

## Digital Tools Case Study

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

Reach Active was born nearly 3 years ago to address two main problems with MSK care - access to high quality evidence based care (if you're reading this you're certain to be keeping on top of the latest guidelines, but we all know therapists who still use out of date techniques and modalities!) and motivation, there are often long waiting times to overcome and appointments at inconvenient times.

[www.reachactive.co](http://www.reachactive.co) support@reachactive.co

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

MSK physiotherapy assessment and treatment for people with back or neck pain aged over 16. Patient experience is high on the agenda at Reach - we pride ourselves on having an exceptionally user friendly tool. We have had patients from 17 years - 82 years successfully reduce their pain with our app. Because we are a digital only service there are no location restrictions, all you need is a smartphone and an internet connection!

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

An app - [Back & neck physio by Reach](#)

### How have these services replaced face to face contact?

Assessment: The patient journey starts with an in-app physiotherapy assessment which includes sections on pain, function, psychosocial status and general health. The assessment is used to screen for serious pathology, complex medical or psychosocial associations with the pain, in which case we will signpost the patient to the appropriate service. Where available we use validated questionnaires, e.g. Keele STart back to guide our decision making, so there is no requirement for a face-to-face (either in-person or via a screen) consultation.

Treatment: Following the assessment a personalised exercise programme is created. There are detailed instruction videos to follow, and reminders can be set to support habit forming. We use an in-app chat function to enable daily support, motivation and encouragement between physiotherapist and patient. There is also a "learn" function where short pain education articles are gradually released to support self efficacy.

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

It is certainly a different way of working however there are huge benefits over a standard in person clinic. With the in-app chat function we can be available to answer a question or concern or offer some encouragement just at the moment when a patient needs it, not a week or two later at their next clinic appointment. We get feedback from the patient after every time they

complete their exercise programme, so we can adapt and progress it quickly and responsively. We also have access to a huge amount of recovery data, which can be so difficult to collect in clinic situations.

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

Recent app store review

“This app has genuinely worked for me. I’ve been to physio in person and also tried other workouts etc in the past but struggled to stick to it, or felt like they weren’t the right exercises for the pain I was feeling, which has been quite frustrating at times. The Reach physios are with you everyday to encourage, support and gently push you to do your exercises which has helped a lot. They’ve tailored things to suit me every step of the way, and I feel so much better - less pain and much more confident. I'd definitely recommend trying it.”

We have more reviews on our [app store page](#) and [Trustpilot](#).

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

- Focus on the problems of the end pain sufferer and the user experience.
- Give people the tools and information to be able to self-manage as much as possible, because they can handle it and they get so much motivation once they see they are helping themselves.
- Involve non-medical people in the product process, they are great at helping to challenge the traditional way of doing things.