

Long-COVID & Physical Activity Learn and Share Event

Wednesday 24th May 2023

Hosted by The Herts Sports & Physical Activity Partnership

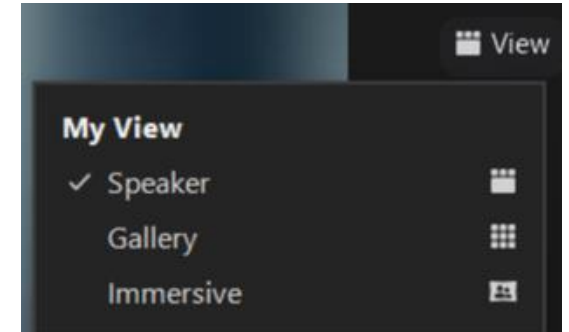
Funded by Public Health, Hertfordshire County Council

The event will begin shortly



Webinar Housekeeping

- All participants will remain muted and cameras off throughout the webinar
- Select 'Speaker View' for the best viewing experience →
- Comments and networking welcomed through the 'Chat' function
 - Please introduce yourselves and offer your comments throughout the event
 - Before you send – make sure you select 'Everyone'
- Questions for the presenters are encouraged through the 'Q&A' function
 - We will attempt to answer all questions live, any others will be responded to after the event
- This webinar will be recorded and distributed to those registered for the event
 - This webinar will also be available to view at www.sportinherts.org.uk/longcovid
- Please fill in the pop-up feedback survey when you leave



Agenda

Introduction

Long-COVID & Physical Activity

Dr Harsha Master (GP Lead) & Abby Minter (Specialist Occupational Therapist) Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust

Hertford's Nuffield Health's Long-COVID Programme

Laura Roberts (Covid Rehabilitation Specialist/ Personal Trainer) Nuffield Health

Personal Long-COVID Story

Philip Gibsone - Patient from NHS Covid Rehabilitation Service

East & North Hertfordshire Covid Pathway

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West Hertfordshire Covid Pathway

David Murnane (Clinical Lead for Long Covid Service) Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust

Long-COVID & Physical Activity Rehabilitation Project

Will Slemmings (Strategic Lead for Health) & Sarah Keen (LC & PA Project Assistant) Herts Sports & Physical Activity Partnership (HSP)

Questions for Presenters



Long Covid & Physical Activity

Dr Harsha Master

GP Lead,
COVID-19 Rehabilitation Service
Hertfordshire Community Trust
hmaster@nhs.net

