

LEISURE CENTRE

# THE MSK HUB PROJECT

For those living with musculoskeletal conditions



2024 AWARD WINNER  
HEALTH IMPACT AWARD



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HEALTH IMPACT AWARD



SHORTLISTED  
OPERATOR OF THE YEAR



[LeisureCentre.com/MSK](https://LeisureCentre.com/MSK)



# ABOUT THE PROJECT

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Launched in 2023 as part of the Healthy Ageing Challenge, the musculoskeletal [MSK] hub project has transformed 33 of our Leisure Centres into community MSK rehabilitation hubs.

Our MSK Hubs help to reduce health inequalities and the burden on the NHS by providing local, supported, self-management options for people to better maintain mobility and reduce pain through activity.

Research shows that people with chronic MSK conditions are twice as likely to be inactive. Our MSK Hubs continue to provide support to people living with MSK conditions to access DTAC-certified rehabilitation programmes in their community, improving mental and physical health and enhancing quality of life.



## WHY IS THIS PROJECT NEEDED

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It is well documented that older adults are the primary beneficiaries of NHS services, with an estimated 7 million people waiting for treatment.

The consequent prolonged waiting times is a particular concern for those with chronic MSK conditions and especially for low-income and minority ethnic groups.

With over 20 million people currently living with a MSK condition, research shows that chronic MSK conditions can lead to increased fragility and risk of falls, poor mental health and worsening physical health - associated with decreased mobility and increased social care needs.

Further research highlights the prevalence of MSK conditions in pregnant and postpartum females.

## WHAT WE ARE DOING TO HELP

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Working with Good Boost, ESCAPE-pain, Arthritis Action and ukactive, Parkwood Leisure has transformed 33 of our leisure centres into community MSK hubs, providing a range of local programmes for people to maintain and improve their mobility whilst reducing pain:

- **Good Boost**  
Ongoing 30-60 minute AI personalised therapeutic DTAC-certified aquatic and land exercise classes, for individuals and groups living with MSK conditions.



- **ESCAPE-Pain**  
Hosted within a handful of our MSK Hub sites, this provides a six-week, twelve-session group rehabilitation programme for people with chronic joint pain that integrates educational self-management and coping strategies with an exercise regimen individualised for each participant.
- **Arthritis Action**  
Providing information from arthritis action via social peer to peer coffee mornings at sites to improve the quality of life of people living with chronic arthritis and MSK conditions.
- **ukactive**  
We are certified to The Active Standard [TAS]- a quality mark for the physical activity sector, developed by ukactive and independently assessed, demonstrating our commitment to provide facilities that are safe, inclusive and compliant.  
  
The Active Standard enables our service users, partners and clients to be confident we will maintain the high standards expected in order to support healthier and happier communities.



## **PARTICIPANT JOURNEY**

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Participants wanting to access Good Boost classes can self-refer or be referred through their GP/ Healthcare Practitioner.

Each person wanting to take part in ESCAPE- pain courses or Bump Boost classes will need to complete an MSK Hubs PAR-Q.

To find out more or to self-refer, participants can visit [LeisureCentre.com/MSK](https://LeisureCentre.com/MSK) or they can call or visit their local leisure facility.

Existing Healthcare Practitioner referral forms can be used or alternatively, a healthcare referral form can be downloaded on [LeisureCentre.com/MSK](https://LeisureCentre.com/MSK)

As a number of our MSK Hub sites use the ReferAll patient data management system, please check this [link](#) for the online ReferAll form



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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## WHO IS FUNDING THIS?

Parkwood Leisure, in partnership with Legacy Leisure, Lex Leisure and 1 Life, sustains each of the leisure centre MSK Hubs in England and Wales.

Parkwood Leisure, in partnership with Legacy Leisure, Lex Leisure and 1 Life, has demonstrated it has the infrastructure, standardisation, accessibility, quality assurance and a variety of structured interventions to support the NHS.

## WHAT TYPE OF PROJECT IS THIS?

The initial national pilot throughout 2023-2024 was an industrial research project that was co-designed and co-developed to demonstrate how leisure centres can support the NHS backlog by offering its spaces and partnering with NHS Trusts and healthcare professionals to deliver musculoskeletal rehab.



## HOW DO WE REFER AND SIGNPOST TO THE PROGRAMME?

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All participants will need to complete a fitness to exercise declaration form and Parkwood Leisure terms and conditions before starting any activity. Participants wanting to take part in ESCAPE-pain or Bump Boost classes will need to complete an MSK PAR-Q which will be reviewed by the exercise referral Level 3 or 4 trained teams.

Before participants take part in their first Good Boost class, they will need to visit the facility to register a profile on the Good Boost Hub using the portable tablets [takes approx. 20-30 minutes]. No self referral is required for the Arthritis Action coffee mornings, participants can turn up on the day.



