three and four, therefore the study was representative of patients with various severities of Parkinson disease.

The trial measured ambulatory activity using step activity monitors which were evaluated as having at least 95% device accuracy. They calculated the number of steps taken per day, as well as maximal activity levels. The result of the trial ‘supports the commonly held but untested contention that ambulatory activity declines with disease progression’. In particular, the research showed that transition to Hoehn and Yahr stage three disease was ‘associated with a significant decline in daily activity levels’. Nurses can therefore use the Hoehn and Yahr stages to predict the ambulatory activity level of patients, allowing them to implement appropriate measures to prevent risk to patients, for example, an increased package of care for patients transitioning to stage three. Stages 2.5 and above are associated with ‘increased gait dysfunction and postural instability’. This concurs with hypothesis that ‘onset of increased gait dysfunction and postural instability are associated with decreased functional ambulation.’ This therefore allows nurses to assist relatives and carers in preparing both physically and emotionally to manage a decreased level of ambulation.


Krannert School of Physical Therapy, University of Indianapolis, conducted a single-blind, randomized controlled trial examining the efficacy of community-based group exercise in rehabilitating patients with Parkinson disease. The study consisted of two groups, to which participants were randomly assigned. One group completed a course of traditional exercise and one group completed a course in boxing. The research team found that ‘both groups demonstrated statistically significant improvements over time’. This demonstrates that community-based exercise rehabilitation is proven to improve mobility in patients with Parkinson disease. This study was conducted in the USA and in evaluating the quality of this evidence, it must be considered that participants therefore may not be fully representative of the UK population of Parkinson disease sufferers due to differing socioeconomic, genetic