Ease* follow this link: <https://www.arthritis.org/health-wellness/healthy-living/physical-activity/walking/walk-with-ease/www-leader-resources> or contact Ellen Garrison with The Healthy Aging NC Initiative at egarriso@unca.edu.

To find out about other evidence-based programs and how to become a leader...

If becoming a trained leader in an evidence-based program interests you, please go to <https://healthyagingnc.com/for-trainers/how-to-become-a-trainer/> to learn more.