# **Self Care Forum Self Care Innovations Award 2022**

# **Award Application Form and Eligibility**

***The Self Care Forum is inviting applications of good practice and innovations in self care, personalised care, and social prescribing that have made a difference to individuals, groups, or organisations.***

**Who can apply?**

This invitation is open to everyone, whether you are an individual, a community champion, an employer, GP practice, Local Authority, school, college, business, or services organisation (public, private, or charitable). For a guide, see examples table below.

**£500 bursary**

The winner will receive a £500 bursary to spend on a self care related initiative and the top entries will be included on the Self Care Forum website to share best self care practice and excellence. The winners will be announced during the UK’s National Self Care Week (12 – 18 November) as part of its launch and promotional activity.

Closing date for admissions: **31st July 2022.**

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| Examples of possible initiatives | If specific health-related conditions were targeted, they might include |
| * 2021’s Self Care Week activities * Coronavirus related self care * Signposting to services * Protecting mental health and wellbeing * Promoting self care to the shielded population * Self care for the elderly or other specific groups * Self care introduced by employers * Local authority population or community initiatives * Pharmacy initiatives * GP initiatives * Self care education by schools, universities, or community groups such as Scouts, Guides etc * Empowering vulnerable groups | * Long-term conditions * Obesity * Diabetes * General health * Nutrition * Exercise * Mental Health * Self-treatable conditions/minor illness |

## Please use the form below to tell us about your self care initiative.

If you are typing directly into the form, do not worry if the box extends beyond the page – it will continue onto the next one.

## Title and contact details.

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| **Title of Initiative**  MSK Connect |
| Name of Organisation and Region (please state context, ie general practice, community care etc)  Keighley Healthy Living |
| Name of person/team/individual being nominated  MSK Connect (MSK = Musculoskeletal Conditions) |
| Contact name for entry  Kerry Page |
| Contact email for entry  kerry.page@khl.org.uk |
| Timeframe and dates of initiative  1st October 2021 – 31st March 2022 |
| Date of submission  20th June 2022 |

## Problem(s) and how you tackled them.

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| What was the problem you were trying to tackle? (max 200 words)  Supporting those with Musculo-skeletal (MSK) conditions who were reliant on medication and living within anxiety and depression to access appropriate and inclusive exercise/moving more options or to get outdoors. KHL wanted to support this cohort to better manage pain, make everyday tasks easier, increase social connections and enhance quality of life. |
| Please give a brief description of your self-care innovation (max 250 words)  KHL were well placed to deliver on this project’s aims because we had already run a successful pilot and produced a programme plan with milestones, co-design tools and evaluation methods. Through GP referrals we had an identified a cohort of people living with MSK conditions and chronic pain that we had built relationships with through one-to-one and wellbeing contacts etc to build their confidence to a point where they could engage with health and life restorative support. Using validated tools and co-design methods we had identified where people were in terms of pre-contemplation to readiness to engage with being more physically active in ways that met their expressed needs, social life, work/life balance and which mitigate for chronic pain or long-term health conditions. We built trust in the people we were working with so that we were able to effectively signpost people into a broad range of physical activity options, from very gentle to more condition-specific that met their needs and that supported their ability to self-care and better manage their conditions. Accessibility was a key focus of our teams ‘hand-hold’ into being more physically active and we also were trialling ‘active signposting’ methods into classes, activities and courses which were inclusive and which embraced the diversity of Keighley and surrounding areas. We learned that consistent contact, trust and confidence building and supporting people into appropriate activities for them, which met their social, physical and mental health requirements was key to engagement and success. |
| What challenges or barriers were you faced with and how did you solve the problems or overcome the barriers? (max 250 words)   1. High demand for places on the classes, we countered this by putting on more sessions to meet demand, which we managed within our planned budget. 2. Word of mouth and promotion of the classes led to people/patients asking if we could deliver outside the area of the scope of this funding, we are responding to this request by incorporating this expressed need in future programme, facilitator bookings, venue identification and funding applications to build in and scale out of these services and physical activity opportunities, to ensure that we meet the specific needs of people with MSK, arthritis and chronic pain etc. that are person-centred and happen in their place. 3. Room sizes were sometimes a challenge with walking aids, wheelchairs or people who just needed a bit more space to get around. We countered this by moving into larger rooms, splitting classes and capping attendance numbers. 4. We did realise that to deliver to people with additional needs and specific health conditions, you do need the exercise instructors to have a higher level of qualification, specific qualifications and experience. We managed this by getting a specialist in when needed and by expanding our experts-by-experience model. |
| Did you collaborate with other partners or organisations, if so, who were they?  Yes, with NHS West Yorkshire & Harrogate Partnership and Modality (GP super partnership) |

