

Nordic Walking in Your Community Health Centre



nordic academy
Australia's Nordic Walking Professionals

Nordic walking is an ideal activity to offer through Community Health Centres as people of all ages, backgrounds and fitness levels can participate in it and feel the benefits immediately.

If set up correctly from the start, a Nordic Walking program will result in a low cost, low maintenance and sustainable program that can truly make a difference to the long term health and wellbeing of a community.

Nordic Academy has created 'ready to go' programs which require minimal consultation and tailoring to meet the needs and budget of any sized or located CHC.

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What is Nordic Walking

Nordic Walking is a low impact but highly effective total body workout which is suitable for people of all ages and fitness levels. It can be done in all seasons and over all terrains (from sandy beaches to country trails to urban footpaths). To achieve the excellent health benefits offered by Nordic walking the use of specially designed poles (which are not the same as trekking or ski poles) and a learned technique is required.

Who is it For

Nordic Walking is an ideal form of exercise for people who wish to:

- improve their cardiovascular fitness without overly exerting themselves;
- find a suitable activity which is not limited by distance, pre-existing injury or skill level
- get into an exercise program having only a low level of fitness;
- lose weight by doing a physically active but low impact exercise;
- change their habits to create an active, balanced and healthy lifestyle.

What are the Benefits

Overseas research studies have proven that Nordic Walking:

- activates 90% of the body's muscles
- gives a 20-25 % greater cardio fitness benefit than regular walking
- burns up to 46% more calories compared to regular walking without poles
- decreases the weight load and impact on the joints of the lower body
- strengthens as well as tones the upper back and shoulders
- gives a more intense workout but with lower perceived exertion
- increases the lateral mobility of the spine
- promotes an upright and balanced walking posture
- improves co-ordination
- releases pain and muscle tension in the neck and shoulders
- improves upper body circulation

About Nordic Academy

Nordic Academy is the leading training provider, as well as the leading driver for the development of Nordic Walking, in Australia and the Oceania region. We have been sought out to conduct training and provide expertise for health professionals from a number of countries including Singapore, Malaysia, New Zealand and Fiji.

Nordic Academy was founded in 2005 by Patrick Burtscher and Maree Farnsworth. Patrick's background is in education and sports coaching, whilst Maree came to the team with a degree in Sport Science. Both Founders undertook their initial training and gained their early experience in Austria under the mentorship of Markus Foermer (www.nordicacademy.at) under the umbrella of N.W.O. (Nordic Walking Organisation).

Since then both Founders have become recognised as international pioneers and experts of the activity of Nordic Walking, being actively part of the global development and members of the International Nordic Walking Advisory Board.

Nordic Academy's vision is to provide opportunities for as many people as possible to experience the health benefits and enjoyment of Nordic Walking. This is achieved through the provision of high quality training to health professionals, a Professional Membership program to provide follow up support and resources, equipment and accessories, a network of certified Instructors for the general public, as well as general advocacy.

The Founders



Maree Farnsworth is the National Training Manager with a degree in Human Movement Sports Science. She has been working in the health and fitness industries for over 15 years. Her experiences have included being a corporate health club manager, an exercise physiologist at one of Australia's most respected health resorts, co-author of a healthy weight loss program for women, and a team trainer for a national corporate development company.



Patrick Burtscher is the Community Health Program Manager and also the Director of Nordic Academy. He is a very experienced educator, having worked in various disciplines across different fields of teaching and instruction. In his home country of Austria he was a school teacher and headmaster, a ski instructor and coach of tennis and rock climbing. Patrick has also developed educational materials which have been published in both Switzerland and Austria.

The Commitment

The passion, dedication and belief of the founders as to the potential for Nordic Walking to really make a difference to people's lives ensures that their training, programs and ongoing support is always of the highest standard and care.

Testimonials about Nordic Academy's CHC Programs

"The Central West Gippsland Primary Care Partnership implemented a project which aimed to increase the range of physical activity options that are available for older adults across Baw Baw and Latrobe through 'Seniors Go for you Life'. Nordic Walking was identified as an ideal activity for this project as it is for people of all ages and fitness levels and can be carried out in a variety of terrains.

Nordic Academy delivered the Instructor and Leader Training Course in our rural region and offered a range of packages that we could tailor to meet our needs. Sustainability was an important factor for CWGPCP and the package included two levels of training, one for instructors and one for leaders and we felt that this would help to sustain the momentum in the community.

