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# Rapid Access Online Active BackCare(ABC) Program

Aoife Collins, Senior Physiotherapist.



# The Rapid-access Online Active Back Care (ABC) Program

Aoife Collins



Seirbhís Sláinte  
Níos Fearr  
á Forbairt

Building a  
Better Health  
Service

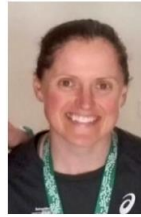
Spark Ignite  
Application 2021

# Winner National Individual Award Spark Ignite 2021



Spark Ignite

Hi Health Innovation Hub Ireland



## About the Innovator

Aioife Collins is a senior physiotherapist working in South Lee Primary Care, Cork. She has 17 years' experience working as a physiotherapist. Aioife holds a BSc in Physiotherapy and an MSc in Older Person Rehabilitation. She has specialist training in Back Pain management and treatment stratification and is the Local Champion for Telehealth Implementation for Physiotherapy, Cork South Lee. Aioife was the winner of the Individual category HSE-HiHI Spark Ignite National Final 2021.



## About Health Innovation Hub Ireland

Health services in Ireland and across the world are increasingly seeking innovations in health-related technology, products and services to drive improvements in the quality, access and value of healthcare delivery. Health Innovation Hub Ireland (HiHI) brings enterprises and healthcare professionals together to test, validate and help commercialise innovative technologies, products and services, while enabling greater innovation in healthcare delivery. HiHI supports the building of an innovation culture within the health service through a suite of knowledge building resources and guidance for healthcare professionals on the key steps from ideation to



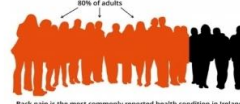
## The Healthcare Challenge

Back pain is the most commonly reported health condition in Ireland, 80% of Irish adults experience back pain at some point in their life. Back pain is estimated to cost the country more than cancer and diabetes treatments combined. The economic burden of low back pain is estimated to be around €2.8 billion in the UK per year. Previous research found that disability payments for back pain amounted to €348 million per year, and 27% of people who receive income support do so due to low back pain (LBP), making it the highest single reason for people claiming income support.

years and even when seen, less than 10% require surgery, with the remaining 90% discharged back in to primary care, delaying their engagement with physiotherapy.

Various approaches to diagnose, treat and manage LBP have arisen, leading to an exponential increase in health care costs. Attempts in recent decades to treat back pain by treating the spine itself through injections or surgery have had only marginal success. Paradoxically, this trend has been associated with a concurrent increase in disability and chronicity. Therefore, the HSE faces enormous challenges, with both the escalating disability burden and financial impact of LBP.

People with persistent back pain are often referred to an orthopaedic specialist, this wait can be up to four



Back pain is the most commonly reported health condition in Ireland.

Spark Ignite 1/2

## The solution

Aioife's innovation is the Rapid-Access Online Back Care (ABC) Programme. Aioife plans to deliver her award winning, evidence-based group programme via an integrated software platform delivered by Salaso Health Solutions. Moving from a traditional-care model to an innovative digital-care model, this easy-to-use, GDPR-compliant software will provide a patient portal and smartphone application, linked with a platform for the physiotherapist who will devise and manage the programme.

By using an online format, clients who struggle to attend a clinic can access their physiotherapist without the exertion or expense of leaving home. Clients will be able to repeat the programme themselves at any time, thus encouraging self-empowerment, and avoid ineffective and costly passive treatments. The adoption of a digital programme will increase access opportunities for all patients, particularly those living in remote areas.



Above: Aioife Collins with HiHI Interim director Dr Danya Mulcahy.

10:32

VoLTE 4G LTE 77%

THE IRISH TIMES

## Innovation

# Back care programme scoops top health innovation award

Winning project developed by Cork physiotherapist Aioife Collins

## Expand



The competition attracted more than 180 applications from HSE staff. Photograph: iStock

