

# Internet intervention supporting management of low back pain in primary care

<b>Submission date</b> 08/11/2013	<b>Recruitment status</b> No longer recruiting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
<b>Registration date</b> 08/11/2013	<b>Overall study status</b> Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
<b>Last Edited</b> 17/12/2019	<b>Condition category</b> Musculoskeletal Diseases	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

Low back pain is one of the most common and costly problems seen by general practitioners (GP). The aim of this study is to develop and test an interactive internet intervention specifically designed for patients having low back pain consulting their GP. Financial pressures on the NHS restrict access to face-to-face physiotherapy. An internet intervention may provide a unique and efficient means for offering education and advice for the self-management of low back pain. Patient feedback is used to inform amendments to the structure and content (phase 1). The acceptability of the intervention and the feasibility of this study are then assessed (phase 2).

### Who can participate?

Adult patients experiencing low back pain and who have access to the internet

### What does the study involve?

Participants are randomly allocated to one of three groups. The first group receives the internet intervention with telephone physiotherapist support, the second group receives the internet intervention without support, and the third group receives usual care from their GP. All patients are followed up after 3 months. Factors including recruitment rates, the extent of patient interaction with the intervention and patient dropout are assessed. Interviews are conducted with GPs, patients completing the intervention, and physiotherapists giving the telephone support.

### What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Using the internet allows patients immediate access to tailored information in their own homes. The multidisciplinary team of general practitioners and specialists works collaboratively with patients to develop and amend existing high quality educational materials, making them suitable for delivery in an interactive internet format. There are no risks associated with participation in the study.

### Where is the study run from?

The study is run from various GP surgeries around Hampshire and Wiltshire areas of the UK.

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?  
January 2015 to December 2015

Who is funding the study?  
National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) (UK)

Who is the main contact?  
Dr Adam Geraghty  
a.w.geraghty@soton.ac.uk

## Contact information

**Type(s)**  
Scientific

**Contact name**  
Dr Adam Geraghty

**ORCID ID**  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7984-8351>

**Contact details**  
Aldermoor Close  
Southampton  
United Kingdom  
SO16 5ST

## Additional identifiers

**Protocol serial number**  
14614

## Study information

**Scientific Title**  
Internet intervention supporting management of low back pain in primary care: a feasibility study

**Acronym**  
SupportBack

**Study objectives**  
This study will examine the feasibility of the trial design and acceptability of the internet intervention for management of low back pain in primary care.

**Ethics approval required**  
Old ethics approval format

**Ethics approval(s)**  
NRES Committee South Central - Southampton A, 25/06/2013, ref: 13/SC/0202

## Study design

Randomised; Interventional; Design type: Not specified

## Primary study design

Interventional

## Study type(s)

Treatment

## Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Topic: Primary Care Research Network for England; Subtopic: Not Assigned; Disease: All Diseases

## Interventions

Patients will consent to the study online prior to completing the baseline information and questionnaires. They will then be randomised to three groups automatically, using internet-based software:

1. Internet intervention with telephone physiotherapist support: SupportBack is an online intervention providing advice and support in getting active for people with low back pain. Provides tailored activity programme and self management advice
  2. Internet intervention with no telephone physiotherapist support
  3. Usual care from the GP
- Follow up will take place at 3 months.

## Intervention Type

Behavioural

## Primary outcome(s)

Recruitment rate; Timepoint(s): Baseline & 3 months

## Key secondary outcome(s)

1. Back pain care related resource use (i.e. no of GP visits) collected by simple questions; Timepoint(s): 3 months
2. Quality of life, measured with EuroQol EQ-5D; Timepoint(s): Baseline & 3 months
3. Objective measures of use of internet intervention; Timepoint(s): Baseline & 3 months
4. Patient experience & perceived usefulness of intervention, measured by qualitative interview /quantitative scale; Timepoint(s): Baseline & 3 months
5. Patient experience/perceived usefulness of phone support, measured by qualitative interview /quantitative scale; Timepoint(s): 3 months
6. Problematic Experiences of Therapy Scale (PETS); Timepoint(s): 3 months
7. Roland Morris Disability Questionnaire (RMDQ); Timepoint(s): Baseline & 3 months
8. Time off work via simple questions; Timepoint(s): Baseline & 3 months
9. Visual Analogue Scale for measuring pain as a process measure across the study; Timepoint(s): Baseline & 3 months

## Completion date

01/12/2015

## Eligibility

### Key inclusion criteria

1. Access to the internet and an active email address
  2. Current low back pain
  3. Prior presentation in primary care with low back pain (for those invited directly from practice lists)
  4. An ability to read/understand English without assistance
- Lower Age Limit 18 years

**Participant type(s)**

Patient

**Healthy volunteers allowed**

No

**Age group**

Adult

**Lower age limit**

18 years

**Sex**

All

**Total final enrolment**

87

**Key exclusion criteria**

1. Patients under 18
2. Clinical indicators of potentially serious spinal disease (indicated through a 'red flag' screen. Red flags are rare in primary care, thus we expect the majority of patients with low back pain to be eligible for this trial)
3. Those patients without the internet will be ineligible for this trial and will be offered usual care

**Date of first enrolment**

01/01/2015

**Date of final enrolment**

01/07/2015

**Locations****Countries of recruitment**

United Kingdom

England

**Study participating centre**

**University of Southampton**  
Southampton  
United Kingdom  
SO16 5ST

## Sponsor information

### Organisation

University of Southampton (UK)

### ROR

<https://ror.org/01ryk1543>

## Funder(s)

### Funder type

Government

### Funder Name

National Institute for Health Research

### Alternative Name(s)

National Institute for Health Research, NIHR Research, NIHRresearch, NIHR - National Institute for Health Research, NIHR (The National Institute for Health and Care Research), NIHR

### Funding Body Type

Government organisation

### Funding Body Subtype

National government

### Location

United Kingdom

## Results and Publications

### Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are/will be available upon request from Dr Adam Geraghty ([a.w.geraghty@soton.ac.uk](mailto:a.w.geraghty@soton.ac.uk))

### IPD sharing plan summary

Available on request

## Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
<a href="#">Results article</a>	results	09/03/2018		Yes	No
<a href="#">Results article</a>	qualitative results	01/09/2020	17/12/2019	Yes	No
<a href="#">HRA research summary</a>			28/06/2023	No	No
<a href="#">Participant information sheet</a>	Participant information sheet	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes