

TrackActive: app for supporting exercise programmes in a MSK physiotherapy clinic

Quick intro to yourself and any contact details you're happy to share ...

My name is Anthony Brightwell and I am the co-director, along with Rob Foyster (MCSP), of Spectrum Health, a private physiotherapy clinic in the City of London.

What physio services do you provide? (e.g. specialty, conditions, location, patient demographics)

Our clinic provides private outpatient MSK physiotherapy.

We treat each case as a team, rather than as an individual therapist. Between the lead physiotherapists, and our specialised team of assistants we treat all manner of injuries or conditions from chronic and acute back and neck pain, overuse injuries to all major joints as well as post-operative rehabilitation.

What tools are you using to deliver your physio services digitally?

We like to offer as many ways of monitoring progress as possible. Not only as it helps show insurance companies and referring consultants alike that we are treating their patients effectively but helps to engage the patient that bit more and have them believe they are getting somewhere.

-We use TrackActive a huge amount. This is an app that allows us to share individually tailored exercise programs with each patient and they can log in and work through their physio exercises as they go. Each exercise has pictures and videos of how to use them as well as a clear written description. We can log number of sets and reps for each exercise and we can also see if/when the patient has done the program and how hard they found each exercise.

-We use HUDL (an app on tablet and smartphones) as a great way of recording video capture and breaking it down to see mechanics at each joint etc. I use this a lot to perform running analysis for my running-based patients who are looking to pound the pavement again ASAP.

-We also use an image capture software called ISLA visual record to take snapshots of a joint or swollen area and can monitor week-by-week progress in range of motion (ROM) or swelling, bruising around an acute injury or wound. We can also share this securely with GP's or the patient's consultant.

How have these services replaced face to face contact?

TrackActive has been a great way of being able to progress a patient through different stages of their rehab exercises and ensuring that they can access them easily. Sometimes if a patient cannot make it into the clinic (whether they are traveling, too busy, or confined to their home due to a global pandemic) this platform is a great way to check-in and update a patient's activity levels and exercise progress. Prior to using this app, patients often forgot the exercises or performed them incorrectly. This app minimizes the chance of this happening.

What is the clinician's experience of using the digital tools?

The TrackActive tool is very easy to use. It has a simple log in process and you just click to add to a specified exercise program that can be tailored to each individual. Even if there is an exercise that is not in the pre-populated library, there are simple steps to “quick create” your own exercise and add it to the patient’s program.

It is also really handy to refer back to at the patient’s next appointment to see where you are at regarding their level of exercises and reps etc.

Do you have any patient feedback on digital physio service offer?

Our patients love it. Many of them find that working through the app as they go about their physio homework is really helpful, not only to make sure they haven’t forgotten any of the exercises, but also to check they are doing them correctly.

Any top tips to others exploring using digital tools in physio services?

I would just advice other physios to embrace it. Each of these tools can be used differently to suit you. But all in all, they all help us track our patients’ progress and also offer better evidence of progress for other parties (insurances and doctors) than just written notes with figures and remarks of positive or negative tests as objective outcome measures. It is another great tool in my toolkit!