Ciará O'Brien

Thu Jun 17 2021 - 16:12



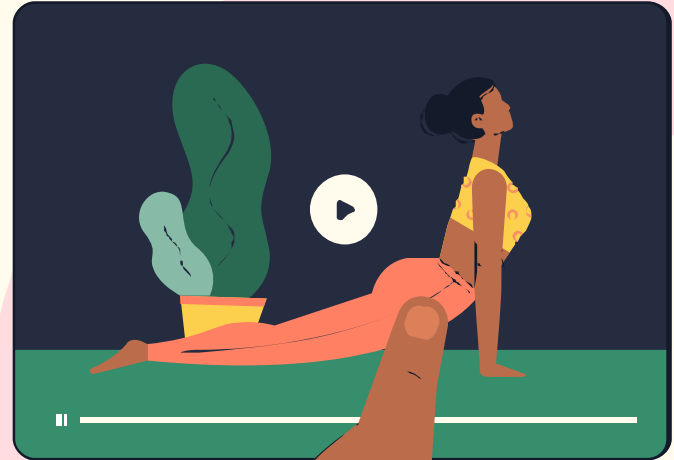
# Progress 2022-2023

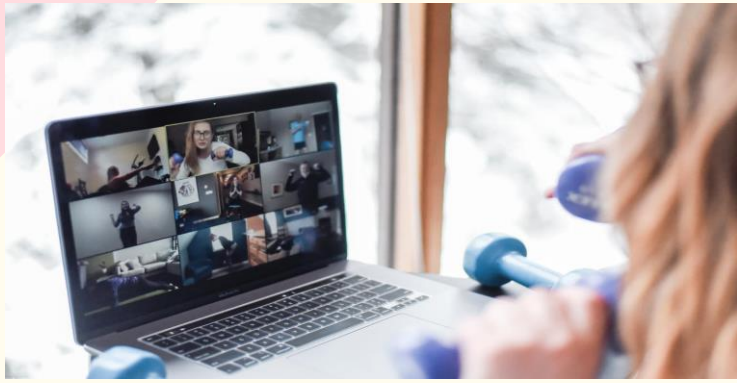
Pilot Testing

Hybrid model

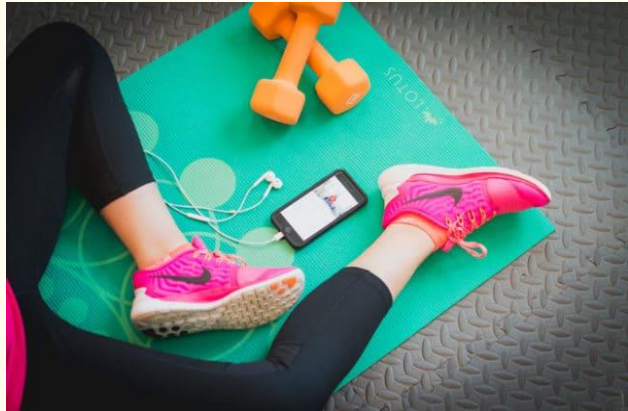
Funds from Spark Ignite Program spent on equipment-dedicated to ABC program.

Moved to new PCC Building-new IT set up- Better Wi-Fi access.





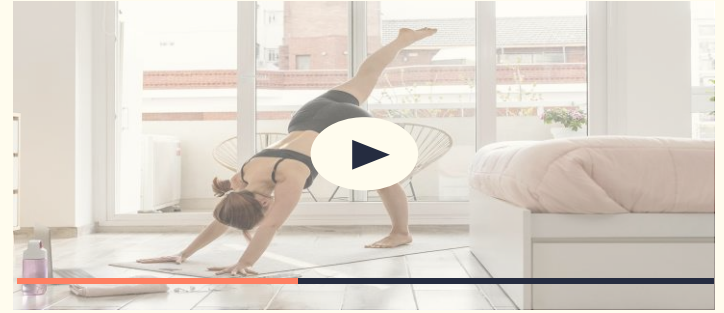
# Pilot Testing



# Hybrid Model



**Inperson  
Rehab in  
clinic and  
Online Rehab  
at home**



✘

**Hybrid Pilot  
groups completed**

**Positive Data**



**Data Collection  
Quantitative and  
Qualitative**

# Successes-Online ABC



## Better Local Pathway

Educational work with GPs/ referrers re language/advice given, less time on w.list.



## Fewer Repeat Referrals

Better education, awareness, fewer repeats



## Client Outcomes

28% reduction in pain,

72% Improvement in QoL

30% less disability,

85% extremely satisfied

3 avoiding surgery



## Collaboration ✖

Working with CSP in Pain Mgmt & with Pain Team SIUVH re Pathway. ✖



## Pool

Clients use local pool at reduced rates. ○



# Qualitative Feedback

‘What did you find good about the ABC? What was not so good about the ABC?’

‘I like mixture of classes & online homework’

‘Easy to follow exercises on computer, love the videos’

‘I can over the advice at home & share it with my family’.

