

IMPACT REPORT

2020/21



arthritisACTION.org.uk



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FOREWORD

Welcome to our Impact Report 2020/2021.

Last year, the world faced one of the biggest health challenges affecting humanity. A year on, and the Covid-19 pandemic continues to affect people, organisations and charities across the globe. Arthritis Action's experience has been no different. We have had to respond to rapid changes and uncertainties brought about by Covid-19, and to overcome new challenges each day.

NHS waiting times have continued to increase, with over 5 million people waiting for surgery or to be seen by their healthcare practitioner. This has increased demand for charity support, and we are very proud to have provided vital services to support people living with arthritis and to those who have been affected by the delays.

We are very pleased to have secured funding from the National Lottery Community Fund and Western Power Distribution, alongside a range of funders and supporters, to help our Groups reach more areas and support more diverse communities.

We have successfully organised over 150 Group meetings and events this year, with over 800 people in attendance. We have also provided much-needed telephone support to more than 3,000 people this year, and introduced a new volunteer-led telephone service, called Arthritis Action Connect, to connect Members with one another to offer peer support.

Our website continues to provide relevant and useful information for people affected by arthritis. Our signature Online Self-Management Resource, comprised of 27 videos on a wide range of topics, has been viewed over 46,000 times, with average session times reaching 5 minutes.

Our webinar series has also been very successful, with over 377 attendees engaging in topics including Arthritis and the Covid-19 Vaccine, Managing Arthritis Pain in a Pandemic, and Hand Therapy.

We continue to work very hard to raise awareness of arthritis and the impact it has on millions of people across the UK. We reached more than 1.7 million people on our social media channels, and a combined audience of 33.7 million through our PR efforts and media coverage, nationally and regionally.

We are also very pleased to have continued to offer individualised support to our Members. This comprised nutritional and weight management consultations, clinical appointments with our network of osteopaths, physiotherapists and acupuncturists, online exercise classes, and our Personalised Member Pathway service.

None of this would have been possible without the generous support of our Members, partners, volunteers, supporters and service users. It is our wonderful community who help us make a real difference for people living with arthritis across the UK.

We could not be in a better position to mark our 80th Anniversary in 2022, and we look forward to celebrating this milestone by recognising the remarkable individuals and organisations who have helped Arthritis Action become the charity it is today.

Robin Nye

Chair of Arthritis Action



Shantel Irwin

CEO of Arthritis Action



WHO WE ARE

Arthritis Action was founded in 1942 by Charles de Coti-Marsh, who developed a self-help programme for people with arthritis based on a combination of diet and physical therapy.

Our fundamental aims remain the same, and we take pride in continuing this longstanding tradition of helping people with arthritis enjoy a more active life with less pain through self-management, in line with the best available evidence.

We are the UK charity giving hands-on, practical help to improve the quality of life of people affected by arthritis. We offer healthy eating and nutritional advice; access to clinical appointments with our network of osteopaths, physiotherapists, and acupuncturists; mental health resources; exercise tips; and pain management techniques, to help people take control of their arthritis, manage the pain it can cause, and enjoy life to the full.



WHAT WE DO

Arthritis Action offers people with all forms of arthritis a holistic self-management approach that can be tailored to suit each individual based on their condition, pain level, activity levels, eating habits and lifestyle. Although over 10 million people live with arthritis in the UK, we know that each person is unique in the way they manage their symptoms. This is precisely why we tailor our self-management approach to meet individual needs.

Our self-management approach encompasses the following services:



Nutritional and
weight management
consultations with our
registered Dietitian



Subsidised clinical
appointments with our
registered Osteopaths,
Physiotherapists and
Acupuncturists



Our Personalised Member
Pathway service, enabling
people to set goals and
receive personalised
support to achieve them



Factsheets, our Members'
magazine, electronic
newsletters and online
resources on a variety of
topics including self-
management, physical
activity, and mental
wellbeing



Identifying the best
models for exercise
suitable for people
with arthritis and
other musculoskeletal
conditions



Self-management
educational events to
learn about various
techniques for managing
both the physical and
mental aspects of arthritis



Arthritis Action Groups
across the country.
These were held online
in 2020/2021 due to
the ongoing Covid-19
pandemic

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES ARE:



To empower people living with arthritis to better self-manage their condition.



To reach more people across the UK who are motivated to lead a healthy lifestyle and self-manage the symptoms of arthritis.



To have a self-management approach that attracts referrals from healthcare professionals.



To raise awareness of the Charity and that of arthritis and MSK conditions.

