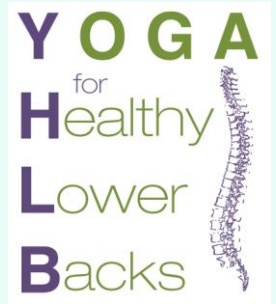


The implementation of the evidence-based 'Yoga for Healthy Lower Backs'- course as a treatment option for patients with back pain

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Introduction

Back pain is a common and often chronic condition that is costly both for the NHS and our society as a whole.

The Yoga for Healthy Lower Backs programme (YHLB) is a gentle evidence-based [1] and cost-effective [2] 12-week program that enables patients to self-manage their chronic back pain in the long-term.

Aims

- Make YHLB available to NHS patients of Penryn +/- other Cornish surgeries and evaluate outcomes
- Educate health care professionals about YHLB
- Evaluate obstacles to implementation

Methods

Support for pilots gathered by presenting at clinical meetings at Penryn, Perranporth and Hayle surgery.

Referral through GPs, physiotherapists and self-referral using waiting room posters / fliers.

Funded through patient contribution £56-100, SW Deanery scholarship, subsidized by A. Trehwela & Perranporth surgery.

Pilot 1 (n=9/12) & Pilot 2 (n=10) courses were taught to Penryn patients.

Pilot 3 (n=12) was delivered to patients of Perranporth and St Agnes surgeries.

Pre-and post-course questionnaires were used to measure outcomes.

Further GP education through presentations at RCGP CPD evening at the Duchy hospital & SWAHSN 'Sharing best practice' conference, PPTs to GP ST3s / ST2s & Kerrier CMHT.

Foundation of 'YHLB Steering group' and liaison with Kernow CCG, Kernow Health, RCHT Pain Clinic, local MP.

Draft created for new local back pain pathway incorporating new NICE guidelines.

Main obstacle - Funding

Course evaluated at £292 in 2008 [2], currently offered for £224 in the private sector incl. course book, CD & handouts.

Exclusion of socially deprived patients even with reduced patient contribution towards total course cost.

Possible funding from Cornwall Community Foundation through Age UK.

Currently preparing application to another UK charity.

Acknowledgments

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References [1] Yoga for Chronic Low Back Pain: A Randomized Trial' Annals of Internal Medicine 2011 H. E. Tilbrook, H.Cox, C.Hewitt et al. [2] 'A Pragmatic Multi-centred Randomized Controlled Trial of Yoga for Chronic Low Back Pain: Economic Evaluation' Spine Journal 15th August 2012 Chuang LH, Soares MO, Tilbrook H et al.

Results

Feedback from RCGP CPD evening – 100% of 21/22 GPs would consider suggesting or referring patients to YHLB & would support its inclusion as a fully funded NHS service.

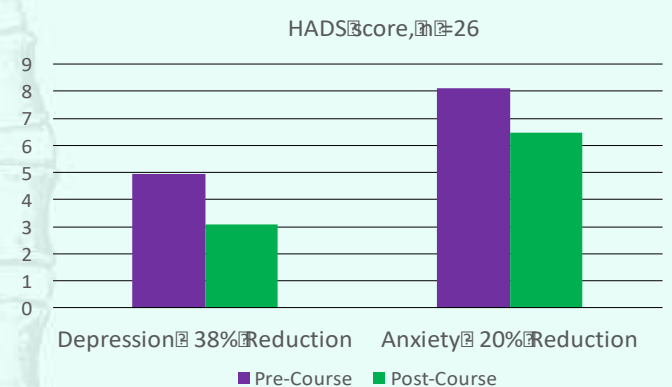
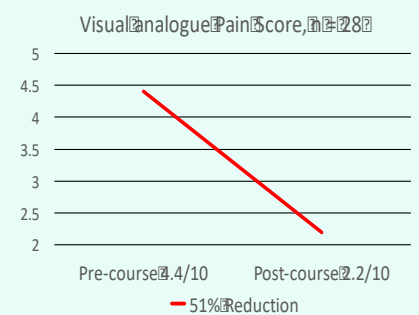
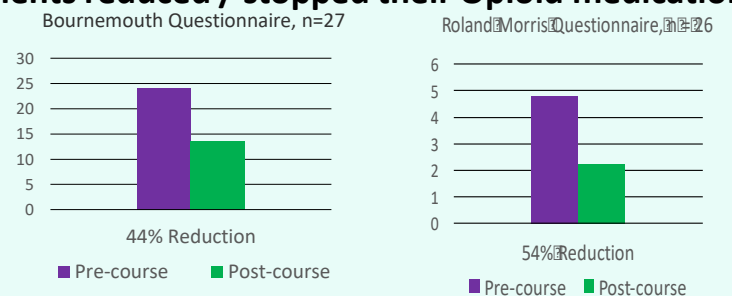
Patient quotes

'The course got me back to work after 6 ½ month, my recovery had plateaued and I was feeling desperate.'

'I'm firmly convinced that empowering people to tackle things themselves is the best way forward.' 'It's great to see the NHS taking a proactive approach to back issues.'

Outcomes (28 pre- & post-course patient questionnaires)

Reduction in analgesia and antidepressants was noted - **5 patients reduced / stopped their Opioid medication**



Conclusion

These YHLB Pilots show impressive outcomes with regards to back pain & function as well as mental health.

Funding remains the main obstacle to implementation alongside lack of familiarity amongst GPs.

NICE wants it, patients want it, GPs who know it want it: **It is time to de-medicalise back pain & facilitate self-management with the help of innovative treatment options such as 'Yoga for Healthy Lower Backs'.**