‘Hard to concentrate in class, glad to watch video at home’.

‘exercise was hard but good to do, joints feel freer, tired after class’

‘thought I had cancer, so relieved to learn and manage pain better’





# Challenges

## ✖ Funding

Cost of setting up  
Program online.

## ✖ Other Demands on service

Huge increase of  
referrals for frail older  
adults post COVID

-prioritised on w.lists.

Collaborators have  
similar demands.



## IT Literacy & Availability ✖

Cost, availability, confidence,  
tech issues, patchy WiFi.

Language Barriers

## Recruitment of Physios

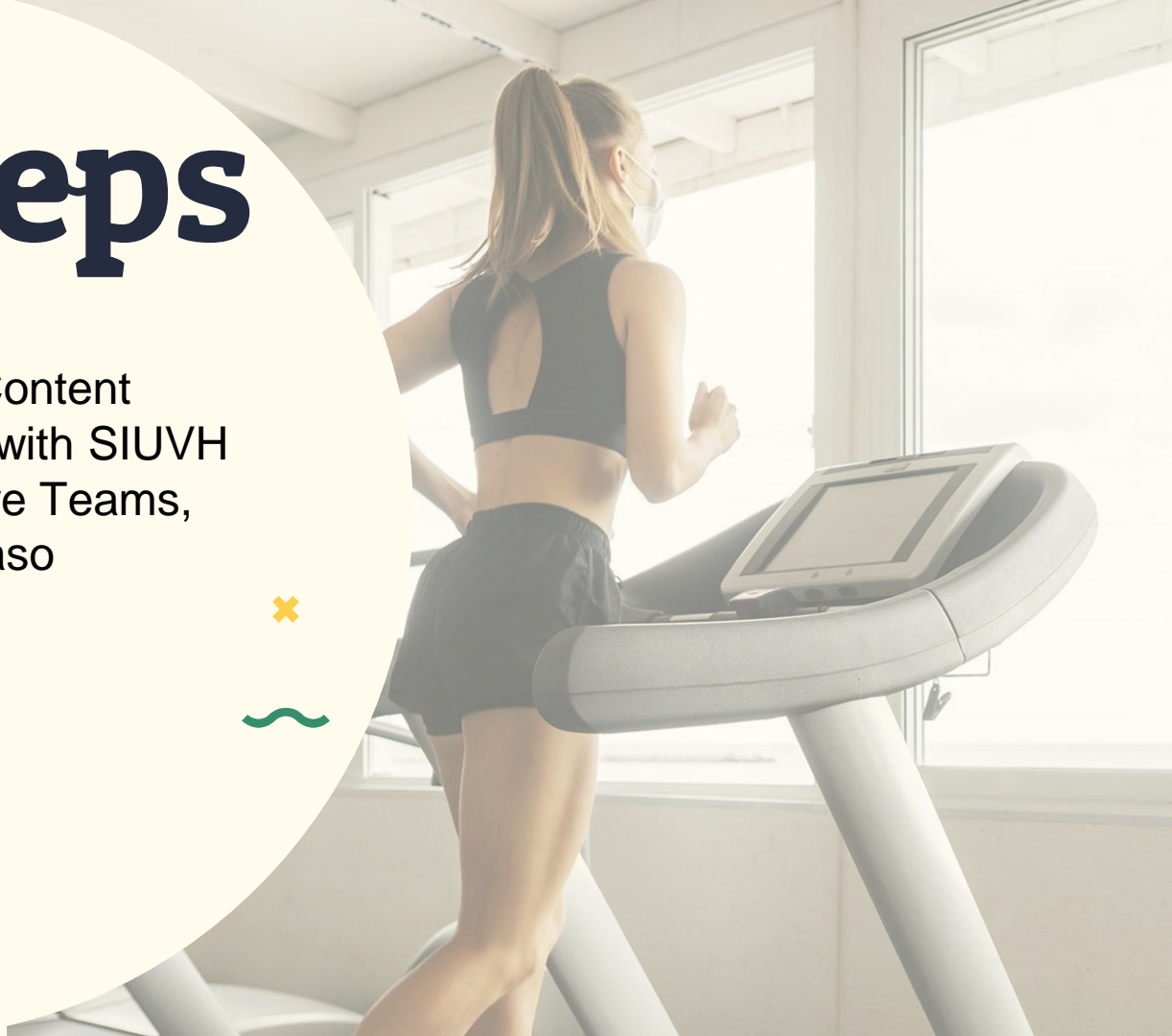
Vacant posts in CHN  
13 & beyond.

