



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Women Needed for Osteoporosis Research Study

BISMARCK, N.D. – Four doctoral students from the University of Mary Physical Therapy program are seeking women to participate in an osteoporosis study. Participants must be past menopause, be diagnosed with either osteopenia (low bone mass) or osteoporosis and meet other screening criteria.

Two informational meetings will be held at Waterford, 1000 West Century Ave. in Bismarck: Monday, Aug. 18 at 10:30 a.m. and Thursday, Aug. 21 at 7 p.m. There is no charge, and refreshments will be served. For more information, people can call (701) 355-8045.

Osteoporosis is a disease in which bones become fragile and more likely to break. If not prevented or if left untreated, osteoporosis can progress painlessly until a bone breaks. In fact, it is often called a “silent disease,” because bone loss occurs without symptoms. Eighty percent of those affected by osteoporosis are women.

“People may not know that they have osteoporosis until their bones become so weak that a sudden strain, bump, or fall causes a vertebra to collapse or a bone to break,” says Mary Dockter, PT, PhD, associate professor and director of clinical education at the University of Mary. Dockter also is director of education for the physical therapy organization Section on Women’s Health and is serving as advisor to the research project.

The purpose of the 12-week study is to determine the effect exercise has on mobility, posture,

function and quality of life in females with osteopenia or osteoporosis. Participants will attend either a modified Pilates class, specifically designed for those with osteoporosis, or a water-based yolates class (yoga and Pilates combined). Participants also are needed to be part of a control group of women who don't exercise.

According to Dockter, modified Pilates programs have been created for individuals with osteopenia and osteoporosis that incorporate positions of spinal extension. "However, no randomized controls have validated the effectiveness of a modified Pilates program," she says.

"Waterford Health & Fitness Club is pleased to be participating in this important study," says club director Lindsey Lauf. "This work will help advance the knowledge about treating women who have osteoporosis." All classes will be held at the Waterford Health & Fitness Club.

Waterford Health & Fitness club is open to anyone over 40 and features a variety of fitness options—including pool and therapeutic spa— with exercise equipment and classes designed specifically for older adults.

The University of Mary department of physical therapy is accredited by the Commission on Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE). Graduates of the doctoral program work as physical therapists in a variety of roles and practice settings.