

IMPACT REPORT

2022-23

FOREWORD

Welcome to our Impact Report 2022/2023.

Whilst we have emerged from the Covid-19 pandemic, people affected by arthritis have continued to be impacted by the ongoing cost of living crisis. Arthritis Action has worked tirelessly throughout the year to support people living with arthritis across the UK, and we remain deeply committed to helping as many people as possible.

We are proud to have continued to support people through our self-management approach. We have directly supported over 4,000 people this year through Groups and Self-Management Events; clinical appointments with our network of physiotherapists, osteopaths, and acupuncturists; webinars; ‘Home Strength’ exercise classes; nutrition and weight management consultations; self-management presentations; and our personalised member pathway service.

Our website has once again proved to be a powerful resource for people affected by arthritis, reaching 370,000 visitors this past year. Our popular page, ‘arthritis and disability benefits’, has had 46,000 visits alone, highlighting the need for financial support during these difficult times.

We are pleased to have delivered 92 presentations to over 2,000 people. We delivered 30% of these to ethnic minority and low-income communities. Our work on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) has not stopped there. This year has seen us implement our first EDI strategy, amplifying our efforts to reach underserved communities and support more people through our resources and services.

To expand our offer to a younger audience, we are pleased to have introduced young adult online groups, and to launch ‘Arthritis & Me’, a new quarterly newsletter for the young adult community. We have also released our first ever Podcast, covering topics from pain management to artificial intelligence, which has had two successful seasons so far and reached over 2,700 people.

We are grateful for the gifts in Wills we receive as they go towards supporting others affected by arthritis and to families and friends who honour their loved ones with donations in their memory. Thanks to a grant from London Catalyst we were able to grow our work with YMCA Central this year, helping a new audience learn about self-management. We are thankful for the continued support from the Joan Ainslie Charitable Trust and other Trusts and Foundations who continue to fund our work. We are also grateful to have received

corporate support from Abbvie and Amgen this year to deliver our young adult services.

We have continued our efforts to raise awareness of arthritis and that of the Charity, reaching over 1.7 million people on our social media channels, and a combined audience of 70.8 million through media coverage and PR activities.

We are also extremely proud to have worked on the UKRI ‘Transforming gyms into community MSK hubs: mobilising the UK leisure sector to deliver inclusive, accessible, personalised and gamified health services for Older Adults with MSK conditions’ project, joining leading organisations Good Boost, ukactive, Orthopaedic Research UK, and ESCAPE-pain to work with the leisure sector to support over 20 million people living with arthritis and musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions, and transform leisure centres into local community MSK hubs.

We will soon be launching our new three-year strategy 2024-2026, which builds upon our existing strategy and will elevate our efforts to support more adults affected by arthritis across the country.

We are very proud of everything we have achieved this past year. But there’s still more to be done to support the millions of people affected by arthritis in the UK. Working alongside our wonderful Members, partners, volunteers, supporters and service users, we will continue to achieve amazing things together to help people live a happier, healthier life with arthritis.



Dan Torjussen-Proctor
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 an integrated 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:



Nutrition and weight management consultations with our registered Dietitian



Arthritis Action Online Groups including coffee mornings and evening events



Factsheets, our digital Members’ magazine, electronic newsletters, webinars, and mental wellbeing resources



Running online exercise classes and resources for exercising safely. Signposting to activities in communities and collaborating with activity providers



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



Our new Podcast aimed at young adults, and specialist groups and events exclusively for young adults living with arthritis



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

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

92%

ARE SATISFIED WITH OUR SERVICES

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

To meet our strategic priorities, we delivered the following services in 2022/23:

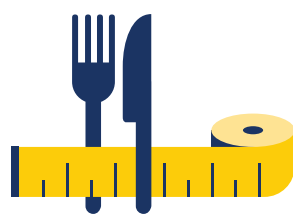
1. To empower people living with arthritis to better self-manage their condition.

