

PulseIQ

User Personas

Three core profiles for the 40–60 health-motivated user

Revised — February 2026

01

Robert, 57

Doctor-referred

His numbers are heading the wrong direction. He's physically capable and ready to act — before he needs medication.

02

Diane, 61

Post-injury

Hip replacement six months ago. Cleared by her physical therapist. Every app either ignores her limits or treats her like she's broken.

03

Carmen, 42

Chronic back pain

Herniated disc and chronic stress. She's self-managing both — she just needs an app that respects what she already knows about her body.

Why these three?

Competitive research across Zing Coach, Freeletics, and Fitbod confirms that adults motivated by health — not aesthetics — are systematically underserved. These three personas represent distinct entry points into that gap: Robert is prevention-focused and physically capable but facing a clinical warning; Diane is post-surgical with formal movement restrictions; Carmen is self-managing chronic pain and stress without clinical referral. Each maps directly to a PulseIQ preference tag and onboarding pathway.

Robert, 57

Operations manager, logistics company
Columbus, OH

PERSONATYPE

- Health-motivated
- Doctor-referred
- Prevention-focused

"The doctor said my numbers are heading the wrong direction. I'm not waiting for a crisis. I just need a starting point that won't make things worse."

heart-rate-aware

medical-referral

prevention-focused

short-session

BACKGROUND

Robert is physically capable and active in his day job — he manages a warehouse team of 40 and walks the floor for hours each day. But his last two check-ups have flagged elevated blood pressure, rising LDL cholesterol, and a pre-diabetic fasting glucose reading. His doctor has been direct: without lifestyle changes, medication is likely within a year. Robert isn't impaired — he's at a fork in the road. He's motivated by prevention, not rehabilitation. What's stopped him from acting isn't ability, it's not knowing what intensity is right for someone with his cardiovascular profile, and a concern that pushing too hard could do more harm than good.

GOALS

- Bring blood pressure and cholesterol readings down without medication
- Build a sustainable movement habit that fits around a demanding schedule
- Understand what exercise intensity is appropriate for his cardiovascular profile
- Feel less winded on long site walks; build baseline cardiovascular fitness

PAIN POINTS

- Every app assumes he wants to get ripped or is already unwell — he's neither
- HIIT defaults feel reckless given his cardiovascular risk profile
- No app connects exercise to health outcomes — only aesthetics or performance
- He wants something to show at his three-month follow-up — no app generates that
- Progress metrics are calorie-based — irrelevant to what his doctor cares about

TECH PROFILE

Devices: Android phone, work laptop

Fitness tech: None — considering a basic smartwatch

App comfort: Functional — uses apps for work, not a consumer tech enthusiast

Preferred sessions: 15–25 minutes, early morning before work

Location: Home, neighborhood walking routes, occasional gym

COMPETITOR GAP

Zing Coach's HIIT defaults and max-effort language feel unsafe to Robert given his risk profile. Freeletics' tribal intensity would be alienating. Fitbod is gym-strength focused and misaligned with his goals. None of the three connects exercise to cardiovascular health outcomes, offers conservative intensity defaults for at-risk but physically capable users, or generates a progress summary a doctor would find meaningful.

How PulseIQ fits

Robert maps to heart-rate-aware, medical-referral, and prevention-focused tags. Because he's physically capable, PulseIQ doesn't default him to the lowest intensity — it sets a safe ceiling and explains why. Progress is framed around consistency and heart-health metrics, not calories. A shareable three-month summary is available for his doctor follow-up. He never sees 'crush it' or 'push harder' — he sees 'steady progress, right pace.'

Voice in action:

"Good morning. Today's 22-minute session is ready — steady pace, right intensity for your goals."

"You've moved consistently for 3 weeks. That's the kind of progress your doctor wants to see."

"Based on your pace, consider a rest day tomorrow. Consistency beats intensity every time."

Diane, 61

Retired nurse, part-time volunteer coordinator
Portland, OR

PERSONATYPE

- Post-injury
- Physical restrictions
- Rebuilding confidence

"I've been cleared to exercise but I need something that actually knows what that means. Not 'consult your doctor' — I've done that. Now I need the app to meet me where I am."

low-impact

gentle-start

medical-referral

post-surgical

BACKGROUND

Diane had a hip replacement six months ago and has completed her formal physical therapy program. Her physical therapist has cleared her for general exercise with clear restrictions: no high-impact movement, no deep hip flexion beyond 90 degrees, no twisting. She's motivated and determined — she was a keen walker before her operation and wants to rebuild that fitness and independence. But she's tried two fitness apps since being cleared and both were useless: one offered no way to exclude the movements she can't do, the other gave her a blanket 'low intensity' program that was too easy and didn't progress.