## **WHAT PATIENT SCREENING WILL BE UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO COMMENCING ACTIVITY?**

**Good Boost screen for the following:**

- **Health care professional advising against exercise:** Good Boost advises that they return when signed off.
- **General malaise in the 48 hour previous to exercise.**
- **Cancer treatment:** with the participant being immunocompromised health professionals may need to risk assess if group classes are for them.
- **Cardiac and respiratory conditions:** Good Boost recommend that they do what they can but do not exert themselves and keep necessary medication to hand.
- **Kidney disease:** Good Boost recommend that they speak to a GP before getting in the water due to increased activity in the pool.



## WHAT PATIENT SCREENING WILL BE UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO COMMENCING ACTIVITY?

### Eligibility criteria for ESCAPE-pain for knee / hip osteoarthritis:

#### Eligibility criteria for ESCAPE-pain for knee / hip osteoarthritis:

- Participants over 45 years of age with chronic joint pain [at least 3 months' duration] or a clinical diagnosis of osteoarthritis.
- No contraindications to carrying out a regular exercise programme.
- Would benefit from a group-based rehabilitation programme with exercise.
- Independently mobile and able to participate in a group-based exercise programme with minimal supervision.

#### Eligibility criteria for ESCAPE-pain for backs:

- Adults [over the age of 18].
- Non-specific lower back pain for more than 3 months or recurrent episodes [with or without radicular [sciatic] pain].
- No contraindications to exercise.
- Identified as medium risk using STarT back. However, if a participant is identified as low or high and would benefit from the programme and wishes to participate in the programme, consideration can be given for their inclusion.
- Independently mobile and able to participate in a group-based exercise programme with minimal supervision



## HOW LONG DOES THE PROGRAMME LAST?

**Good Boost** is an ongoing programme where participants can attend as many of the classes as they wish each week.

**ESCAPE-pain**, hosted within a handful of MSK Hub sites, is a six week 12 session programme [consisting of two sessions per week]. The expectation for participants of the ESCAPE-pain programme is to attend all twelve sessions of their chosen cohort.

**Coffee Mornings** are hosted either weekly or monthly across nearly all MSK Hub sites. Participants can attend as many of their local coffee mornings as they wish.

## HOW MUCH DOES THE PROGRAMME COST?

There is no cost for the initial referral.

Participants will then pay a per class fee of c.£5 (class prices vary across each MSK Hub), in order to cover the staffing and facility costs of providing the classes.

The participant income ensures project sustainability whilst also exploring opportunities to receive funding to support where price may be a barrier.

Coffee mornings are free to attend.



## WHAT QUALIFICATIONS WILL STAFF HAVE FOR THIS PROJECT?

Bespoke training is provided via Good Boost and ESCAPE-pain prior to course delivery commencement.

Best practice is continually shared to all MSK Hub Coordinators.

For ESCAPE- pain class delivery, staff will already hold a level 3 exercise on referral qualification OR a level 4 qualification.

There will be appropriately trained first aid qualified staff across all facilities.

## HOW IS PATIENT SAFETY ASSURED FOR THIS PROJECT?

Good Boost is DTAC-approved [<http://bit.ly/GoodBoostDTAC>] and ORCHA-approved [[OrchaHealth.com](http://OrchaHealth.com)] AI-driven software. If a patient details a new MSK condition or pain, the programme is recalculated and the exercise is modified.

Good Boost is not a diagnostic tool but can highlight concerns based on the information the user provides. A participant can then discuss this information with their healthcare team to ensure they are safe to proceed

ESCAPE-pain is an evidenced-based treatment programme for chronic knee, hip, or back pain. All facilitators delivering the programme must be trained by the central team.



Facilitator training will cover participant eligibility criteria and screening/assessment methods highlighting the importance of identifying red flags and contraindications for exercise.

Parkwood Leisure will need to ensure that participants are assessed against the ESCAPE-pain eligibility criteria, as well as an appropriate activity readiness assessment or triage – for example, a Fitness to Exercise Declaration Form.

## OUR HEALTH COMMITMENT STATEMENT [HCS]

Our [HCS](#) outlines with the user mutual responsibilities for safety and well-being.

Endorsed by uk active, a Health Commitment Statement can be shown to help lower drop-out rates of service- users during sign-up, due to the personal responsibility that the user is agreeing to.

In addition, as part of the service user sign up process, participants will be required to agree to Parkwood Leisure's Fitness to Exercise Declaration Policy as well as all ESCAPE-pain and Bump Boost participants being required to complete an MSK Hubs PAR-Q.

Written sign off is required from their GP/HCP should they not meet all PAR-Q criteria.



## NICE Early Value Assessment

Good Boost has been included in the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Early Value Assessment (EVA) program, specifically for the management of mild to moderate hip or knee osteoarthritis.

This is a significant milestone that signals community-delivered, digitally-supported therapeutic exercise can be considered a credible component of NHS care pathways.