Nutrition & Weight Management Service

93% satisfaction

90% said the service made them feel more knowledgeable about their arthritis and closer to achieving their weight/nutrition goals

"Martin is totally invested in what he does and goes above and beyond his remit."



Home Strength Exercise Class

100% of people felt an increase in confidence

96% saw an increase in overall strength & stability

91% felt a reduction in pain



Clinical Appointments

Subsidised treatments with our network of osteopaths, physiotherapists and acupuncturists.

97% would recommend the Clinical Appointment service

93% agreed that using this service helped improve their daily experience of arthritis, and they are better able to manage their condition following their appointments

87% agreed that using this service has improved their ability to do physical tasks

"I have always received excellent treatments, been given practical advice to continue my exercises at home. Further support has been given through emails and discussion about advice and webinars I have received and attended with Arthritis Action."



Personalised Member Pathway

100% satisfaction with the Pathway service

97% agreed that the Pathway increased their knowledge about self-management and improved their confidence to self-manage their arthritis

95% agreed that the Pathway has brought them closer to achieving their goals

"I am happy and know that if I need, there are people that I can turn to with expertise, or who know someone who does."

Podcast

2.7k plays across platforms



"I have been listening to your podcast and recommended it to my patients as I find it is a very fun and informative way to engage with people living with arthritis."



2. 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

100% felt the Groups helped them to understand their arthritis better

95% felt more in control of their arthritis, and would recommend Arthritis Action to a friend



"I felt isolated when it came to discussing and understanding what it was actually like to be living on a day-to-day basis with osteoarthritis. The Online Groups bring together people from all walks of life, and for me has helped me to come to terms with having osteoarthritis, and has helped me to build a better pathway for the future."

Collaboration with YMCA

Arthritis Action held open clinics to provide information to help people better manage their arthritis.

100%

- ✓ found the sessions useful
- ✓ were likely to apply what they learnt to their daily lives
- ✓ would recommend the service to others



"It was great to learn more about arthritis and how to perform simple techniques to help relieve the pain. Very friendly and professional presentation."

Events and Presentations

120+ Group meetings, events and presentations were organised

2,600+ people attended, including our Groups and presentations, including patients, carers, community organisations, corporate staff, healthcare professionals, and diverse communities



Self-Management Events

94% were likely to apply what they learnt in the course to their daily lives

88% agreed that these events help people better understand how to manage their arthritis

"Was very friendly, welcoming and informative. Especially good having someone from your charity who is also dealing with arthritis, who could explain how they self-manage their arthritis."

Webinars

98%

- ✓ found Arthritis Action's webinars useful, with 61% finding them very useful
- ✓ came away from the webinar with more information on the topic discussed (including pain, yoga therapy, and arthritis & pain)
- ✓ would recommend Arthritis Action's webinars to others living with arthritis



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

MSK Social Prescribing Resource

Arthritis Action sponsored and contributed to the development of the Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Alliance's (ARMA) Social Prescribing Resource. The resource aims to equip social prescribing link workers across the country with information on musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions and self-management to better support people living with those conditions and sign post them to the most relevant services. The resource was shared on the social prescribing NHS Futures website and is one of ARMA's most popular resources. To date, it has been viewed 3,611 times and the information downloaded over 600 times <https://arma.uk.net/social-prescribing/>

We delivered a webinar aimed at social prescribing link workers in January, which has been viewed 422 times so far. This had some of the most positive feedback we have ever had for our webinars and was one of the best attended. It is aimed at link workers with little or no knowledge of MSK, not at MSK specialists. The recording and slides are available on our website.

Associated Practitioners

We have a network of 132 osteopaths, physiotherapists and acupuncturists across the country, providing treatments for Members to help improve their symptoms.



Supporting Young Adults living with Arthritis

As the three-year strategy period comes to an end, we are pleased to have supported more young adults living with arthritis. We have supported over 7,300 people this year through our dedicated Young Adult Hub on our website. We ran Young Adult Group meetings and events for young adults, started a new quarterly electronic newsletter 'Arthritis & Me', and launched the Podcast featuring a range of topics including healthy eating, physical activity, work, pain management, and mental health.