The training course was comprehensive covering the history, benefits, the basic technique right through to more complex variations of Nordic Walking. Patrick was enthusiastic and knowledgeable and his passion for Nordic Walking was contagious. The course left instructors feeling equipped to teach others how to Nordic Walk and the Leaders enthusiastic about walking with others. Following the training Patrick has provided on going support and email contact."

Sarah Hawkey
Health Promotion Project Manager
Central West Gippsland Primary Care Partnership
Moe VIC

"As a physiotherapist in a Community Health setting, I have noticed a shift in focus from treatment of injuries to prevention through Health Promotion.

With this in mind, the need for an activity that can be done by young and old, when or where ever, and by well or not so abled clients is required - I believe Nordic Walking is a most suitable activity and will prove to be an essential asset to any health or fitness practice.

The Instructor Course with Nordic Academy not only taught me how to walk with the correct technique and its interesting variations, but also how to teach these techniques to others, what the common mistakes are and how to correct them. The health benefits of Nordic Walking were also explained in depth and backed up by the scientific evidence.

The enthusiasm shown by both Maree and Patrick is very infectious and their professionalism is apparent with all aspects of their Nordic Walking business and the instructor course."

Tilly Waite
Physiotherapist

"Dear Maree and Patrick,

Thank you both so much for your attendance in Heywood this week.

We believe the day was a great success with enormous enthusiasm already following on from the training. Groups have already commenced without any encouragement from us. There has also been interest from others enquiring about the program. Would you be prepared to return, in perhaps three to four months, to review walkers in action, provide information to potential Nordic walkers and undertake another training program?

We so enjoyed having you both here and believe that Nordic Walking does provide very real benefits (while having fun too).

We would be very happy to be a member of your proposed network group. Continued success in your endeavours

*Sincerely,
Valerie"*

**Valerie Ahearn
Glenelg Outreach Primary Health
Heywood VIC**



About Our Training

Nordic Academy's high quality training is designed to ensure Instructors are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to teach, and adapt where necessary, correct Nordic Walking technique to client's individual needs and/ or limitations. It is only through this ability for Instructors to tailor and correct, that people can experience the significant benefits that Nordic Walking offers to address their specific health and fitness needs.

In order to have such understanding of their clients' needs and produce the potential outcomes, Nordic Academy focuses its training on health and fitness professionals and allied health assistants.

We are **the only training provider** in Asia-Pacific which has met stringent certification requirements and has achieved external accreditations with several major organisations. Accreditation status exists with:

- ESSA (Exercise and Sport Science Australia)
- Fitness Australia
- Physical Activity Australia
- APMA (Australian Pilates Method Association)
- ALMA (Australian Lifestyle Medicine Association)

Nordic Academy's training, program development and expertise have been tailored and delivered across a wide range of industries and fields: from health and fitness, to active lifestyle programs for local councils, as well as to tourism, schools and outdoor education sectors.

Consultancy & Support

Training is the first step in setting up a Nordic Walking program, however as Nordic Walking is a new activity, knowing how to structure, promote and facilitate programs to attract and benefit your desired target markets is an essential follow up in order to achieve long term success and sustainability.

Nordic Academy has provided consultancy and follow up support to deliver best practise programs to a variety of health practices, fitness centres, private businesses, government departments and local councils around Australia (see Appendix 1 for a sample). Work and consultancy has also occurred internationally with organisations such as Osteoporosis Canada, Singapore Sports Council and the Fiji Physiotherapy Association.

Nordic Academy's Nordic Walking Training Course

Nordic Academy's standard Nordic Walking Training involves a 1.5 day Instructor Course, containing a balanced mix of theory and practical components.

| DAY 1 9.00am - 5.00pm | DAY 2 8.30am - 12.30pm |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and present status of Nordic Walking • Health and fitness benefits explained • Learning the basic Nordic Walking technique • How to teach Nordic Walking • Video analysis and review of personal techniques • Equipment - poles, shoes, accessories • Warm up exercises & games • Legal and safety issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technique practise • Peer teaching & coaching • Intro to Nordic Walking technique variations - jogging, bounding, double poling, skating • Stretching exercises • Strengthening exercises • Promotion of Nordic Walking • Program Set Up – Specific Markets • Theoretical & practical assessments |

Professional Development Points

Nordic Academy's Training Course offers Professional Development Points for course participants who are members with Fitness Australia, Physical Activity Australia, Exercise & Sports Science Australia and the Australian Pilates Method Association.