GOALS

- Rebuild lower body strength and stamina safely within her physical therapist's restrictions
- Regain the ability to walk 3 miles without discomfort
- Feel like an active person again — not a patient
- Maintain upper body and core strength to support her hip long-term

PAIN POINTS

- Apps offer 2–3 generic 'injury' toggles that don't map to her specific restrictions
- No app distinguishes between 'low impact' and 'post-surgical movement exclusions'
- Generic low-intensity programs don't progress — she plateaus immediately
- She wants to show her physical therapist what she's been doing — no app makes that easy
- She has to decline inappropriate exercises mid-session with no easy alternative

TECH PROFILE

Devices: iPhone SE, shared iPad at home

Fitness tech: Fitbit (pre-surgery, now unused)

App comfort: Moderate — confident with apps she uses regularly

Preferred sessions: 30–45 minutes, mid-morning

Location: Home, community center, walking routes

COMPETITOR GAP

Zing Coach's three predefined health categories are wholly inadequate — a user with vertigo reported there were 'only 3 to choose from.' Freeletics and Fitbod have no meaningful restriction logic at all. No competitor offers progressive rehabilitation protocols, movement exclusions beyond broad categories, or progress summaries designed to be shared with a physical therapist or doctor.

How PulseIQ fits

Diane maps to low-impact, gentle-start, and medical-referral tags. PulseIQ filters out all contraindicated movements from day one — she never faces an inappropriate exercise mid-session. Progression is gradual and opt-in: 'feeling stronger? ready to add a little more?' rather than auto-escalating. A shareable movement summary is available for her next physical therapist appointment. Every exercise has a visible 'this doesn't feel right' bail-out.

Voice in action:

"New to this exercise? Here's a quick guide — and there's a seated version if you'd prefer."

"You're 4 weeks in. Your consistency is building something real."

"Take your time — there's no rush. Tap here if anything doesn't feel right."

Carmen, 42

Program Manager, Tech Nonprofit
Denver, CO

PERSONATYPE

- Chronic back pain
- Stress-driven
- Self-managing

"My back and my stress levels are connected — I've known that for years. I need movement that helps both, and an app that doesn't make me fight every session to avoid the wrong things."

low-impact

stress-first

energy-variable

joints-back-sensitive

BACKGROUND

Carmen manages digital equity programs for a small tech nonprofit, fully remote. Her days run 8am to 5:30pm and she's always the last to log off — the mission matters, and the boundary between work and life is mostly imaginary. A herniated disc at L4-L5 three years ago introduced her to chronic pain, and prolonged desk work and stress have kept it there. She's 42, motivated, and clear-eyed: she knows what sets her back off, she knows stress makes it worse, and she's been doing her own research long enough to have strong views about what works. What she hasn't found is an app that respects both constraints simultaneously — the physical and the psychological.

GOALS

- Manage back pain through consistent core strengthening and movement
- Use exercise as a genuine stress and energy management tool, not just fitness
- Stay active on bad pain days without feeling like she's failed or fallen behind
- Build a habit that adapts to variable energy and workload, not just her body

PAIN POINTS

- Apps prescribe forward flexion, heavy deadlifts, and sit-ups — all contraindicated for her
- The 'joints or back sensitive' toggle doesn't distinguish chronic disc issues from general stiffness
- No app adapts in real time when she checks in with high stress or low energy
- Streaks and missed-session guilt are damaging — flares and deadline weeks are unpredictable
- No app connects physical movement to stress and energy outcomes — tracked in silos

TECH PROFILE

Devices: iPhone 14, Apple Watch Series 7, home iMac
Fitness tech: Apple Watch — activity rings, rarely digs deeper
App comfort: High at work, low patience for cluttered consumer apps
Preferred sessions: 5–15 minutes, evenings or early morning
Location: Home — no gym membership, occasional outdoor walks

COMPETITOR GAP

All three competitors treat back sensitivity as a single toggle mapping roughly to 'lower intensity' — not the specific movement exclusions a herniated disc requires. None adapts to a stress or energy check-in at session start. None connects physical movement to stress management outcomes. For Carmen, these aren't nice-to-haves — they're the reason she abandons every app she tries.

How PulseIQ fits

Carmen maps to low-impact, stress-first, and energy-variable tags. PulseIQ filters contraindicated movements by default and opens every session with a dual check-in — 'how's your back today?' and 'how's your energy?' — scaling the session accordingly without marking a modified session as a miss. Cool-downs always include a breathing or mindfulness component. Progress is framed around consistency, stress trends, and core strength — never streaks or calories.

Voice in action:

"How's your back and energy today? Tap to adjust — we'll build your session around your answer."

"Tough week? Movement is one of the best things you can do for stress. Let's keep it gentle."

"Core work today — this helps both your back and your head. Take it at your pace."