Abby Minter

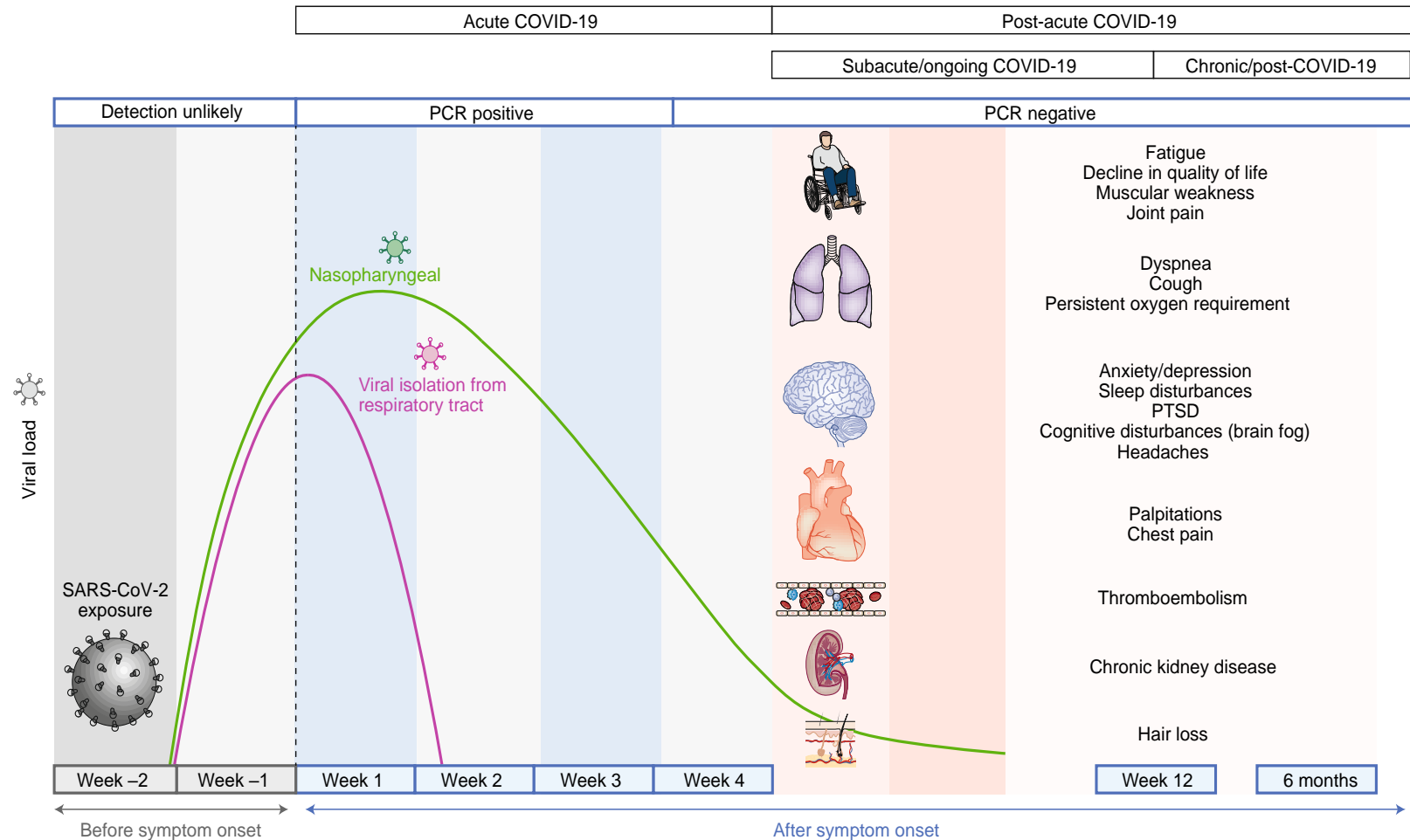
Specialist Occupational Therapist,
Covid-19 Rehabilitation Service
Hertfordshire Community Trust
abigail.minter@nhs.net

Defining Long COVID: NICE guideline [NG188]

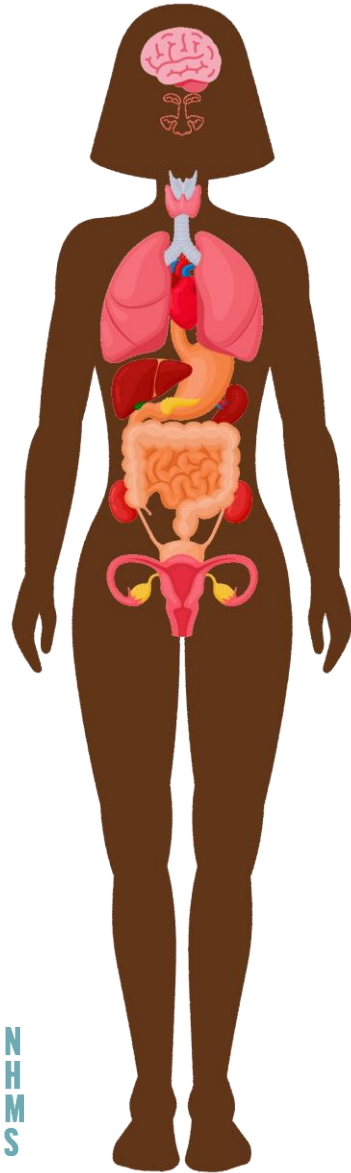
Acute COVID
< 4 weeks

Ongoing symptomatic
4-12 weeks

Post-COVID-19 syndrome
> 12 weeks



Long COVID: Common symptoms



Neurological: *headaches*, dizziness, pins & needles

Neuropsychiatric: *anxiety, brain fog, sleep disruption*

Ear, nose and throat: *voice changes, loss of smell & taste, sore/tight throat, nasal congestion*

Respiratory: breathlessness, cough, chest tightness

Cardiovascular: chest pain, fast heart rate/palpitations, *exercise intolerance, breathlessness*

Autonomic: fast heart rate, dizziness, thermal dysregulation, (PoTS)

Gastrointestinal: *food intolerances*, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, nausea, reflux, bloating

