

Review of 2022/23

Goal

Objectives

22/23 Outcomes

By 2025 we will reach all newly injured people in the UK, including all children and young people. By providing support from the beginning of the adjustment process we can make sure people have the skills and confidence they need to live life independently.

By 2025 we will be more inclusive, expanding the number and range of our transformative courses, online resources and services for people who cannot access specialist support in spinal centres – making them accessible throughout the UK.

By 2025 we will be leaders in supporting people with a spinal cord injury in getting back to work and volunteering, working collaboratively with businesses, the NHS and other organisations where we can achieve more together to provide opportunities.

Back Up supported more people than ever before - 1695 adults and 145 children and young people that were affected by spinal cord injury. Moving closer to our aim of being there for everyone affected by spinal cord injury.

In total, we provided 19,253 instances of help.

We proactively telephoned over 1140 people with spinal cord injury to raise awareness of the many ways that Back Up and our partners can provide support.

We found new ways to reach people when we brought together a coalition of charities for Spinal Cord Injury Awareness Day with our corporate partner RAPP. All of the charities involved; (Aspire, Horatio's Garden, Regain, Spinal Research, Cauda Equina Champions and Wheelpower) delivered a joint social media campaign highlighting the amazing support network that is available for people affected by Spinal Cord Injury.

"Back Up has given me hope for a future which at the moment feels very difficult to imagine. I felt good to open up to someone who understands without being judged."

We have expanded our team in communities across the UK. For the first time, we have dedicated team members in Wales and the West Midlands. In the next 12 months will have a dedicated member of the Back Up team in every UK region, allowing us to better reach people who do not make it to specialist spinal centres.

This year, 135 people attended a Back Up course with over 83% achieving their personal aim. Alongside our residential courses we now offer What Next? our online course for newly injured people and their family members to positively adjust to life after spinal cord injury. What Next? is enabling us to reach people wherever they are in the UK.

"The things that Back Up teaches are so vital to helping people get their lives on track again once they have overcome all those major hurdles of their recoveries."

With the generous support of our corporate partners we have extended our vocation offer providing 308 - one to one interventions.

79% of people who attended Skills for Work are in work, volunteering or education 6 - 12 months after attending the course.

"My expectation of the course were low but within the first hour I realised how good the content was and how relevant it is to the audience. It's the best course I've done of this kind and I've done quite a few. It was just amazing to see everyone improve so much on the course."

"The thing that I really got from it, was understanding that what has happened since my injury are all life experiences that have transferable skills that I can use in my future career path. I'm really excited to start my new job."

Living confidently: people with a spinal cord injury have the confidence and practical skills to get the most out of life

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Thriving at any age:
all people with a spinal cord injury are able to reach their full potential

By 2025 we will provide specialist advice and information to children, young people and their parents in order for them to access care, equipment and social support. We will work with the NHS to ensure that all children and young people with spinal cord injury receive the treatment that they deserve through the established Children and Young Person's pathway.

By 2025 we will ensure our support is targeted at times of greatest need, helping people affected by spinal cord injury overcome barriers they may face in their education, career, family life, hobbies and social life, so that they can live the life they want. We will increase our resources for people who are ageing with spinal cord injury and establish a course for newly injured people who sustain a spinal cord injury later in life.

By 2025 we will provide support to every child and young person with a spinal cord injury who wants our help to ensure that they are fully included in their education and that their voice is heard in this process. We will be there for any teacher, school, college or university that needs our support around inclusion and meeting the needs of a child or young person with a spinal cord injury, to ensure they have a positive education experience.

In June, with NHS London and South East we launched an accredited information, advice and guidance service for newly injured children, young people and their parents. This service helps ensure they get the right support at the right time.

We have offered 587 instances of help to 145 children and young people.

Working with parents and young people we have developed new resources on 'what I know now that I wish I knew then.'