Training Opportunity

What: Nordic Walking Training Course
Where: In-House Training

Inclusions per participant:

- One pair of top-of-the-range 'ONE WAY' NW poles (valued at \$189 AUD)
- 84 min DVD resource (inc. drills, stretching and strengthening exercises)
- Course manual and handouts
- Personal video analysis of Nordic Walking technique
- Internationally recognised qualification

Investment AUD \$540 per course participant
(depending on numbers, per individual course cost may be recalculated)

Please Note: there is NO extra cost for in-house training once minimum number of participants are reached (minimum number depends on CHC and location).

Provision of Nordic Walking Equipment

Setting up a proper structure for the use, hire or purchase of poles by participants is critical to the financial viability and sustainability of the program.

Your Community Health Centre will first need to purchase a set of poles. Nordic Academy recommends that sets contain predominantly fixed length poles as they are stronger, more durable and better value for money. Nonetheless it is wise to always include a minimum number of adjustable poles to ensure that all heights within a group can be accommodated.

The quality of poles and especially the straps are also vital aspects to consider. The Salomon licensed wrist strap (ie. used by One Way and Leki brands of poles) is the only type of strap on the market which delivers the comfort and performance necessary for beginners to most easily achieve correct technique.

CHCs generally use the 'Fitness' model (RRP \$169) poles. The All-Terrain poles are available for \$189 while the adjustable poles retail from \$209 per pair.

For more information about poles and their characteristics please contact us directly.

The retail pole prices are not relevant to CHC's; Nordic Academy runs a Corporate Membership Program providing equipment at wholesale prices and ongoing support with a wide range of resources to ensure the success of the Nordic Walking program is guaranteed.

Option 1: Using Poles During Classes

Participants come along each week to a class and pay a nominal fee each time for the use of the poles (and a contribution to the cost of the Leader). The poles stay on premises at the CHC and can be used by many people throughout the week.

Option 2: Hiring Out of Poles to Participants

Participants can pay a small fee to hire a pair of poles to take home (eg. \$10 for a two week trial period). This enables the opportunity for the participants to practice by themselves whilst having the opportunity to discover increased enjoyment and health benefits of the activity. After the 'trial period' the clients can choose to purchase their own pair of poles (minus the already paid \$10 hire fee) or return the poles to the CHC.

Option 3: On-selling of Poles to Participants

After participants have learnt the technique and experienced the benefits of Nordic walking they often wish to purchase their own pair of poles. The CHC can offer this service by offering the poles at normal retail or at a subsidised price.

Nordic Academy offers extra discounted prices on pole purchases to its professional members. If on-selling the poles to participants by a CHC is desired then membership to this program is highly recommended.

To minimise administration for the CHC, an alternative is for participants to purchase their own poles directly through Nordic Academy.

FAQ's

General Questions

Who can benefit from Nordic Walking?

Basically everybody can benefit from Nordic Walking. For people with walking difficulties or the more frail the poles are support, for the more fit the poles are a workout enhancer.

Is there a difference between Nordic Walking and Pole Walking?

Nordic Walking is the name most commonly used around the world for this form of walking with poles. The term 'Pole Walking' was used by a company called 'PoleAbout'. There are slight variations in the techniques promoted.

Can we run the Nordic Walking program by ourselves?

Yes you can, and this is what we encourage. An independently run program is more sustainable and cost effective for the long term.

How long will it take to implement the Nordic Walking program?

You can promote the Nordic Walking program to your clients a couple of weeks before the training takes place and are ready to go once the Instructors and Leaders have received their training.

Is there any additional cost involved in setting up the program?

No. Every package comes complete with training and an amount of poles to start up the program. Once demand increases you can very easily have more staff trained or order more poles. There are other 'optional' packages and products which are available for added benefit later on (eg. Professional membership, pole bags, DVD's, books).

Training

Why is there so much emphasis on training (after all Nordic Walking looks easy!)

Proper training and instruction of your community participants is essential so that their first experience is a positive one. If they enjoy and feel the benefit straightaway they likelihood of them continuing to exercise is maximised. Nordic Walking is easy to learn – but only if taught correctly. After all it is a completely new movement pattern which requires co-ordination and progressive learning phases.

What is the difference between an Instructor and a Leader?

The role of the Instructor is to teach participants correct NW technique, whilst the role of the Leaders is to facilitate the regular walking sessions. To become an Instructor a background in fitness and/ or health is required, whereas to become a Leader no pre-requisite qualifications are necessary (only enthusiasm!)

