

Claire Small blog RA awareness week

Rheumatoid Arthritis Awareness week and the importance of quality and data

Read our latest blog by Claire Small, Quality lead at MSKPN and Chief Clinical Officer of Pure Sports Medicine.

With a strong focus on providing the general public with “best in field” care, using the same model that operates in elite sport, Claire has been a physiotherapist for over 30 years. In this blog she draws attention to Rheumatoid Arthritis Awareness week and tells us about the importance of quality and data.



RA Awareness Week holds significant importance because musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions are often overlooked in our awareness efforts. While we frequently discuss diseases like cancer and diabetes, we tend to neglect the substantial influence that MSK disorders can exert on one's quality of life and their capacity to lead a fulfilling life.

Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) Awareness [Week](#) 12-17 Sept 2023

This week is RA Awareness Week, an annual event to raise awareness of the condition and the impact on sufferers and their families. The event is run by the National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society (NRAS) who state that it can affect anyone at any age and currently affects more than 400,000 people in the UK.

It's not just about the years in your life, it's about the life in your years

This year's theme is #RADrain. RA is associated with systemic inflammatory changes. Whilst not life threatening it affects your quality of life and ability to make a valuable contribution to the life that you want to lead. All aspects of a person's life are impacted, not just joints and muscles and this theme demonstrates how day-to-day activities can drain your battery, leaving you unable to continue the day ahead due to pain, fatigue, immobility, and reduced dexterity.

Those with chronic MSK conditions have over 3 times the odds of reporting poor health

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) report on [understanding the drivers of healthy life expectancy](#) states that MSK has the third-largest influence on self-reported health (behind nervous system and tumours), but when combined with prevalence, it has significantly the biggest contribution to healthy life expectancy. Remember a third of the UK population, over 20 million people live with an MSK condition.

How does the quality agenda at MSKPN help?

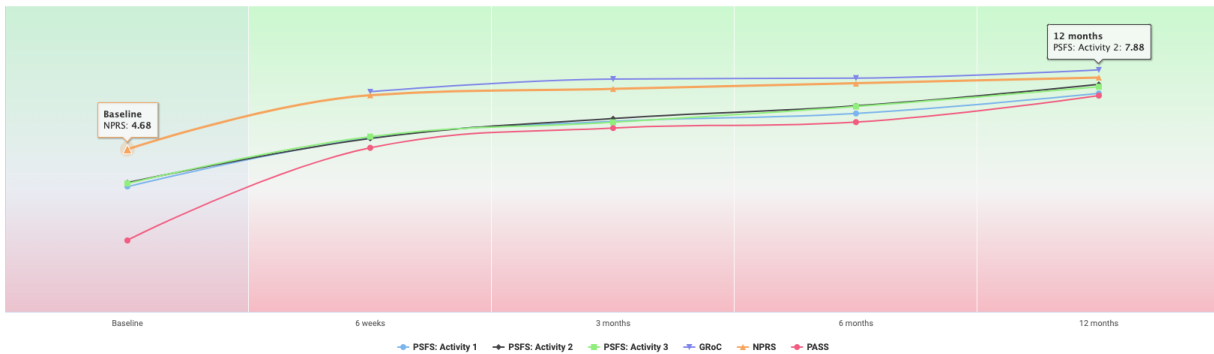
One of the biggest challenges for people seeking support is understanding what good quality care looks like and what should be expected when visiting a physio or Sports and Exercise Medicine doctor. Here at MSKPN, our aim is to raise the whole standard of care across the industry, not just enabling the public to understand best practice, but also other organisations to gauge where they sit related to other groups.

You know what a 5-star hotel is and what to expect. How do you know what a 5-star MSK clinic looks like and how do you find one?

We want to demonstrate our effectiveness as a sector and provide that information in a similar way to how other industries disclose their performance ratings. Especially with things like RA, people live with these conditions for a number of years before they are diagnosed.

We are collecting outcome measures of effectiveness

MSKPN as a body, has committed to collecting a standardised data set of outcomes and people's experience. We have some initial foundation partners who are already committed to collecting the data. We will start to build on this and gather a groundswell of information and then collate it, to measure ourselves around the industry average.



	PSFS: Activity 1	PSFS: Activity 2	PSFS: Activity 3	NPRS	GROC	PASS
Baseline	4.09 (8,308)	4.23 (8,003)	4.20 (5,897)	4.68 (8,306)	-	2.35 (81)
6 weeks	5.69 (1,493)	5.67 (1,442)	5.73 (1,079)	2.91 (2,121)	2.65 (2,119)	5.37 (2,005)
3 months	6.23 (885)	6.32 (852)	6.20 (644)	2.70 (1,247)	3.14 (1,243)	6.01 (1,217)
6 months	6.49 (444)	6.74 (434)	6.72 (329)	2.52 (663)	3.18 (662)	6.21 (662)
12 months	7.15 (153)	7.44 (151)	7.37 (120)	2.33 (253)	3.50 (253)	7.08 (253)

MSKPN is working with Cemplicity who have produced a product specifically for members to collect this data. I'd like to think by the end of the year, we have at least a good three months of data to form our baseline.

Working together we make everyone better

It's only possible to achieve higher standards if we work together. MSK healthcare has been very fragmented which is not good for patients or practitioners. Coming together and working collaboratively under MSKPN is what will allow us to achieve these goals and objectives. Good healthcare is never bad for business. If people have good experiences of MSK they will shout about it to friends and families. If they have poor experiences, they will just turn away.

How can we find out more?

This year MSKPN is proud to have been invited to deliver 2 breakout sessions at the [MSK Conference](#) at Birmingham NEC that runs alongside Therapy Expo on 22-23 November.

Our programme focusses on raising standards, implementing outcome measures and demonstrating the valuable and innovative work that independent practitioners are delivering. We'll talk about the benefits of working collaboratively both in an MDT environment but also sharing knowledge and ideas with other practitioners.

If you are member of MSKPN you will benefit from an additional discount. Come and see us at our stand TF49 @TherapyExpo. Find out about membership by emailing us enquiries@mskpn.co.uk

About Claire Small

Claire still maintains a clinical list at her clinic in Kensington while lecturing and examining on several post graduate medical and physiotherapy courses. She is the co-author of the textbook "Managing the Injured Athlete" and has published papers on hip and groin dysfunction. She chairs the Quality Committee for MSKPN, with a primary focus on creating a unified system for the collection of Quality Metrics and Outcome Data. She is a member of the Faculty for the Emerging Leaders programme run by BASEM and the Faculty of Sport and Exercise Medicine (SEM) and also sits on the Board of the Australia-UK Chamber of Commerce.