

# BACK to Health Programme

- ✓ Understand your lower back problem better
- ✓ Improve function
- ✓ Manage pain

**Back Pain Rehabilitation**

Patient Information

# Introduction

## A three-week residential programme for the management of long-lasting lower back pain

**The BACK to Health programme aims to improve function and reduce suffering associated with long lasting low back pain. This will be achieved through:**

- Group learning
- Exercise
- Lifestyle change



The team consists of a physiotherapist, two specialist nurses and a clinical psychologist. The team are regularly joined by guest speakers including a specialist pharmacist, dietitian and several exercise professionals.

The programme offers a broad, person centred approach supported by the most up to date research.



# Programme Details

The BACK to Health programme moves away from seeking a medical cure for long-lasting pain. It focuses instead on self-care through education sessions, exercise, psychological support and practical coping and problem-solving strategies.

**The programme involves an initial three week residential stay, involving an exercise and educational programme with an emphasis on long term self-care.**

It is attended and delivered by a number of professionals skilled in supporting you to make the changes you need to regain the confidence and ability to take back control of your personal situation.

**The BACK to Health Programme runs each week Monday to Thursday, with patients returning home from Friday to Sunday.**

Due to the residential element of the programme, patients will stay in a hotel for 3 nights during each week, the cost of which is funded by the NHS.

The residential nature of the course allows established habits to be challenged and new habits re-established without the interference of the persons usual day to day life and commitments.

There will be follow-up sessions with the therapists to provide support and evaluate progress after the initial 3 week course is completed.

**Please note: There is no individual hands-on treatment and you will not see a doctor or undergo any further medical investigations.**

The aim of the BACK to Health programme is to allow people with long-lasting pain to develop techniques and strategies to allow them to minimise the impact of their pain on their quality of life. Many people will reduce or stop unhelpful pain related medication and return to work.

## Specific content of the programme includes:

- **Movement and exercise sessions** to improve strength, stamina, range of movement and promote resilience
- **Education about the cause and nature of long-lasting pain** with particular emphasis on the distinction between pain and damage
- Working on valued based goals to make a return to an **active, meaningful lifestyle**
- **Psychology sessions** to help understand the links between beliefs, fears, thoughts, and subsequently mood and pain, and to learn techniques of identifying unhelpful patterns of thinking and develop effective changes
- **Reduction** in unhelpful pain related medications
- **Reduction in reliance** on rest and challenging unhelpful behaviours
- Developing a range of **relaxation techniques** to reduce pain and aid sleep.
- Improving range and style of strategies to **manage increases in pain**.



## To participate on the programme you must:

- ✓ Want to **regain control of your life** by willingness to apply self-care
- ✓ **Apply new or hone existing skills** through individual and group activities
- ✓ Be willing to **assess your lifestyle** and think about relevant and realistic adaptations you may need to make
- ✓ **Be motivated to attend all sessions** and put in the effort to achieve your goals

## Is the programme right for me?

Patients need to be prepared to stay in residential accommodation (Hotel) for three weeks (go home at weekends) and to participate in a group based programme (accommodation is provided as part of the programme).

**We appreciate this may be a major commitment for you but hopefully it will change your life.**

Because of the physical nature of the programme, patients must be able to perform personal care, for example, independent washing and dressing, be able to walk independently for 15 minutes or 500 metres and have good general medical health.

**Before you start the three-week course, you will need to attend a half-day induction session at the hotel which gives you the opportunity to:**

- Meet the team
- Have a tour of the facilities
- Meet other people who have been referred to the programme.



## How do I access the programme?

Ask your **Triage and Treat Practitioner** if you would be suitable for a referral.



## Contact us

**For further information please contact the Low Back Pain Triage and Treat Service:**

Email: [spinaltriageandtreat@nhs.net](mailto:spinaltriageandtreat@nhs.net)

Telephone: 01642 944703

Available: Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm (excluding bank holidays)

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