

Joint Pain Advisor Case Study

Why did you decide to see the Joint Pain Advisor (JPA)?

I was on lots tablets, popping them whenever I was in pain, taking the maximum a day and I was having trouble walking. I got involved with Greenwich Live Well service and they pointed me to the JPA. I have arthritis in my knee – there is no cure for it other than a new knee. Unfortunately I'm too young and the GP said you're not bad enough. I said I don't want a new knee anyway – if I can manage with what I've got which I can. It's more about doing what I can do.



Pictured above: Chris Smith, JPA service user

What advice did the Advisor give you?

She suggested I do some sit to stands, back slides and knee steps – just to strengthen my knee up. I'm now on no tablets and I do the exercises 3 times a week – I probably should do them five days! The JPA also suggested walking more. I had started but carried on more through Greenwich Healthy walks – I now lead the walk. It is really good – the fact I lead the walk makes me go out.

What's changed since using the JPA service?

I've stopped the tablets – I can't remember the last time I took them for my knee which is fantastic. It was stopping me from doing stuff. I'm just back from an exercise class – a Livewell service 'Move to Music' for over 50s, which is great. Since JPA I can walk for miles now. I now walk up to the High Street – I measured it in the car it is 2 miles there and back. I walk up there, go and have a coffee – and it is just a coffee now whereas before it was a bacon sandwich too and walk back. I have an allotment too, it used to be a 20 minute walk away and now it's a 10 minute walk - obviously its not changed in distance just that I've got healthier and able to walk better on my knee.

What did you like about the JPA? Anything you didn't like?

Everything. She was friendly, helpful with all the advice. I didn't feel I couldn't say anything to her. I was really comfortable in her presence. She knew what she was talking about. She was definitely interested in what was wrong with me and how to try and help me, the suggestions, not just about the joint pain, it was food and exercise classes too. I was doing a quite bit already but she helped me carry on.

It could have been done once a month, again for my reassurance, yeah that was the only thing. Other than that she was nice to talk to, a great service.

Was it an issue that she wasn't a clinician?

No it wasn't. Since I had my x-ray I've seen an NHS physio who told me to do exactly what the JPA told me to do. Sometimes, maybe subconsciously I wasn't sure I was doing the right thing because I wasn't been told by a doctor or physio, so although I was doing the right thing, I wasn't sure I was. At the start the exercises hurt a bit and I thought am I doing more damage than good. But obviously the more I done it (exercises) the less it hurt then I thought she must know what she's talking about as it's not hurting.

Would you recommend JPA instead of or alongside 'usual' care e.g. GP?

Alongside. Definitely, because when I had my x-ray – it was a two week wait for diagnosis, then obviously it was 'you need physio' and that was another month. But I was already doing the exercises as I'd been to the JPA. Getting to the JPA clinic was an easier referral.

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