

Introduction

Joint health is fundamental to our wellbeing and impacts various aspects of everyday life such as activity, exercise, work, education, travel and independence. Conditions that cause joint pain such as osteoarthritis (OA) and rheumatoid arthritis (RA) are the most common musculoskeletal disorders and cause significant burden of disease in the UK, accounting for a large proportion of disability adjusted life years (DALYs). Chronic joint pain is a leading cause for workplace absence (reference number 1).

The economic impact is anticipated to worsen in the UK with estimated cost of working days lost due to OA and RA expected to reach over £3.43 billion by 2030 (reference number 2). Those living in the most deprived areas in Scotland are more than two times as likely to develop a long term musculoskeletal (MSK) condition compared to those living in the least deprived areas. Obesity is closely linked to the development of joint diseases such as OA and psoriatic arthritis with 70% of adults suffering from a long term MSK condition having either an overweight or obese BMI (reference number 3). This is concerning due to increased prevalence of obesity in Scotland. Clinicians, particularly in primary care need the skills, knowledge, resources and experience to either prevent or optimally manage such conditions, for example with relevant lifestyle and weight management advice. Signposting patients to resources such as [The importance of exercise | NRAS | Physical Health](#) may help