

# Patient Champions in JIGSAW-E

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## How did you get involved in JIGSAW-E?

In 2009 I was sent by my GP for physio treatment on my knees, because my doctor suspected that I might have osteoarthritis. The physiotherapist I saw recommended that I get involved with a new trial taking place at Keele University, looking at the benefits of effective exercise for osteoarthritis.



Since then, I have attended many small group meetings concerned with osteoarthritis research and in May 2016 I was invited to join the [LINK group](#), ([Lay Involvement in Knowledge Mobilisation](#)), which is a group concerned with the implementation of the research done at Keele. The LINK group is a proactive group made up of patients, lay members and health care professionals who provide a forum for implementation issues at Keele. We are actively engaged in



the transfer of research findings into health care practice and one of the projects we work on is JIGSAW-E. I was asked to be a Patient Champion for the project because of my role in the LINK group and my own personal experiences of osteoarthritis.

The possibilities for this group are endless and I enjoy working with the group to help the project team to overcome implementation problems.

## What is your role as Patient Champion?

As an osteoarthritis Patient Champion and a LINK member, I have been closely associated with the JIGSAW-E project since its launch. I feel that my role is as an advocate for other osteoarthritis patients. The role is an extremely important one, as it enables patients like me to get 'closer to the action' and have input into the implementation and real life application of medical research.

Nothing has stimulated my imagination more than JIGSAW-E or the LINK group. Being a Patient Champion has given me a unique opportunity to engage with health care professionals and other patients both in this country and internationally. Engagement always works best when people feel valued as part of a team, therefore I think that Patient Champions have an important role in JIGSAW-E, actively and enthusiastically promoting the four innovations for the treatment of osteoarthritis. Alongside Clinical Champions, Patient Champions help to drive the delivery of high quality services for patients with arthritis.

We encourage other patients to be aware of the JIGSAW-E self management approach and we help to get the message across that this service is available to patients. We have done this by being part of Task and Finish groups to produce marketing materials for GP practices that use the JIGSAW-E approach. We have worked on poster designs and GP screen displays. We've also helped to put together hand osteoarthritis information sheets and we have reviewed the osteoarthritis quality indicators for both the UK and Norway. Most recently, we have helped to write the patient content part of the JIGSAW-E website. Along with the project team, I also met with the Telford and Wrekin Clinical Commissioning Group to push forward with the implementation of JIGSAW UK across their 32 GP practices.

I am one of two Patient Champions in the UK and together we have been a part of the International JIGSAW-E Community of Practice, as part of the [JIGSAW-E Patient Panel](#). We attended the

two day launch event at Keele and met other osteoarthritis patients from across the five countries and learned about the differences to health care in each country and challenges faced by patients there.



When patients are encouraged to talk about their experiences and provide constructive criticism we can open a whole new conversation and learn from each other. The more we get involved the more tools we have to make a difference. There has

been plenty of opportunities to contribute and I have enjoyed the conversations with the partner countries, particularly around the adoption of the guidebook in other health care systems. It is important for us to share our knowledge with each other. Patients are the most under used resource in any health care system, but in JIGSAW-E there are no boundaries between us, we help to keep the project relevant and in the end we are just one body of people trying to make a difference to people with arthritis across Europe.



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