How many Instructors and Leaders do we need for our centre?

This is dependent on the size of your centre and on how big you want the program to be. There should be at least one instructor and two leaders.

Where will the training be held?

In-house training is conducted at your preferred location (most probably at your centre). An alternative is for your staff to attend Nordic Academy's regular training courses which cater for the general public (see our website for these dates).

How long does the training go for?

1.5 – 2 days for the Instructor course and 1 day for the Leader course.

How much of the Instructors and Leaders course is similar?

The course formats have been designed so that on the first day of training the Instructors and Leaders learn together. On the second day of the Instructor course more in-depth and involved training is conducted (see Course Outlines – pg 8).

Equipment

How many sets of poles do we need?

We assist you to choose the right size package which contains the appropriate number of poles to begin your program with. As your program and the demand for poles increases more equipment can easily be ordered.

What is better – fixed length or adjustable poles?

Fixed length poles offer superior value, durability and performance however adjustable poles offer the convenience of catering for people of different heights. For group programs a mix of the both poles is the ideal solution – maximum value for money and the ability to cater for all participants is achieved.

Where can the CHC purchase poles?

The CHC can purchase poles easily and at any time directly from Nordic Academy.

Is there other equipment we can / should purchase?

There is no other equipment needed however accessories and spare parts are available.

Support

Is there follow up support?

Yes. Nordic Academy offers advice and support as long as your Nordic Walking program is running. We want your program to be successful and sustainable!

What is the Corporate Membership?

This is an optional membership program which allows your centre to purchase equipment from Nordic Academy at wholesale rates. Membership also offers many other great benefits (eg. wide range of resources and material to promote the Nordic Walking program, etc). This membership would be a very wise option for your program. Speak to Patrick for more information.

The Next Step

To discuss or organise the next step in getting your own CHC Nordic Walking program 'ready to go' please contact:

Nordic Academy

Phone: Patrick on 0433 775 227

E-mail: patrick@nordicacademy.com.au

Appendix I

Organisations Nordic Academy has worked with

Listed below are some of the organisations which have received training, consultancy and worked with Nordic Academy in order to establish and maintain successful Nordic Walking programs.

- Heart Foundation Walking (Australia wide)
- South Australia Sports Medicine Centre
- Federation University (formerly University of Ballarat)
- Foot & Ankle Rehabilitation Australia
- Bruny Island Community Health, Tasmania
- Central West Gippsland Primary Care Partnership
- Glenelg Outreach Primary Health
- City of Bunbury, Western Australia
- Shire of Manjimup, Western Australia
- Central Highlands Rural Primary Health, Victoria
- Manningham Community Health, Victoria
- Latrobe Valley Community Health, Victoria
- Rural Health Tasmania
- Arthritis Victoria
- Arthritis Tasmania
- Department of Health Tasmania South
- City of Melton, Victoria
- City of Cockburn, Western Australia
- City of Kingston, Victoria
- St Vincents Hospital, Melbourne
- OXFAM Trailwalker (Australia wide)
- Mount Buller Chamber of Commerce
- Luther College (Croydon)
- Avila College (Mount Waverley)
- Rosehill Secondary College (Niddrie)
- Blackburn High (Blackburn)