"Support from Back Up helps greatly in giving a sound balance to future decision making, quite often you don't have enough information or experience on a subject to make a balanced decision. It's always good to have more information about a subject relating to spinal cord injury, especially in a changing world, sometimes it's the little things that make all the difference. Back Up being so connected in many different fields always makes a difference, if they don't know it they will seek out the experience and I absolutely love that!"

Work is ongoing to understand the true impact of Back Up's services. We're excited that we have been able to test the social value of our work for the first time, which is helping us to target support at times of greatest need.

We are developing new resources for people who sustain spinal cord injury later on in life and those aging with a spinal cord injury. We aim to roll these out in the latter part of 2023.

"I was feeling very alone with my incomplete SCI, knowing there was a lot I didn't know but not knowing how to find out. A google search led me to Back Up, whose resources have completely turned my experience around."

459 one to one support interventions have been successfully delivered to ensure that children and young people are fully included in education. Engaging with 29 educational settings. Most importantly 100% of the children and young people Back Up have worked with say they are now feeling happier at school.

We remain the only UK wide charity with dedicated services for children and young people with spinal cord injury. We continue to teach vital practical skills.

"My daughter has come back transferring without a board, in and out of the car and on the stair lift too!! She is more confident with her wheelchair and has gone down steps backwards (just a few) in her wheelchair."

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Staying connected:
everyone affected by spinal cord injury can connect with someone in a similar situation to themselves, to overcome challenges and achieve goals that matter to them

By 2025 we will provide more in-depth one-on-one support to those who are really struggling, increasing our capacity to mentor three times more people with a spinal cord injury and their family members. We will also establish a parent support programme and parent mentoring. This will involve sharing experiences and parents being provided with practical support to help them come to terms with what has happened, and adjust positively to life post-injury.

By 2025 we will offer the family of each newly injured person a 'family rehab service'. This begins with the acute phase through information and advice online and in-person at relatives' days, to post-discharge from the hospital, through peer mentoring and dedicated courses.

By 2025 we will be integrated into the NHS's spinal services rehabilitation pathway to increase access to the first-hand knowledge that comes from living with a spinal cord injury. We will work in partnership with the spinal centres' psychology, physiotherapy and occupational therapy professionals for in-patient support. We will work in partnership with the outreach and out-patient teams to support those with a spinal cord injury in other hospital settings, and in the community.

This year we provided mentoring to 203 individuals - double the number of people who were matched with a mentor in 19/20.

We are delighted to have matched more people with mentors than ever before but we know that there is a greater need. We have a goal of mentoring three times more people affected by spinal cord injury. This is why we launched 'Mentorloop' in April to better connect mentors with mentees and to better understand our impact. This year we have averaged a real time quality score of 4.52 out of 5!

The Back Up Lounge our online forum where no topic is off limits was attended 1064 times.

"My mentor really changed my life I don't think she realises what's she done to help me, I will be forever grateful for her, shes amazing!"

In November with support from NHS South East, Back Up's Family Rehab Service was launched.

This service works directly with family members in the early days after their loved ones injury and helps to support a positive adjustment by creating a 'Family Plan' to get life back on track. Each plan is built around the goals of the family member. This year we have seen a 77% increase in the numbers of family members registering for Back Up's services. With 96% of family members reporting that life with spinal cord injury is more manageable as a result of Back Up's support.

"I wasn't accepting what had happened to us, I was losing energy and focusing my time on things that weren't necessary- I can now see the bigger picture and feel that I manage my husbands needs better."

In August we started year two of a three year partnership agreement with NHS England. This meant extending our 'Back Up on Track' offer to inpatients in Stoke Mandeville, Salisbury and Sheffield to include inpatients in Stanmore and Oswestry. The programme is designed to improve knowledge, skills and confidence. It works with newly injured people, family members and centre staff to build bespoke packages of support. We have already signed up 135 patients, exceeding year two targets of 75 participants.

Impact is measured through pre and post engagement measures which shows distance traveled. At this stage, we're delighted that 98% of participants have shown improvements in their wellbeing and confidence scores.

"I am pleased and excited by the direction that Back Up is heading so we're able to support more people affected by spinal cord injury. " (NHS Consultant)