

Research Space

Conference poster

Strategies to help people with back pain become life-long swimmers: learning from all stakeholders through the Delphi technique

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Strategies to help people with back pain become life-long swimmers: Learning from all stakeholders through the Delphi technique



People with back pain



Swimming teachers



Physiotherapists

Introduction: Group exercise is recommended in the NICE guidelines for people with back pain; swimming is often advised by health professionals as it offers cardiovascular and musculoskeletal training and can have a positive impact on mental health. Exercise is only a useful management tool for people with back pain if it is undertaken on a regular basis; it is recognised that people may need to adopt specific strategies if they are to become life-long swimmers.

Method: People with back pain, swimming teachers and physiotherapists helped develop a series of swimming lessons for people with back pain using the Delphi technique. Participants were asked open questions in the first round and closed questions in the second and third round and the responses from each round were shared with the group. This poster presents the findings relating to the final question, which asked what strategies might help people with back pain become life-long swimmers.

Results: The infographics below show the strategies that the participants thought might help people with back pain become life-long swimmers. The colour illustrates where at least 70% consensus was achieved; people with back pain are represented in purple, swimming teachers in green and physiotherapists in blue.



Developing a peer support group



Discounted pool fees



Ensuring swimming sessions fun and sociable



Setting goals and making an action plan



Providing information about local pools



Offering session for family or friend to join in



Integration with standard classes in local pool



Further drop in sessions



Positive feedback from instructor



Reflection of benefits beyond back pain



Email or text reminders



Paperwork to support learning



Signpost to adult only sessions

Conclusion: The Delphi technique enables researchers and participants to learn from one another and to have an equal voice, without pressure to conform to the group opinion. All stakeholders should be involved in research, the Delphi technique should be considered prior to clinical trials to ensure that interventions are acceptable and fit for purpose.