

Our Ref: ID 1516

NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group
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Re: Freedom of Information Request – Back related referrals

Thank you for your request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which was received into this office on 26th September 2019.

You Asked for:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am requesting the following information on access to NICE-recommended non-pharmacological therapy for the management of low back pain and/or sciatica:

1. Psychological therapies (using a cognitive behavioural approach):
 - a. Are GPs able to refer NHS patients with chronic pain to this service?
 - b. How many NHS patients were referred in 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 (to date)?
 - c. What was the average waiting time in 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 (to date)?
2. Manual therapy (spinal manipulation, mobilisation or soft tissue techniques such as massage):
 - a. Are GPs able to refer NHS patients with chronic pain to this service?
 - b. How many NHS patients were referred in 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 (to date)?
 - c. What was the average waiting time in 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 (to date)?
3. Group exercise programme (biomechanical, aerobic, mind–body or a combination of approaches):
 - a. Are GPs able to refer NHS patients with chronic pain to this service?
 - b. How many NHS patients were referred in 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 (to date)?
 - c. What was the average waiting time in 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 (to date)?
4. Pain Management Programmes:
 - a. Are GPs able to refer NHS patients with chronic pain to this service?
 - b. How many NHS patients were referred in 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 (to date)?
 - c. What was the average waiting time in 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 (to date)?

Our Response:

1. Psychological therapies (using a cognitive behavioural approach):
 - a. Yes.

- b. NHS Wirral Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are unable to identify referrals or activity data at the level of psychological therapies for management of lower back pain.
 - c. This information is not recorded in a reportable format.
- 2. Manual therapy (spinal manipulation, mobilisation or soft tissue techniques such as massage):
 - a. Yes, via the Musculoskeletal (MSK) Integrated Triage Service.
 - b. Activity coming through individual contract dashboards is not recorded at that level of information and outpatient data does not use that level of detail.
 - c. Please see the answer to question 1c.
- 3. Group exercise programme (biomechanical, aerobic, mind–body or a combination of approaches):
 - a. Please see the answer to question 2a.
 - b. Please see the answer for question 2b.
 - c. Please see the answer to question 1c.
- 4. Pain Management Programmes:
 - a. Please see the answer to question 2a.
 - b. The CCG does not receive data on pain management programmes specifically for lower back pain, just overall activity, through a contract dashboard. Regarding inpatient and day case activity, there were 553 episodes identified between 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 that mentioned ‘back pain’ in their description. Of these 553 episodes, 397 had no procedure code listed against them at all so we are unable to confirm if they received any treatment. The remainder tended to have a code for radio-imaging of some sort (MRI, etc.)
 - c. The CCG are unable to identify waiting times at that level of detail.

We hope this information is useful, however if you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Corporate Affairs Team (contact details at the top of this letter)

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