



Project Summary

Maximising the treatment benefits of physical activity for patients with ankylosing spondylitis: Tackling long-term adherence and maintenance

Dr Peter Rouse awarded £33,815

Patients with ankylosing spondylitis can gain significant treatment benefits from participating in regular physical activity including reductions in pain and fatigue as well as improvements in physical function, and psychological well-being. Yet, many fail to participate in sufficient levels to acquire these benefits. Programs exist that support the initiation of physical activity in this population including a residential program offered by the RNHRD, but we lack understanding of how to support the long-term maintenance of this important lifestyle behaviour to harness health benefits. The proposed research will form a new collaboration between health care providers, patients, and academics to co-develop effective and implementable ways of supporting ankylosing spondylitis patients to sustain and integrate changes in physical activity into their everyday lives after a residential treatment program. Outcomes from this research could have important implications for the long-term health and wellbeing of patients with AS by helping to sustain reductions in symptoms and enhancements to psychological well-being. In addition, this research could help improve the long-term outcomes of an existing NHS treatment programme. Once efficacy is established, the techniques of supporting the maintenance of physical activity identified could be applied to other interventions and populations in particular to those suffering from other musculoskeletal conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, or osteoarthritis.