April 2015

Lifeguard Fitness Readiness: Certification vs. Qualification

Jacob Rasmussen
University of Northern Iowa

Copyright © 2015 Jacob Rasmussen
Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.uni.edu/agss

Part of the Cardiovascular System Commons, and the Leisure Studies Commons

Let us know how access to this document benefits you

Rasmussen, Jacob, "Lifeguard Fitness Readiness: Certification vs. Qualification" (2015). Annual Graduate Student Symposium. 35.
https://scholarworks.uni.edu/agss/2015/all/35

This Open Access Poster Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate College at UNI ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Annual Graduate Student Symposium by an authorized administrator of UNI ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@uni.edu.
Purpose of the Literature Review

The purpose of this study is to Review in-service logs (written outline) for cardio and strength components within lifeguard in-services, in order to design appropriate in-service fitness readiness guidelines in order to improve the overall training of lifeguards.

Need for the Study

Aquatic safety is a major concern of leisure service providers on a worldwide basis. Incidents of drowning are one of the leading causes of accidental deaths in countries throughout the world. According to the World Health Organization (2014), drowning is the third leading cause of death worldwide. In making the case for in-service training, there are obvious and clear benefits. It’s easy for aquatic supervisors and manager to assume that if a guard is certified, his or her rescue abilities are high (Turner, Vogelsong, and Wendling, 2003, p. 43). This is a dangerous assumption, however, because many lifeguards need more practice beyond what the certification process and normal guarding duties demand. This is a very powerful point that there needs to be more conditioning than the American Red Cross Lifeguarding pre-test, which only requires that participants swim 300 yards or the 100 yard requirement by Ellis and Associates.

In-service training is supplemental training that should be separate from the certification process. Earning a lifeguarding certification means you have successfully completed a training course and passed written and skill evaluation on a given date. It does not mean that you have learned everything there is to know about lifeguarding. Once hired as a lifeguard, you should expect that you will be required to continue your training. (American Red Cross Lifeguard Manual, 2012; Turner, Vogelsong, & Wendling, 2003).

Having standards of fitness is crucial to ensure that Lifeguards are improving their level of fitness. Requiring cardio and strength training incorporated during in-services along with weekly requirements will help to make sure that when an emergency situation does occur that the Lifeguards will not only know what to do, but be able to perform quickly and efficiently.

Pre-Test Requirements for Lifeguarding (Continued)

American Red Cross pre-test includes a 300 yard swim, either front crawl or breaststroke is acceptable, which goggles are allowed. Then two minute tread, no hands are allowed, participant can hold hands above water or they can put their hands under their armpits. The last part of the test is a brick retrieval, participant starts in the water, swim 20 yards, swim down 7-10lbs. to retrieve a 10lbs brick, and then participant returns the brick to starting point, while maintaining two hands on the brick and face at the surface of the water.

Ellis and Associates pre-test includes 100 yard swim, either front crawl or breaststroke. The brick retrieval the participant must do a feet-first surface dive to a depth of at least 8ft. and bring 10lbs brick to surface. And the final is a one minute tread without hands. In their book it is obvious that aggressive scanning techniques are key fundamentals that are taught to their lifeguards.

YMCA pre-test includes three phases to complete. The first phase is treading water for two minutes and then swim 100 yards front crawl. The second phase includes swimming a 50 of each of the following: front crawl with head up, sidestroke, breaststroke head up, and elementary backstroke kick with hands on stomach. Along with this phase the participant preforms a feet-first surface dive to a depth of 8-10 ft. then swim 15 yards underwater. The third phase starts at the end of the pool, sprint swim 60 yards, surface dive 8-10ft, pick up a dive ring from bottom, bring to surface, tread 1 minute without hands, place object back at the bottom of the pool, then swim rest of length of the pool, hoist self out, and immediately begin compressions on an adult manikin for 1 minute.

StarGuard has a lot of the same requirements, in their book it talks about layers of protection and at the heart of it is surveillance, this topic is highlighted a lot throughout the book.

NASCO the pre-test is very basic and they reference American Red Cross a lot in their manual. Some of the things that differentiate in the book is certain rescue techniques that have been adapted from the American Red Cross system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certification Body</th>
<th>Swim*</th>
<th>Swim Time</th>
<th>Object Retrieval</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red Cross</td>
<td>300 yds</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
<td>10 lbs brick, swim 20 yards, return to starting point in 45 seconds</td>
<td>Tread 1 minute, no hands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellis and Associates</td>
<td>100 yds</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
<td>First surface dive to a depth of 6 ft.</td>
<td>Tread 1 minute, no hands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YMCA</td>
<td>100 yards</td>
<td>7 seconds</td>
<td>10 lbs brick, swim 20 yards, return to starting point in 45 seconds</td>
<td>Tread 1 minute, no hands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StarGuard*</td>
<td>100 yards</td>
<td>Tread 1 minute</td>
<td>Tread 1 minute, no hands</td>
<td>Tread 1 minute, no hands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Aquatic Safety Company</td>
<td>200 yards</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*pre-test skill assessment