EXAMPLES OF EXERCISE PROGRESSION IN THE POSTNATAL RUNNER

Weeks Postnatal

Examples of Exercise Progression

Weeks 0-2



Pelvic floor muscle strength & endurance



Basic core exercises e.g. pelvic tilt



Walking for Cardiovascular exercise

Weeks 2-4



Progress walking, pelvic floor muscle/ core rehab







Introduce squats, lunges & bridging in line with day-to-day requirements

Weeks 4-6



Low impact exercise



Low impact - cross trainer

Weeks 6-8



Power walking Scar mobilisation



Increase low impact exercise



Add dead lift



Add resistance to lower limb & core

Weeks 8-12



Introduce swimming



Dependent if lochia stopped & wound healing satisfactory



Spinning if comfortable sitting on a spinning sadle

Week 12 & Beyond



Graded return to running



Goal specific



Consider running coach



Consider risk factors e.g. obesity



Modify according to signs & symptoms

Source - Goom T, Donnelly G & Brockwell E. Returning to running postnatal - Guidelines for medical, health and fitness professionals managing this population. March 2019



CONSIDERATIONS TO GUIDE RETURN TO POSTNATAL RUNNING



Is the mother at least 3 months postnatal?

Yes

Continue screen - potential to return to running if recommended tests are passed but screening may highlight she isn't ready

No

Continue screen if >6 weeks postnatal informing that the minimum recommended recovery prior to return to running is 3 months Subjective screen and use of validated outcome measures e.g. Australian pelvic floor questionnaire

Objective Screening



Pelvic Floor Screen via a Specialist Physio



Strength testing



BMI < 30



Abdominal Screen for DRA including functional dynamic/load tests



Load and impact screening +/- video analysis



RED-S screen



(breastfeeding/scar tissue/



No

Additional considerations Psychological screen for PND sleep)

Screening passed?

Yes

Graded return to running e.g. couch to 5K

Rehabilitation programme to address dysfunctional areas or signposting to relevant professionals e.g. physio, GP or Uro-gynae consultant

Source - Goom T, Donnelly G & Brockwell E. Returning to running postnatal - Guidelines for medical, health and fitness professionals managing this population. March 2019