For healthcare practitioners and commissioners, this recognition reduces the perceived risk associated with adoption, supports the scaling of evidence-informed interventions, and aligns with system priorities for prevention, self-management, and easing pressure on traditional healthcare services.

Good Boost will continue to generate real-world outcomes data aligned with NICE's structured evidence-generation framework over the next three years to support future NHS adoption decisions.

The inclusion in the NICE EVA adds to Good Boost's existing accreditations, reinforcing its credibility and readiness for NHS deployment.

Good Boost is registered as a Class I Medical Device, confirming it meets regulatory standards for safety and intended clinical use. Furthermore, it is certified against the NHS Digital Technology Assessment Criteria (DTAC), covering key areas like clinical safety, data protection, and security, allowing NHS organisations to procure and deploy it with confidence. It also holds an independent ORCHA Rating of 86%, placing it among high-quality digital health solutions.



## **WHAT INSURANCES ARE IN PLACE?**

Public liability insurance is in place for all participating facilities.

## **IS THERE ANY DATA BEING COLLECTED AND WHAT HAPPENS WITH THIS?**

We take our responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act (DPA) extremely seriously. Our consistently applied GDPR Policy, supported by mandatory staff training and strong internal governance, ensures personal data we collect is handled lawfully, transparently, and securely, complementing our commitment to equitable service access.

Data from additional leisure centre activity usage will be

collected from participants who will register as a member at the leisure centre to understand use of the different services provided by the different leisure centres. This data is stored centrally in Parkwood Leisure's customer relationship management [CRM] System.

Data on participant health outcomes [physical and mental], demographics, user engagement and throughput is being collected through the Good Boost and ESCAPE-pain system via a tablet computer [Good Boost HUB], as part of the registration of individuals participating in the programme.

Upon registering with the Good Boost HUB app, the user agrees to the terms and conditions and privacy policy which includes anonymised data sharing.



This means that the user provides consent at this point to be involved in data collection and does not require consent to be collected by the leisure facilities.

Data analysis will be conducted independently by ukactive. Therefore, anonymised data will be provided through secure transfer from Good Boost server and 4Global to ukactive.

The service evaluation will be conducted by combining the CRM data [4Global] and the data collected by the Good Boost app at leisure centre level for all venues. Data sharing agreements between participating groups have been signed, and data sharing, processing and controlling is between Good Boost, 4Global and ukactive.

All data shared and processed will be shared, stored, analysed and then removed in line with GDPR, meaning that each individual is not identifiable, data remains confidential, and where relevant, provided and then reported in an aggregated format.

## **REFERALL**

Customer data which is entered on the ReferAll system is held on the secure cloud-based database. For further information on our systems and data security processes, please refer to our Privacy Policy

[\[https://www.leisurecentre.com/privacy-policy\]](https://www.leisurecentre.com/privacy-policy)



## WHAT IMPACT ARE MSK HUBS HAVING?

Further findings from the national MSK Hub project can be found in the 'Transforming gyms into community Musculoskeletal (MSK) Hubs' report:

- **Personal Wellbeing**- The national pilot identified that Personal wellbeing (satisfaction, worthwhile, happiness) was high or very high at baseline and remained stable at 6-week and 12-week follow-ups, with a slight reduction in anxiety. Our MSK Hubs have so far contributed to improved wellbeing for 62.5% of participants.
- **Inactivity targeted**- The national pilot identified that most individuals (81.9%) who engaged were not sufficiently active at baseline.
- **Wider Facility Usage**: The national pilot identified that on average, for every one MSK Hub session attended, participants attended an estimated 3.7 other classes and activities within the leisure facility, suggesting a model for sustained physical activity participation and sustained engagement for leisure operators.
- **Demographics**: The programme engaged a wider range of individuals than expected, though high representation was seen from older (60+, 61.2%), white (90.5%), female (81.2%), and retired (50.9%) individuals.



- **Localised Offer:** The national pilot identified that close to three quarters of participants (72.3%) travelled up to 5km, supporting the concept that the programme successfully provided a localised offer.
- **Pain Improvement-** Pain reduced across all patient specific complaints
- **Confidence-** Participants noted that the social element of the hubs had a positive impact on their wellbeing, enjoyment, and confidence.
- **Social Value-** Over £1.4m social value has been generated (up to Autumn 2025) across our MSK Hubs alone.
- **Policy Influence:** The national UK-wide pilot has influenced national policy, being included as a case study in the UK Government's Sport Strategy 'Get Active' and referenced in the Chief Medical Officer's Annual Report 2023

To find out more about the MSK Hubs pilot, watch the short video here: [\[vimeo.com/805046886\]](https://vimeo.com/805046886)

To find out about the impact from our MSK Hubs, watch the video here: [\[https://vimeo.com/1079221701\]](https://vimeo.com/1079221701)



# LEISURE CENTRE

For more information, contact  
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**LeisureCentre.com/MSK**

This document is also available in Welsh