## Impact and outcomes

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| Who was the initiative directed at and what were the benefits to the targeted group or individuals? (max 250 words)  The initiative was directed at a minimum of 40 ethnically diverse people living with MSK conditions and/or chronic pain. We actually delivered to 77 people. They were people who were reliant on medication and who lived with anxiety and/or depression and took part in minimal or no physical activity due to the MSK, pain, misconceptions, fear and health barriers.   1. Many participants felt stronger and more steady on their feet, have increased mobility, better breathing, improved quality of life, felt better equipped to self-care and had wider social networks and understanding of the community-based health offer. 2. Participants felt heard and valued and were able to input into a service through the co-design elements. 3. Participants felt they had a meaningful role to play in demonstrating the benefits of engaging with physical activity even with their MSK condition and/or long-term pain. 4. They were able to access physical activity offers, courses, classes and activities which met their needs and which they had the confidence were safe for them to attend, they’d be with people who understood their challenges, that the exercise instructor would be trained in this area. 5. They made friends, they had a wider social network, they were more adequately signposted into other physical activity and health supportive community based provision. 6. It provided opportunities for people from different faiths, cultures and backgrounds to come together to exercise together in an environment which felt safe and where they felt they were with people like themselves and who understood their challenges. |
| Were there further benefits to you, your colleagues, your organisation or to a wider area such as the NHS? If so, what were they? (e.g improved job satisfaction, smoother running of facility, happier service users, better use of scarce resources, cost saving)  Yes, there was a wider ‘ripple reach’ due to limited precedent in this area and ten organisations benefitted from the process evaluation learning, and impact outcomes.   1. The exercise and physical activity offer in our community expanded in terms of what was available for people who had MSK and health conditions or who may not access typical or common general population type physical activities, meaning the physical activity offer was wider, more diverse and more inclusive. 2. Our community were able to signpost to a wider, more inclusive set of exercise classes which met the needs of people with limited mobility and health conditions. 3. Supported making of a stronger case for more funding for community-based exercise and physical activity provision that is aimed at tackling health inequalities. 4. There was more awareness in the VCS, GP surgeries, and organisations and institutions of the benefits of physical activity for people with MSK. |

## Evidence

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| Please quantify the benefits of your initiative. (e.g. cost improvement, numbers of people helped, time saved)  77 participants.  Four group sessions per week and two 1:1s per week with online content as an add-on.  Positive Strength Yoga classes and Yoga ‘Breathing Through Pain’ techniques.  Yoga and Positive Strength group delivery is 1-1.5 hours per session; each 1:1 session is allowed 30 minutes to an hour. |
| Do you have formal or anecdotal evidence of success? (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, informal feedback?)  Yes:  Example 1: Richard was referred to MSK Connect through his GP, who was part of the MSK (musculoskeletal conditions) Pain Service, when he could no longer continue with a certain medication and was seeking a stronger pain relief. His GP suggested that because his pain is lifelong gentle exercise such as Tai-Chi and strength building movements might be an additional avenue to help him manage day-to-day. Richard says "I'm a different person from who I was before. I had been self-employed and I couldn't go out to work. I was quite often lying in bed until 2pm in the afternoon with nothing to get up for. People around me now say 'what a difference in you'. I now come to KHL and do Yoga on Mondays, Ballet-Be-Fit Tuesdays, Positive Strength on a Thursday and Tai Chi on Fridays! Oh, and since coming here I've started cooking. I've realised what I put in my body makes a difference. It’s helped me manage situations better. I have to have MRI scans and I'm a big chap so struggle inside the machine. I'd go in with dread, my eyes clenched tight shut, hated them. The last one I went to I had to have my arms, legs and chest done. I went in the scanner and they strapped me down and I could feel my heart going Boom! Boom! So, I started doing my yoga breathing. I closed my eyes and did my breathing then everything just got easier and I was able to open my eyes. They had me in and out of the machine for an hour, there is no way I could have gotten through that without doing my breathing techniques."  Example 2: The MSK Connect Team worked with Jane to understand what she thought, from the variety of activities, groups and one-to-ones and options around diet, physical activity, peer support, mental health and social opportunities would meet her needs. Jane said she wanted to move better & have more energy and wanted to achieve this in a group of people who faced similar challenges to herself. Jane said “Coming here gave me routine because I needed routine. The biggest change for me is that I learnt to be in control of my own body again. I was uncomfortable in my body before because of the abuse I'd experienced. I recognise that and am now comfortable in my own body again. I was living just in my head before. I'm 66 years old and this local support has been life changing for me. I'm doing Dance on a Wednesday, Fit for Life on a Thursday and the 'Round the World' group on a Friday. I've made new friends and even reconnected with an old friend - we are going for days out now. I was dreading retirement and now I know this is who I'm going to be as a retired lady, feeling able to manage my health better, I'm a whole different person. Touch wood, my arthritis has been a lot better since coming here. I haven't taken any pain killers, before I was very up and down and there'd be times where I'd be counting down until the next tablet but since coming here, I haven't had any at all. I'm going through a stressful situation at the moment and what I've learnt has helped me manage it better, I use the yoga toolbox I have now"  Example 3: a 49yr old unemployed South Asian male with chronic back pain did no exercise, he used to swim but the pool has closed. He is reliant on pain medication. He is supported 1:1 by community lifestyles coaches to consider other physical activity options and tries a few. He later reports feeling more agile, independent because he drives, improved mood and that he has made a friend who we now walk with twice a week. He shared his experience at a peer support meeting and was signposted to the local men’s Shed group. He feels more socially connected and now knows how to access online national activity support. |
| What was the cost of this initiative in terms of time, money, and/or other resources? Please be as specific as you can  Approximately £8,000 which included approx. £6k for staff and freelancers, £800 room hire and £600 marketing. |