Constitutional: *fatigue & PEM*, muscle pains, night sweats, fever

Reproductive : change in periods, symptoms of peri/menopause

Unusual features

- Many patients were previously fit and well
- Long initial illness > 1 week
- Presentation of multiple complex symptoms
- Relapsing-remitting pattern (dubbed the corona coaster)
- Post Exertional Malaise - the 'Boom and bust' phenomenon
- Overlap with symptoms of:
 - **Autonomic Dysfunction & Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome PoTS**
 - **Mast Cell Activation Syndrome – MCAS**
 - **Menopause**
- Challenging to identify LC in the elderly
- Long COVID exists in children

RECOVERY

Without effective treatment, recovery is typically very slow – many patients can remain symptomatic up to 2 years or longer after their initial infection

A **multidisciplinary, holistic** approach that is tailored to the individual, involving **medical assessment, investigations, treatment** and **rehabilitation** is essential to facilitate a faster recovery

BARRIERS TO RECOVERY INCLUDE:

- **Stress and Anxiety**
- **Sleep disruption**
- **Overexertion**
- **Over working**
- **Poor gut health**

Management

RESTING TO RECOVERY

- Lifestyle advice
 - Rest & minimising stress
 - Sleep hygiene & optimisation,
 - Healthy diet - cut out alcohol, caffeine and sugar. Encourage a more plant based diet
 - Pacing and managing expectations
- Meditation, mindfulness, yogic breathing, Yoga, Pilates, Tai chi
- Acupuncture
- Employment support - A flexible, patient-centred, tailored return to work plan is crucial
- Consider signposting to:
 - www.yourcovidrecovery.nhs.uk
 - www.hct.nhs.uk

Occupational Therapy and Physical Activity

- Majority are working age adults
- Active before Covid – work, family, home, socialising, hobbies and exercise

Functionally active

Leisurely active

Regular high intensity activity



Returning to physical activity is one of **the most** common goals reported by my patients

Occupational Therapy Process

Role = to assist with managing the symptoms of Long Covid, with the aim to reduce the impact that these have on everyday lives.

Referred due to mild to moderate reduced energy levels, brain fog, returning to work.

Process of assessment initially then work with individuals to prioritise, plan and pace daily activity.

Reduce the effect of the boom and bust cycle.

Promote balance to day/week

Take into account all activities

Use activity diary to help visualise

Encourage consistency of energy levels

Lifestyle – sleep, rest/relaxation, leisure, diet

Acceptance and expectations



Activity v's Energy



Frequently hear:

“If I just push myself a little more then I’m sure that I would feel better”

“I’m not doing anywhere near what I used to do before so I don’t want to stop exercising – this will make me feel worse”

For effective recovery and management of symptoms it is in fact the opposite.

Balancing energy levels and at times doing less results in improvements for the majority of individuals.

When appropriate for low/moderate fatigue = a slow, gradual return to any activity whilst maintaining energy levels is suggested.

Returning to physical activity may not be advisable for those with chronic long term fatigue or those with underlying conditions- these should be approached differently alongside specialist expert advice.

Benefits of Targeted Physical Activity for those recovering from Long Covid

- Physical health – weight gain, joint pains, deconditioning
- Mental health – returning to previous activities, see self improving, able to spend with family/friends again, taking time out for self, endorphins to boost mood
- Sleep – can enhance sleep quality and encourage healthy routine
- Energy – can help to improve levels and feelings of tiredness
- Brain fog symptoms – can help to reduce effects

Challenges for the Future

- **Anxiety** or **worry** that symptoms will return, that they will feel worse again. Understanding their capability and what is achievable essential. Reassure that this feeling is normal.
- Temptation to **push self** and **overdo exercise** as enjoying it and feel better. More of an issue than anxiety. Most will enter into boom/bust cycle at some point - learning curve and can be positive to remind to prioritise, plan and pace again. Keeping diary and reflecting helpful to maintain levels of energy.