OUR IMPACT

Overall Member Satisfaction

95%
ARE SATISFIED
WITH OUR
SERVICES

- Arthritis Action Connect
- Arthritis Action Groups
- Annual General Meeting
- Clinical Support
- Diet & Weight Management Consultations
- Members' Magazine
- Online Exercise Classes
- Online Resources
- Personalised Member Pathway
- Self-Management Events
- Webinars

“Understood my arthritis better than my GP and my sports injury massage therapist. I've received excellent information and advice. I now understand what I have and what I can do about it. So my self-confidence has increased.”

To meet our strategic priorities, we have delivered the following services in 2020/21:

To empower people living with arthritis to better self-manage their condition.

Diet & Weight Management Service



“Just having someone of Martin's calibre to speak to is great. He has started me on simple exercises to strengthen my knee. We talked of a Mediterranean style of eating cutting down on citric fruits. A good service.”



3 in 4 said the service brought them closer to reaching their weight/nutritional goals



2 in 3 agreed that the consultations have helped improve their symptoms

100% are more knowledgeable about their arthritis and their symptoms have improved

Online Exercise Classes

90% reported improved balance and stability

90% reported improved confidence

4 in 5 reported a reduction in pain

“The workouts have been brilliant and I actually enjoyed doing the exercises. I certainly feel that I am gaining balance and strength and I will continue to follow the videos so that I continue to improve. This class has been especially helpful in targeting the core and improving my strength and balance which may mean in the future I will be able to tackle more aerobic exercises. So a big thank you from me.”



Personalised Member Pathway

100% agreed that the Pathway has improved their confidence to self-manage their arthritis

100% agreed that the Pathway has increased their knowledge about self-management

94% agreed that the Pathway has brought them closer to achieving their goals

94% agreed that the Pathway has helped improve their arthritis symptoms

Clinical Appointments

(subsidised treatments to see our network of osteopaths, physiotherapists and acupuncturists)

93% agreed that using this service has improved their ability to do physical tasks

90% agreed the service helped improve their daily experience of arthritis

6 in 7 agreed that the service helped them become more physically active

“My physiotherapist is absolutely brilliant. Her clinic is Covid-19 safe and everything is in place to provide a safe treatment. Allows time to chat and always remembers previous discussions. Advice on exercise and diet. No feeling of self-consciousness.”

Arthritis Action Connect



satisfaction with the service



3 in 5 reported improved confidence



improved their knowledge about self-management
agreed the service improved their mental wellbeing

“The service is helpful and the calls cheered me up. I really appreciate the patience and understanding that Arthritis Action shows me.”

To reach more people across the UK who are motivated to lead a healthy lifestyle and self-manage the symptoms of arthritis.

Online Arthritis Action Groups

97% felt less isolated during the pandemic

88% reported improved confidence

4 in 5 reported improved sense of control over their arthritis

4 in 5 managed their symptoms better during the pandemic



“Arthritis Action Groups are a valuable source of information for people. The groups are very inclusive, motivating and such a comfort as they always present a positive outlook.”

Self-Management Events

100% were likely to apply what they learnt in the course to their daily lives

89% found the events useful

88% had a better understanding about managing their arthritis

“Good length, great speakers and videos and opportunity for breakout session. Very well organised and held attention.”

Webinars

99% found the webinars useful



“I was so impressed by Dr. Wendy's knowledge and very clear explanation on how the vaccines work. A lay person would have no difficulty understanding the concept.”

Events/Presentations

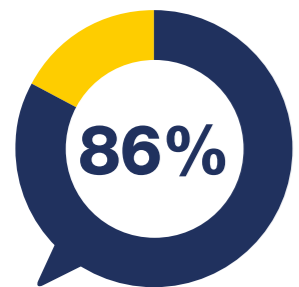
Over 240 Group meetings and presentations were organised this year, spread over 10 different regions and 23 locations. 3,610 people attended our Groups and presentations, including patients, carers, community organisations, corporate staff, healthcare professionals, and diverse communities.



To have a self-management approach that attracts referrals from healthcare professionals.

Information sessions

We organised a series of events with integrated Primary Care Mental Health services, including Sutton Uplift and Talk Wandsworth, to promote the self-management approach.



valued the content about self-management



were better informed about arthritis and additional support that is available

“I hadn’t heard of Arthritis Action and think it would be a helpful resource for me. I liked the enthusiasm of all the speakers.”

Associated Practitioners

We have a network of 121 osteopaths, physiotherapists and acupuncturists across the country providing treatments for Members to help improve their symptoms.



