**Specific Question:**
Do patients with long term Musculoskeletal or rheumatology conditions that attend regular hydrotherapy sessions utilise NHS services less (e.g. clinical review with GP/Consultants/Allied Health Professionals) compared to those who do not attend regular hydrotherapy?

**Clinical bottom line**

The search revealed no evidence to answer this question. Further research is required.

**Why is this important?**

Often patients with long term conditions are unable to complete land based exercises due to pain. An alternate way of exercising is in a hydrotherapy pool. Patients can perform cardiovascular, muscle strengthening and flexibility exercises in the pool. Benefits of exercising in a pool include increased flexibility, increased muscle strength, improved function and reduced pain. Treatments for long term conditions include exercise as part of their self-management strategies. However access to hydrotherapy pools is limited. The current policy at a local hospital allows patients to access the hydrotherapy pool however if patients require on-going sessions they have to attend outside exercise groups.

**Search timeframe** 2007-2017  
**Inclusion criteria**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population and Setting</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Search terms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adult and children</td>
<td>Patients (adult and children) who are regular users of hydrotherapy with long term conditions including: Musculoskeletal Osteoarthritis Ankylosing Spondylitis Arthritis Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA) Group Attendance Chronic Back Pain Registered charities Self-help support groups. Self Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patients with long term MSK conditions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osteoarthritis. Rheumatoid Arthritis Ankylosing Spondylitis Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Attendance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronic Back Pain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered charities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-help support groups. Self Care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Intervention or Exposure (ie what is being tested) | Hydrotherapy  
Regular Hydrotherapy  
Long Term hydrotherapy  
Any water based therapy | Hydrotherapy  
Hydrothermatal Therapy  
Hydrotherapy Methods  
Aquatic Therapy  
Aquatic Exercise(s)  
Aquatic Physiotherapy  
Water Therapeutics  
Aquasize  
Brine Baths  
Thalassotherapy (sea water)  
Any form of water based therapy |
|---|---|
| Comparison, if any | No hydrotherapy  
Land based exercise | No Hydrotherapy  
Land based therapy  
Physiotherapy  
Complementary/Alternative Therapy  
Electrotherapy  
Home Exercises |
| Outcomes of interest | EuroQol 5D (EQ5D)  
Quality adjusted life years (QALY)  
Clinical visits  
Health care utilisation  
Reduced pain  
Cost effectiveness  
Physical function | Quality of Life  
Health Care Utilisation  
Quality Adjusted Life Years (QALY)  
Health Year Equivalent (HYE)  
Disability Adjusted Life Years  
EuroQol 5D (EQ5D)  
Short Form-36 Health Survey (SF-36)  
SF-6  
Health Care Resource  
Reduced Clinical Visits  
Cost Utility Analysis  
Health Consultation  
Reduced Medication Use  
Health Care Costs  
Economic Outcomes  
Cost Benefit Analysis  
Cost Effective  
Clinical Effectiveness  
Cost Savings  
Disability Outcomes |
| Types of studies | RCTs and SRs |
**Date of search** February 2017

**Routine Databases Searched**
Cochrane Systematic Reviews, DARE/HTA/NHSEED, Medline, CINAHL, Embase, AMED, PsychInfo, NHS Evidence, PubMed, Duets UK, HMIC, Health Business Elite, British Nursing Index, Trip Database

**Results**

![Diagram showing search results]

155 unique studies downloaded

14 potentially relevant

141 excluded studies

0 included studies
All 14 excluded, No relevant RCTs or SRs identified

**Summary**

This CAT did not find any published RCTs or Systematic Reviews to answer this question

**Implications for Practice/research**

Future research is needed to see if patients with long term MSK or rheumatology conditions that attend regular hydrotherapy sessions outside of clinical care, for example as a member of a support or charity group, utilise NHS services less compared to those who do not attend hydrotherapy regularly.

**What would you tweet? (140 characters)**

Do regular hydrotherapy users utilise NHS services less? No evidence was found and future research is needed.