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

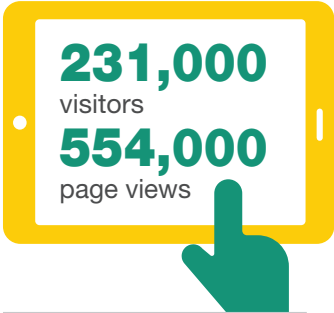
Publicity and PR
Combined reach of **70.8 million**



Fundraising
£499,292



Website



Social media

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



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

A key part of our new 3-year strategy (2024-26) is to help tackle health inequalities and support more people from diverse communities, including areas of low income and ethnic minority populations, which have been identified as the two key groups that are more likely to have a long-term musculoskeletal condition and experience worse health outcomes.

To increase our impact in this area, we undertake the following activities each year:

Community outreach and presentations
We delivered 70 presentations to 2,000 people with arthritis across the UK, of which 30% represented ethnic minority groups and low-income groups.

Supporting people with low health literacy
We developed a variety of material to support more people living with arthritis in simplified language to make the content more inclusive and accessible to people of varying literacy levels.

Partnerships

It has been an active year with several new and continuing partnerships bringing in revenue, sponsorship and new connections.

Field Doctor
We are pleased to be partnering once again with Field Doctor to help provide a range of dietitian-designed, chef-made ready meals to support people living with arthritis.

Abbvie
Pharmaceutical research and development company, Abbvie, has kindly sponsored our Young Adult activities this year, in particular our Podcast, videos and promotional material.

Amgen
Biotechnology company Amgen has kindly sponsored our Young Adult activities this year, including our young adults hub, and young adult events.

Your Life Protected
Your Life Protected, a company who help people with pre-existing medical conditions – including arthritis – to get life insurance and critical illness cover.

The Able Label
The Able Label, a company which provides high quality clothes with adapted hidden designs to make dressing easier for those with dexterity difficulties.

Invisible Creations
Invisible Creations, a company providing home adaptations for people with mobility issues, giving them the support they need to stay active around the home.



TANYA'S STORY

I was initially prescribed medication to help reduce my symptoms, but after this I would say that I've not received any other formal support – outside of receiving more painkillers from my GP upon request. I have struggled to find the support and guidance for navigating my life, both before and after my diagnosis. At the time of writing, I have been waiting over a year for a pain management clinic appointment. It feels like I've been left to manage my condition on my own.

I first heard of Arthritis Action over Instagram and really appreciate the great work they are doing. Speaking to an organisation like them is an amazing way to connect and learn from others who have things in common with you. Their resources help people to manage their lifestyle and symptoms as I have and live a better, more active life.

My arthritis has definitely impacted my daily life, affecting what I can and can't do. However, I find comfort in the things I can control. Recently, I have been making efforts to improve my daily habits. I've learnt to be careful when planning my time and deciding what to do each day, so that I don't over-exert myself. I'm mindful of avoiding processed foods and increasing my step count to help self-manage my condition. I have also taken up mental wellbeing therapy to help cope with the stress that comes with my conditions.

Now, several years after my diagnosis, I have come to love and accept my conditions. At the end of the day, it is a part of me that makes me who I am. Living with my conditions has helped me learn so much about myself and how to listen and honour my body. I have become far more familiar with dealing with my conditions on a daily basis, to the point where it doesn't negatively impact my mental wellbeing anymore.

If someone my age has been diagnosed with arthritis or a similar condition, I would advise them to accept and love their body and self for who they are. It can be hard doing this when your body has different needs to others your age, but you can still do everything you want to do. Don't let your condition define you.

Tanya



**PLEASE SUPPORT
US SO WE CAN
CONTINUE TO
MAKE AN IMPACT
ON PEOPLE'S LIVES**



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