Extra pressure on  
existing resources

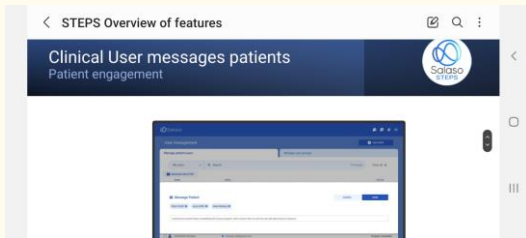


# Next Steps

- Continue Pilot Testing Content
- Continue to collaborate with SIUVH Pain Team, Primary Care Teams, Digital Health HSE, Salaso
- Train Colleagues
- More Sites

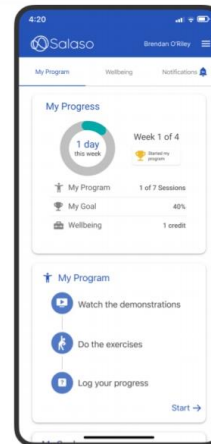
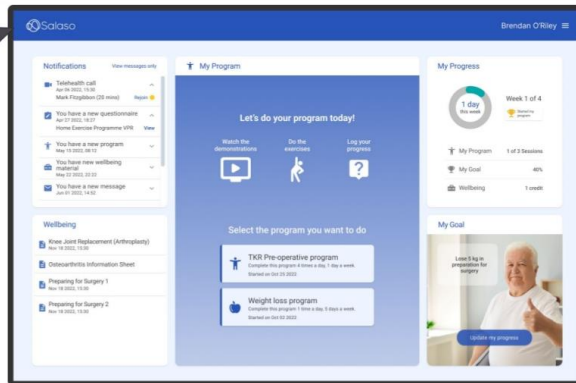


# Salaso New Platform-**STEPS** (Smart Therapy Engagement Platform Services)

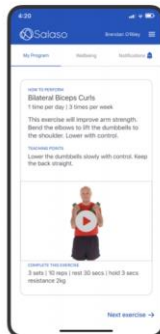
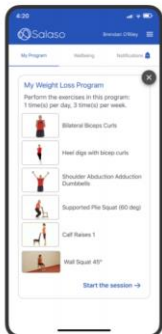
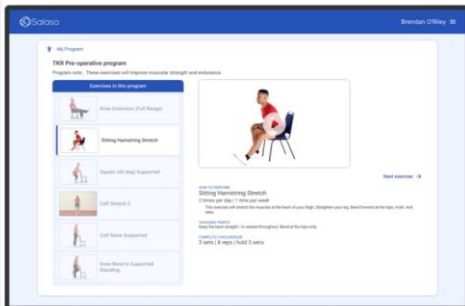


## < STEPS Overview of features

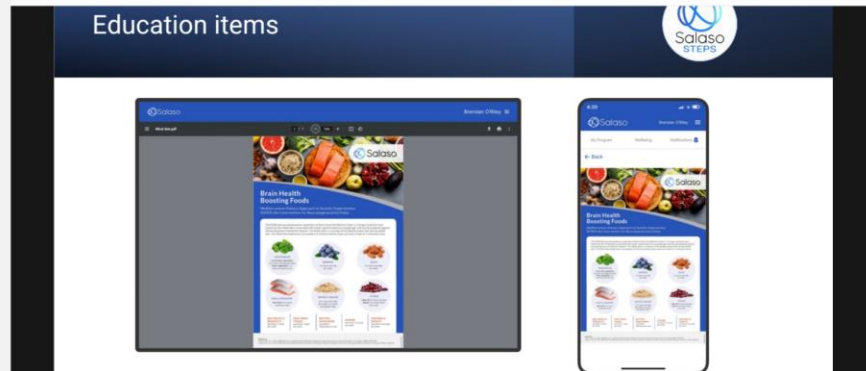
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## < STEPS Overview of features



## < STEPS Overview of features



# Thank You

- The 19<sup>th</sup> National Health Summit for Invitation
- Spark Ignite Program- Eimer O'Connell, Steven Griffen, Caitriona Heffernan.
- Salaso Health Solutions.
- Niall Halliday, Digital Health Lead, HSE.
- Joanne Gould, CSP Pain Management, SIUVH.
- SIUVH Pain Management Team
- Liz O'Sullivan, PT Manager, CHN 13.
- IT Department, HSE.

## CREDITS:

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