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Medication-free digital Pain Management Programme now published on the NHS Apps Library

The unique and evidence-based **Pathway through Pain** online course has passed multiple stringent assessments in addition to demonstrating clinical effectiveness in the self-management of chronic/persistent musculoskeletal pain.

[Pathway through Pain](#) joins Wellmind Health's [Be Mindful](#) Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy programme on the NHS Apps Library

Wellmind Health's digital Pain Management Programme (PMP), **Pathway through Pain**, successfully completed the rigorous assessment process for inclusion in the [NHS Apps Library](#). The NHS Apps Library helps patients and the public find trusted health and wellbeing digital tools that have been assessed to be clinically safe and secure to use, to help ensure they are better able to take an active role in managing their own mental and physical health.

The Pathway is an effective alternative to the prescribing of opioids for chronic pain. The recently published draft [NICE guideline](#) on chronic pain said that GPs should not prescribe opioids and certain other medicines to patients suffering from chronic pain due to a lack of evidence for their effectiveness and the risk of harm.

Pathway through Pain is the only digital PMP in the world. The medication-free, flexible online Pathway has been clinically proven to achieve outstanding and long-term outcomes with high feedback and satisfaction ratings. It educates patients on pain physiology, pain psychology and pain self-management and contains elements such as guided practice on exercise, relaxation, mindfulness, CBT and changing unhelpful ways of thinking and habits. Participants are supported and encouraged in practising these skills in their homes, to become expert in their application and in integrating them into their daily routines.

In addition to proving clinical effectiveness, Wellmind Health's unique digital PMP satisfied [rigorous NHS quality standards](#) across a number of key areas. Approved NHS Apps Library apps and digital tools are tested to ensure they meet the high level of security required to handle clinical and personally sensitive data, and satisfy usability and accessibility, interoperability and technical stability requirements.

Pathway through Pain is already provided to patients across the UK, from GP Surgeries and Pain Clinics to IAPT and Community Health Services. A [2019 research study](#) published in the British Journal of Pain found that patients who completed the Pathway made significant improvements across various outcome measures, and also reported a large average healthcare cost saving of £240 per patient in the year after the intervention.

Richard Latham, CEO of Wellmind Health, said, "We've been working with regional NHS pain services to achieve the highest clinical standards for Pathway through Pain since its launch back in 2011, so it's exciting to have this recognition at a national level. The NHS continues to lead the way in promoting the benefits of using apps to effectively self-manage chronic



health conditions. The ability of patients to self-manage chronic pain effectively has become increasingly important since the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to reduce face-to-face contact.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors

About Wellmind Health

Wellmind Health has provided clinically proven digital Pathways since 2011. The company’s on-demand medication-free interventions guide participants to improved, long-term outcomes. NHS-approved and NHS-trusted, Wellmind Health’s digital courses are designed and delivered by experts.

The **Pathway through Pain** and **Be Mindful** Pathways are proven to deliver significant and measurable long-term results, backed up by rigorous academic and clinical research studies, outstanding feedback from participants and providers, and confidential analytics. Course completers achieve outstanding reductions in levels of depression, stress and anxiety and significant improvements in the self-management of chronic pain.

Wellmind Health’s founders recognised the incredible potential of digital mental health training by connecting their background in web production with efforts to improve their own mental health. The experienced team is dedicated to providing high-quality digital interventions, analytics and reporting that make a real and lasting impact on real lives, healthcare services, companies and society.

About Pathway through Pain

Pathway through Pain is the only clinically validated digital Pain Management Programme (PMP). The medication-free Pathway has helped thousands of people take control and better manage chronic/persistent musculoskeletal pain since its launch in 2011.

Pain medicine experts teach participants a new approach to pain, empowering self-management of pain for an improved quality of life with pain no longer in control. The Pathway is a standalone intervention or works in conjunction with existing treatments to help reduce the need for drug prescriptions and face-to-face appointments. Pathway through Pain has been shown to deliver a 45% reduction in healthcare costs.

Published clinical research and outstanding participant feedback evidence a 24% reduction of problems in daily life and a 20% boost to quality of life while 78% would recommend the Pathway to others with persistent pain.

About Be Mindful

Be Mindful is the only clinically validated digital Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) programme, developed with the pioneers of MBCT. The confidential, on-demand and personalised Pathway is NHS-approved and enables lasting improvements in mental

wellbeing. Clinical and academic research demonstrates the outstanding results of this medication-free online intervention. Participants enjoy outstanding reductions in stress (68%), anxiety (58%) and depression (40%).

Be Mindful is available on both the EMIS App Library and the NHS Apps Library, having passed rigorous NHS quality standards for clinical effectiveness, safety, security, usability and accessibility. The Pathway was highlighted for its high level of evidence (Nesta standards) in a RAND report for Public Health England into workplace health and wellbeing.

The scale of the problem

- Chronic pain costs the UK billions of pounds every year. Back pain alone overall costs £10bn for the UK economy.¹
- 141.4 million working days were lost due to sickness or injury in the UK in 2018, equivalent to 4.4 days per worker. Musculoskeletal problems accounted for nearly 19.7% of the total (27.8 million days) and mental health conditions 12.4% (17.5 million days).²
- The annual cost to employers of poor mental health is £33 billion-£42 billion - over half of the cost coming from presenteeism – when individuals are less productive due to poor mental health in work - with additional costs from sickness absence and staff turnover.³
- Back pain alone accounts for 40% of sickness absence in the NHS.⁴
- Mental health problems – typically stress, anxiety and depression – account for 40% of Legal & General’s income protection claims.⁵
- In 2017 to 2018, 11.5 million adults in England (26% of the adult population) received, and had dispensed, one or more prescriptions for any of the strong painkillers, antidepressants and sleeping tablets within the scope of the review (PHE Prescribed medicines review). In too many cases patients were using them for longer than "clinically" appropriate, where the drugs would have simply stopped working effectively or where the risks could outweigh the benefits. Half of people who were using the drugs in March 2018 had been on them for a year or more with about a quarter having used them for at least three years.⁶
- A number of commonly used drug treatments for chronic primary pain have little or no evidence that they work and can potentially cause harm so shouldn’t be prescribed, NICE has said in its draft clinical guideline published August 2020 on the assessment and management of chronic pain in over 16s.⁷

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¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10601677>

² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/labourproductivity/articles/sicknessabsenceinthelabourmarket/2018>

³ <https://www2.deloitte.com/uk/en/pages/public-sector/articles/mental-health-employers-review.html>

⁴ <http://www.nhsemployers.org/-/media/Employers/Documents/Retain-and-improve/Back-in-Work/Back-in-work-part-1-Introduction-and-key-messages-web-final-25-March.pdf?la=en&hash=EFA3598B5B049291C6F3B0CF9B8AFE34529C5C60m>

⁵ <https://www.ft.com/content/8c949168-e98e-11e8-a34c-663b3f553b35>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prescribed-medicines-review-report/prescribed-medicines-review-summary>

⁷ <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/GID-NG10069/documents/draft-guideline>