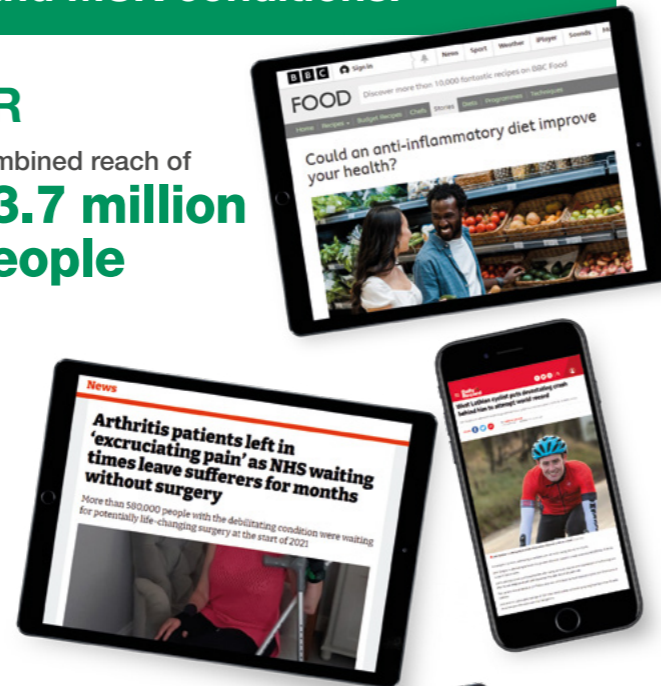
“Being an Associated Practitioner enables me to support patients who ordinarily would be unable to access my care as an osteopath. It allows me to provide members of the charity with protected time to discuss any concerns they may have about their arthritis, and explore how a bespoke package of self-management could help them become more active and do more of the things they love.”

Matthew Rogers, Registered Osteopath

To raise awareness of the Charity and that of arthritis and MSK conditions.

PR

Combined reach of **33.7 million people**

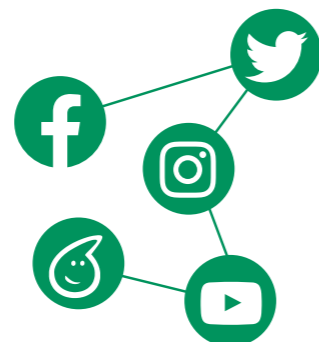


Website

311,000 visitors
606,000 page views

Social media

Our social media activity reached **1.7 million people**



Fundraising
£202,680



PARTNERSHIPS

We are members of the Arthritis & Musculoskeletal Alliance (ARMA) and National Voices

ARMA



Key achievements:

ARMA lobbied relevant bodies for the production of regularly updated information on COVID-19 vaccination for people with musculoskeletal conditions. Particularly information for those shielding and those on immunosuppressant medication.

The ARMA website was the host for the Urgent and Emergency guidance to support professionals to identify musculoskeletal conditions which should be urgently referred.

The knock-on impact of COVID-19 on musculoskeletal health services in the NHS was stark. ARMA focussed on the restart of musculoskeletal health services following the initial waves of the pandemic. To achieve this, ARMA's work continues mostly through engagement with the NHS's Best MSK Health programme. ARMA continues to play a key role in the NHS programme and in linking members such as Arthritis Action with progress and engagement.

National Voices



Key achievements:

Their work on COVID recovery, Digital Inclusion and NHS reform has made appearances in the Guardian, Independent, BMJ and HSJ.

Centred inequalities in all their work, notably holding a four-day conference exploring the VCSE health and care sector's role in tackling health inequity, attended by over 500 people. www.nationalvoices.org.uk/publications/our-publications/how-can-we-dismantle-health-inequity-together

National Voices held an interesting and informative webinar on the topic of exploring a person centred response to Long Covid, where the panel was comprised of influential people working in this space. www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xn554UsrDyY

“We really appreciate Arthritis Action taking the time to deliver an arthritis prevention webinar for us. The insights, information and guidance was valuable to many of those that attended, and the speaker was kind enough to answer any questions at the end.”



JOSH'S STORY

“I was 28 when I was diagnosed with arthritis, in February 2021. I was cycling in Dubai when I crashed my bike quite badly. I was brought straight to hospital, where an x-ray during the rehabilitation process revealed that I was developing arthritis in my hip.

The diagnosis hit me hard. I couldn't overcome it, or heal the problem in however many weeks. It would have been easy to say “Oh no, this is going to get in my way”. Instead, I busied myself with the things I still controlled, like improving my overall health and function. I looked into help from charities like Arthritis Action. I began raising money to help others living with arthritis, and I set myself a goal: to break a Guinness World Record for cycling the furthest distance ever in a week. It's quite an extreme example of setting yourself a goal, but it certainly proves that arthritis isn't holding me back, and I'm still able to achieve extraordinary things.

If I had one piece of advice to someone who's just been diagnosed with arthritis, it would be: don't let your arthritis define you. See it as a new challenge. It's worth asking yourself, “What goals can I set myself for the coming week, or month, or year?” Push yourself just a little further than you are right now, and you'll be surprised what you can still achieve with a body that has arthritis.”

Josh Quigley





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