## And, finally…

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| Are there any lessons you learned or top tips that you would like to share? (max 200 words)  Our engagement team were proactive and adapted engagement techniques to achieve reach and engagement with a cohort of people who are frequently cited as ‘difficult to reach’ and to build their trust and confidence to try out a physical activity for perhaps the first time or regularly for a very long time. We are proud of the level of engagement we have achieved with them.  We are a little in awe at our participants’ attitudes and determination to join or get through some exercise sessions when they personally faced physical and mental challenges that people without their health conditions and barriers to moving more may struggle to comprehend, yet most came once and returned regularly.  The programme has raised awareness with local strategists and funders about the value of implementing and funding longer-term exercise provision linked to medical conditions which happen locally, in places where the participants say they feel comfortable to engage with physical activity options and support. |
| Did you use any of the Self Care Forum’s resources? If so, please specify.  No but we would be more aware of these now in the future. |
| Please state your social media addresses including all those who were involved in the initiative.  <https://www.facebook.com/KeighleyHealthyLiving>  <https://twitter.com/KHL_Keighley> |
| Why do you think this initiative deserves to win the award? (Max 100 words)  We co-designed with participants the physical activity they wanted, and felt safe engaging with, leading to identification of options to meet their needs and KHL finding funding and facilitators to fill any gaps. This raised awareness of the benefits of moving more for people with MSK and chronic pain and resulted in new and strengthened community partnerships and our presenting to partners, organisations and institutions on our approach to getting people with health conditions to engage with physical activity. It has created more collaborative partnership working practices with the VCS, GP’s, social prescribers and health professionals. |
| Do you have an image, materials or weblinks to supplement your application? Please supply no more than 2 images which may also be used to promote your application if successful.  Yes |
| Your application may be chosen to be uploaded to the “best practice” page of the Self Care Forum website to share excellence so that others might use the learnings in your application to empower more people. We will also include your email address so that people may get in touch with you. If you would prefer that your application and/or email address was NOT chosen then please make it clear in the box provided below. |
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We look forward to receiving your application. Please email your completed form to:

[selfcare@selfcareforum.org](mailto:selfcare@selfcareforum.org)

**About the Self Care Forum**

The Self Care Forum supports organisations in helping their communities and service users better understand how to self care. It is the leading independent provider of best practice around self care and the ‘go-to’ place for top quality resources, current opinion, and self care interventions in the UK.It is a charity and aims to improve public health by promoting self care at national policy level. It creates resources, runs the UK-wide National Self Care Week, and supports robust research evidence.

For more information about the Self Care Forum please go to the website. [www.selfcareforum.org](http://www.selfcareforum.org).