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Hertford's Nuffield Health COVID-19 Rehabilitation Programme

Laura Roberts (Covid Rehabilitation Specialist/ Personal Trainer)

A 12-week programme designed to support your recovery from Long COVID

Address: Nuffield Health Hertford Fitness & Wellbeing Gym, Madford Retail Park Ware Rd, Hertford, SG13 7RQ

Phone number: 01992 584765

More info: [Hertford Nuffield Health COVID-19 Rehabilitation Programme](#)



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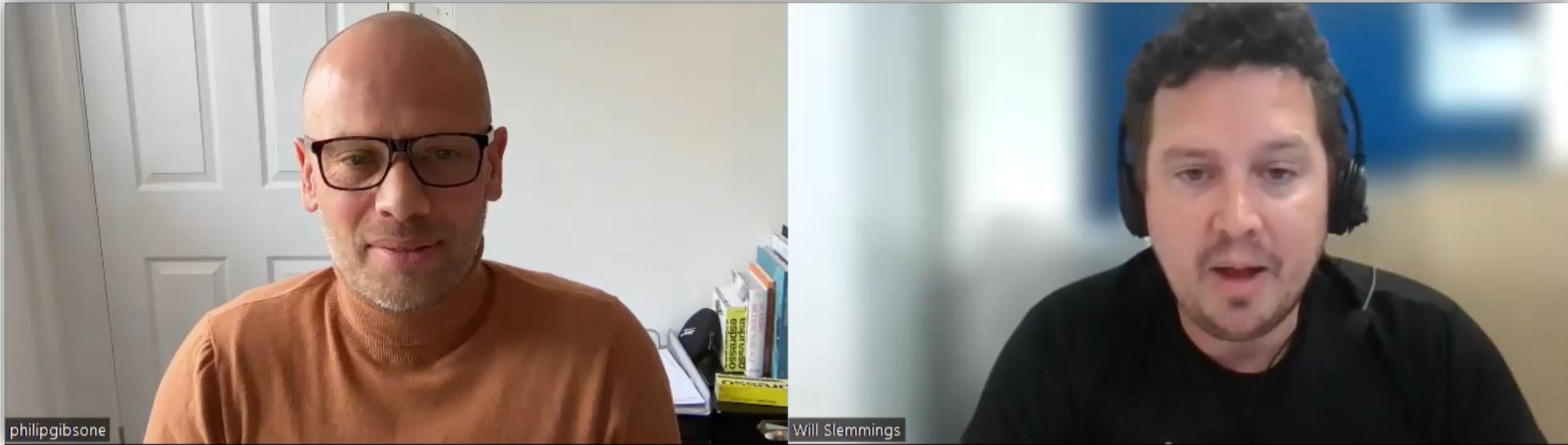
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Long COVID - Personal Story



Philip Gibsone
Patient from NHS Covid Rehabilitation Service

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East and North Hertfordshire Community COVID Rehab Pathway

Integrated Multidisciplinary Rehabilitation Team:

- Rehab Coordinator
- Covid Rehab GP
- Occupational Therapist
- Clinical Psychologist
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Mental Health Service
- Dieticians
- Pulmonary Rehabilitation
- Chronic Fatigue
- Physiotherapy

Aim – to provide coordinated, holistic care involving both medical assessment and rehabilitation

Management

Not all areas across the UK have access to long Covid clinics

- **Pulmonary Rehab** - SOB and breathing re-education
- **ENT & Speech and Language Therapy** - Dysphonia/hoarseness
- **Dietician** - Low histamine diet, weight gain, loss of taste, GI issues
- **Clinical Psychologist** - PTSD
- **Occupational Therapy** – Energy conservation, returning to and adapting work/daily activities
- **Chronic Fatigue Team** - Management of enduring fatigue.
- **IAPT** – Anxiety and depression
- **Respiratory COVID Recovery** - Respiratory review, lung function tests, CT/CTPA
- **Cardiology** - Holter monitor, ECHO, cardiac MRI, Stress test, CTCA
- **Physiotherapy** - Musculoskeletal pain, improving mobility

COVID Rehab Pathway

Criteria for referral from GP/Consultant only:

- **Adults** aged over 18
- 12 weeks +
- Confirmed COVID-19 or symptoms highly suggestive of COVID-19
- **NOTE - A negative swab or antibody test does not exclude COVID**
- Acute pathology ruled out

COVID Rehab Pathway

- **Jointly lead** by AHP and GP in partnership.
- **Yorkshire Screening questionnaire (C19-YRS)** is used for all patients. This must be completed by the patient before triage.
- Patients must have been seen by their own GP for an assessment and appropriate investigations if warranted and **acute pathology ruled out**.
- All referrals are screened to ensure they meet our criteria.
- All incoming referrals are telephone triaged by a COVID-19 **Rehab Coordinator**, or triage clinician who then organises onwards referrals of patients across the system
- Patients are managed in a multi disciplinary pathway of care.
- Rehabilitation & Recovery Services are provided in a blended format of telephone, virtual and face to face.
- Appropriate resources are shared with patients to help them manage their symptoms.
- We hold a weekly virtual MDT that is attended by all teams involved in the management of patients. This is to discuss presentation and needs of patients to ensure that they receive the care appropriate to their condition.

