

POSTER ABSTRACT

Armed To Escape Co Vid 19: An evaluation of the impact of COVID-19 on a novel feasibility study to evaluate the effect of a self-management weight, education and exercise programme on pain, weight and physical function in patients with knee OA at the primary/secondary interface.

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Aim

The original aim of this study was to test the feasibility of running a randomised controlled trial to evaluate the effectiveness of a combined education, weight management, exercise and self management programme on the outcomes of pain and physical function in patients with knee osteoarthritis. This feasibility study was sited at the primary/secondary interface in Meath and was interrupted by Co Vid 19. We used this opportunity to measure the qualitative 'lived in' experiences of the group on the effect of Co-Vid 19 and their appetite for virtual health.

Participants

32 patients with knee osteoarthritis were recruited from the combined primary/secondary care waiting list in Our Lady's Hospital, Navan and Meath primary care services. 16 patients completed the first part of the study and 13 of them completed the semi structured interviews.

Results

15 patients were reassessed after the first stage which was interrupted by Co Vid 19. The mean age attending the class was 61.7 years with a standard deviation of 10.6 years. The mean BMI pre intervention was 38.1 kg/m² with a standard deviation of 7.2kg/ m². A paired samples t-test was conducted on SPSS to evaluate the effect of the three- week intervention on weight, waist, BMI, stiffness, pain, activities of daily living, and mental health and well-being. There was a statistically significant improvement in pain, activities of daily living, quality of life and mental health. and well- being scores from time one to time 2.

13 patients completed the semi structured interviews and four major themes emerged from the interviews; Enablers and barriers to coping in lockdown for this patient group, Benefits of the ARMED programme structure to increasing physical activity, Benefit of the ARMED programme structure to weight management and Enablers and barriers to redesigning the programme for online delivery.

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Conclusion

The evaluation of preliminary data from this feasibility study supported the three- week intervention combining education, exercise and weight management in this patient group even during a pandemic. It would also support the need for further evaluation of the total programme in more normal times. Based on the results of the qualitative interviews we have now redesigned our programme to present it virtually. This feasibility study gave us the evidence needed to redesign the programme and we hope to present the results of our virtual feasibility study early in 2021.