



The University of Dublin

**Age &  
Opportunity**

Life is for  
Living.



An Intellectual Disability Supplement to  
The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing



UNIVERSITAT DE  
BARCELONA

# P: PALS

People with  
intellectual disability:  
Physical Activity  
Leaders



To enable people with  
intellectual disability (ID)  
to become physical activity  
leaders.



Engaging citizens with ID in  
their community.



## **P:PALS - People with intellectual disability: Physical Activity Leaders**

**An EIT Health Funded Project within the Citizen Engagement stream.**

### **Aim**

The aim of this project is to design and pilot a programme to enable people with intellectual disability (ID) to become physical activity leaders (PALs) in their community.

### **Partners**

This is a cross country collaborative project. Led by Trinity College Dublin (represented by the Intellectual Disability Supplement to TILDA (IDS-TILDA) and Trinity Sport, the project will be implemented in collaboration with Age & Opportunity and the University of Barcelona. The two locations, Ireland and Spain, have been selected to enable a cross-country comparison. It allows for the delivery of a practical programme in two different service contexts, cultural contexts and languages, providing a different perspective for both countries – both, however, with a shared vision of access to and participation in sport, leisure, art, cultural and other activities as a central component of how citizens with ID engage in society and achieve a sense of community belonging.

The IDS-TILDA study provides longitudinal research data on the health and aging experience of older people with an intellectual disability in addition to expertise in engaging older people with intellectual disability in research. Trinity Sport is the lead sports partner, with experience catering for diverse populations and providing an ideal city centre location that will facilitate accessibility and ease of access for participants. The University of Barcelona brings extensive research in the area of physical activity for people intellectual disability and this is

complemented by the established and successful leader programme, Go for Life, for older people in the general population in Ireland run by Age & Opportunity.

### **Current Programme**

The proposed training programme serves to empower older people with intellectual disability to be more physically active, improve functional mobility and also to lead their peers in physical activity.

The newly developed course will be piloted in a 6-week programme in Trinity College Dublin Sports Centre in January and February 2018 (with one session per week) and aims to attract 12 participants with ID and 6 support workers (one support worker from each ID service centre). These trained leaders with ID will then lead up to 6 people in their own centres using a 5-week training programme. Programme implementation will occur concurrently in Ireland and Spain, with evaluation of the programme produced mid-way and upon full completion of the programme.

Collaboration, as proposed with P-PALS, facilitates the enhancement of the mainstream agenda for people with disabilities, to ensure equal and equitable participation in society, but informs the mainstream physical activity programme with regard to increasing numbers of the general older population facing cognitive decline. It also fulfils the aging sector's goal to present the aging experience as a heterogeneous one requiring a multitude of diverse policy and service responses.

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