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West Hertfordshire Community Covid Rehabilitation Pathway

David Murnane

Clinical Lead for Long Covid Service – West Hertfordshire
Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust



Central London
Community Healthcare
NHS Trust



Murnane, David (CENTRAL LONDON COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE NHS TRUST)

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Long-COVID and
Physical Activity
Rehabilitation
Project

Will Slemmings, Strategic Lead for Health

Sarah Keen, Long COVID & Physical Activity Project Assistant

Long-COVID & PA Rehabilitation Feasibility Project

- 1-year feasibility project
- Funded by Public Health within Hertfordshire County Council
- Delivered in collaboration with Hertfordshire's two NHS Covid Rehabilitation Services
- The project aims to explore how physical activity can benefit an individual's ability to recover from Long-COVID.
- This will be done by:
 - ✓ Introducing a **pathway** from Covid Rehabilitation Services to ongoing community physical activity
 - ✓ **Mapping** and assessing a range of suitable physical activity opportunities in Hertfordshire
 - ✓ Offering **training** to physical activity deliverers where upskill in awareness of Long-COVID is needed
 - ✓ **Developing** physical activity opportunities where there are gaps in provision (new or existing)
 - ✓ **Improve knowledge and awareness** of Long-COVID and physical activity through training, webinars & resources
 - ✓ Developing and delivering a comprehensive **evaluation framework** to encourage valuable learning

Long COVID & PA Referral Pathway

GP

- Confirms date patient had COVID-19/ that they have LC
- Baselines blood tests (differential diagnosis)
- Chest x-ray (checking for underlying infection)

Covid Rehab Service

- Patient fills out referral form which is screened
- Patient triaged & referred to appropriate services
- Patient discharged when deemed appropriate

HSP LC & PA Coordinator

- Telephone based physical activity triage
- Discusses and signposts to suitable physical activity opportunities
- Ensures physical activity deliverers are aware of first attendance

Community PA Provision

- Patient takes part in community PA provision
- Regular contact with HSP LC & PA Coordinator
- Amends activities/approach as needed

Sustained PA Participation

- Patient is confident and content with ongoing PA participation
- Patient is content with level of LC symptoms
- Patient ends contact with HSP LC & PA Coordinator

Physical Activity Mapping

- We are mapping a range of suitable physical activity opportunities to include in the pathway, e.g. Exercise referral schemes, low level exercise groups, walking groups, seated exercise, tai chi, meditation, yoga, Pilates, also non-traditional PA's such as gardening, singing, mindfulness etc
- Activities MUST:
 - ✓ Be low impact
 - ✓ Be able to be adapted to suit the patient's abilities and requirements
 - ✓ Be suitably accessible
 - ✓ Be led by appropriately qualified delivery staff
- Mapping will be ongoing - building on what works well
- Identifying areas for expansion (developing new or existing offers)

If you have not been contacted and would like your activity to be included within this mapping, please email Sarah Keen on s.keen2@herts.ac.uk

Funded Long-COVID Training

- Future Fit – Covid-19 Rehabilitation Course

Learn how to support clients who have suffered from COVID-19 and build your awareness of the condition, including the best strategies to aid recovery.

5 modules:

1. COVID-19 Rehab Part 1 – What is COVID?
2. COVID-19 Awareness Part 2 – Understanding
3. COVID-19 Awareness Part 3 – Application
4. COVID-19 Awareness Part 4 – Long-COVID
5. Breath Biomechanics