Appendix II

Testimonials about Nordic Walking

- *I enjoy Nordic Walking because its low impact, so gentle on my problematic knees, but I still feel like I am getting a great full-body work-out - Bronwyn Nugent, Parkdale VIC*
- *'Nordic walking has opened up a whole new world to be able to remain active for me. Hills are easier. I can go further and longer.'* – Marion Goodman, Tamworth NSW
- *'Nordic Walking has been my saviour. Before it I was depressed because I couldn't get out and walk in the outdoors. Now I can exercise in the outdoors without pain and get my happy endorphins.'* - Eve Caplan, Cheltenham VIC (arthritis sufferer)
- *Nordic walking benefits me health-wise as it gets me out in the fresh air, exercising my body generally and in particular it has helped strengthen my right knee which, after an accident, was rather weak. Both physically and mentally it is a great form of exercise, whatever the weather. – Lorraine Frazer, Wellington (NZ)*
- *I personally have quite a degenerative ankle and had stopped going for walks, saving it for golf. I have been able to walk up to 80 minutes in hilly terrain with very little discomfort and enjoy some tracks and Adelaide parklands for the first time in years. Common sense prevails and I Nordic Walk once or twice a week plus lessons, plus golf, gym and yoga. – Jim Mack, Adelaide SA*
- *“Apart from the total body benefits, Nordic Walking improves mental focus, discipline and calmness – much like that of yoga and swimming.”* – Theresa Ockenden, EP, Sydney NSW
- *Anyone who feels they can't do Nordic Walking, give it a go. Knowing that you can be picked up at home and supported by the staff the entire time was what gave me the confidence to give it a go. Getting out in the fresh air and moving, I'm not talking about marathons but even the smallest effort is worth it. It has given me a better outlook on life and the confidence to try other things. I have now got the confidence to go on more outings, I now catch the bus to and from Day Centre, I always thought I would not be able to get on board, but I can! I've found that Nordic Walking is good for my mental health and wellbeing. – Anonymous Nordic Walker, Manjimup WA*
- *As a physiotherapist I have seen many of my clients benefit from Nordic walking - assisting with rehabilitation, improving general fitness, increased walking tolerance with painful joints, improved mental health following burns, to name a few. Jim Mack, sports physio, Adelaide SA*
- *As health practitioners we all know the benefits of a healthy lifestyle so what better way to help people, exercise and get paid for it!! Nordic walking really does have it all. – Carolyn Smith, Physio Adelaide SA*
- *As a clinician, I have now experienced that Nordic Walking is an excellent choice of exercise for patients with chronic back pain. I have trialled this with a number of long term patients and experienced great results. They have found Nordic Walking to be an exercise option that is not only tolerable and enjoyable, but is very good for them. – Meg McIntyre, Physio, Port Macquarie NSW*
- *Nordic walking activates more muscle mass when compared to normal walking because of the work of upper limb and back muscles. This means a greater level of energy expenditure can be achieved with a reduced load on weight bearing joints. – Tamara Salkavich, EP, NSW*

Appendix III

Testimonials about Nordic Academy

The following testimonials are from various health professionals in regards to Nordic Academy's quality of training, consultancy outcomes and outstanding customer service.

- *"The Nordic Academy has been instrumental in focusing our three rural primary health sites on one health program, Nordic Walking. The alliance has created opportunities for us to get community members from each region to come together for live in camps and day excursions. It has been highly successful and rewarding for our rural community."* – Chris Worthington, Ouse TAS
- *Out of all activities set up and provided to the general public, Nordic Walking probably has the most potential to be sustainable as it is easy to implement and to run and everybody can join in. Nordic Walking is an all-inclusive physical activity program.* – Simmone van Buerle, Healthy Communities Coordinator, Manjimup WA
- *"The Nordic Academy has been established by two passionate and energetic people, who excel at everything that is Nordic."* – Tamara Salkavich, Exercise Physiologist, Sydney NSW
- *"I was so impressed with Nordic Walking as well as the professionalism encountered from Nordic Academy that I signed up to do a course with them. Since being trained I have organized a local course for beginners, offer it to my patients and am running courses to other local groups as well."* Meg McIntyre, Sports Physiotherapist, Port Macquarie NSW
- *"I am really impressed with the degree of follow up support that Nordic Academy provides – they are readily available and always very helpful with any technical, marketing or equipment support I need."* – Theresa Ockenden, Sydney NSW
- *"We now have five qualified Nordic Walker Instructors who work in our Agency. We love the opportunity of getting out in the fresh air to have some exercise with our clients. We also get a lot of satisfaction seeing the confidence Nordic Walking has given to clients who have had falls in the past and have since been afraid to go out and walk for exercise and leisure by themselves."* Liz Lockyear, HACC Manager, Manjimup WA
- *"Nordic Academy has been a great support, really enthusiastic and efficient. I plan to work with them to develop my expertise and business model. I would strongly recommend to all physiotherapists to look at Nordic Walking as part of the services they offer."* – Jim Mack, Sports Physiotherapist, Adelaide SA
- *Patrick you are a great trainer. You make Nordic Walking fun and easy to learn. You have made the effort to visit us twice in Manjimup and we really appreciate that as Perth is a 4 hour drive from here. You are very accommodating and attentive to the trainers' needs. The after service is great too as you provide information through newsletters and support with queries about how to assist clients that you may be having difficulty with.* – Liz Lockyear, Manjimup WA
- *It's just amazing! It's so fun to pass on the knowledge and watch people enjoy it so much.* – Corina McCarthy, Midlands TAS