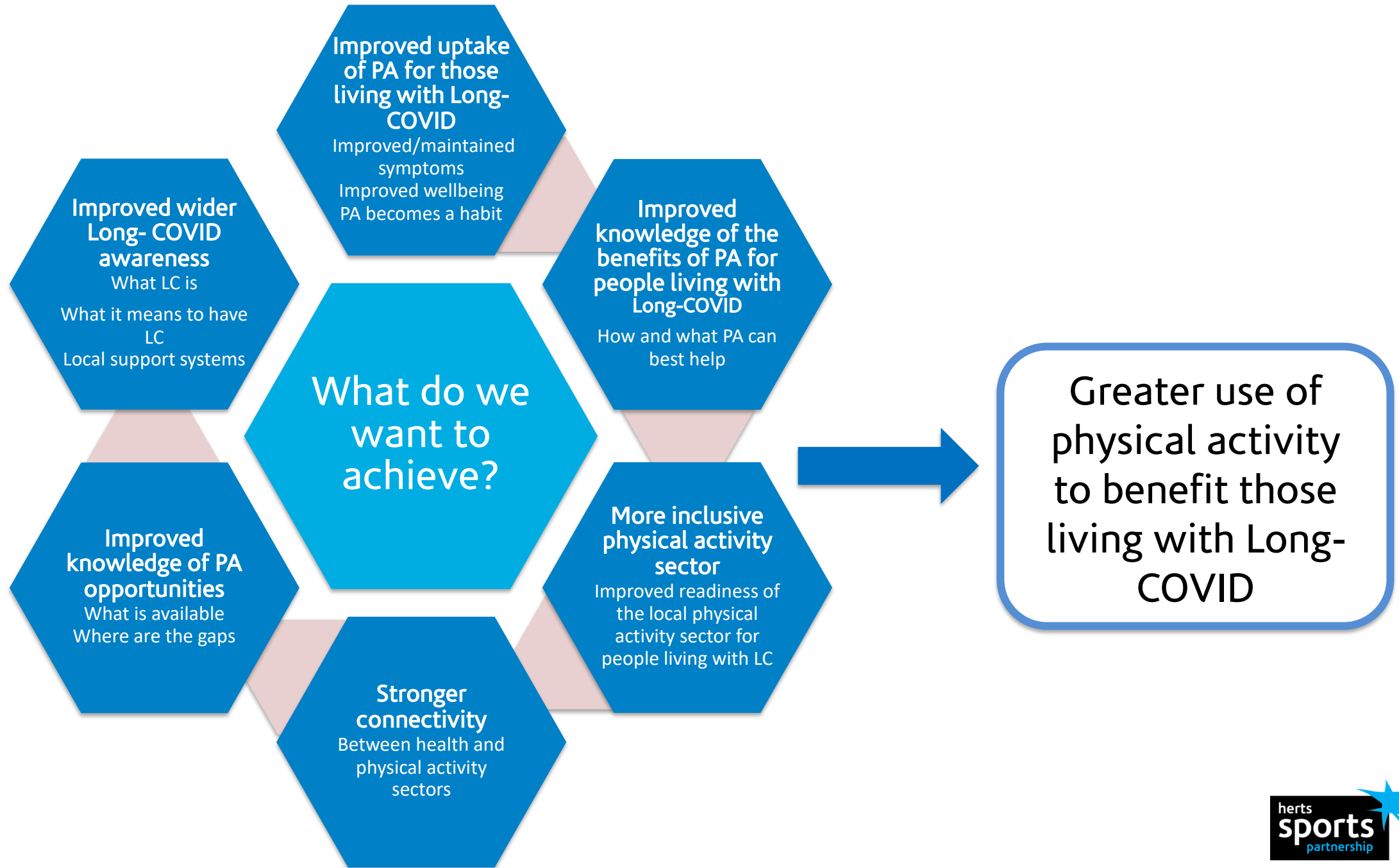
Eligibility Criteria

- ✓ Must be a physical activity provider
- ✓ Delivering in Hertfordshire

- Recognised by CIMSPA (Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity) - 3 CPD points
- Fully funded by this project – **FREE** to access if you meet the eligibility criteria

TO ACCESS TRAINING:

1. *Fill in pop-up survey after webinar to register interest (name/email)*
2. *Visit our webpage for sign-up link – www.sportinherts.org.uk/longcovid*
3. *HSP will provide further instruction*



Next Steps

- Long-COVID & Physical Activity pathway to launch in June 2023
- Long-COVID training will be available to PA providers from next week
- Scoping for new physical activity is currently taking place
- Evaluation framework currently being finalised through the Public Health Evaluation & Intelligence Team
- Ongoing learning and amendment

For more information:

Visit www.sportinherts.org.uk/longcovid

Contact Sarah Keen on s.keen2@herts.ac.uk



Any Questions?