

The Heart Manual Spring Newsletter



Welcome to the first Heart Manual Quarterly of 2026!



Relaxation CD Reminder

As many of you will already be aware, we recently ceased the production of our HM relaxation CD's. This means that in the coming months, this resource will no longer be supplied in accompaniment with our Heart Manuals.

We would like to remind all facilitators to encourage patients to continue to access these relaxation resources by using our HM relaxation app, or by following the hyperlinks and QR codes within the manuals themselves, which will direct you to these relaxation audios!

The Heart Manual Joins a Global Cardiac Rehabilitation Initiative

As a department, we are currently involved in the ACROSS (Affordable Cardiac Rehabilitation: An Outreach Interdisciplinary Strategic Study) research initiative. Led by the University of Glasgow, this project seeks to develop, implement and evaluate the use of a culturally and contextually adapted home-based cardiac rehabilitation intervention, within Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Incorporating both the Heart Manual and REACH-HF programmes, and with the HM team's fundamental role in facilitating the training of health professionals, the overall aim is to establish the capacity to deliver an effective cardiac rehabilitation intervention for individuals living with coronary heart disease and mental health comorbidities, in these countries.

Upcoming Training Dates

- Heart Manual Follow-Up Session:
10th March 2026
- Heart Manual Facilitator Training:
22nd and 23rd April 2026
- REACH-HF Facilitator Training:
19th & 20th May 2026

We also have Heart Manual Digital Reboot and REACH-HF Follow-Up Sessions available for facilitators who have any questions or queries regarding the REACH-HF programme, or who would like to refresh their knowledge of our Digital Heart Manual.

If you are interested in joining us on one of the above training dates or if you would like to enquire about attending any of our other training sessions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with The Heart Manual Department at: heart.manual@nhs.scot

Keep in touch with The Heart Manual!

Contribute to the Heart Manual Quarterly! Is there a Heart Manual story or memory you would like to share via the newsletter? Please submit to: heart.manual@nhs.scot

You can also follow us on X - @TheHeartManual

The Impact of the REACH-HF Programme on HF Patients with Elevated Baseline Anxiety and Depression Levels

The REACH-HF programme is a 12-week facilitated home-based self-management CR intervention and has been repeatedly shown to improve heart failure (HF) patient's health-related quality of life (HRQoL) and their condition management.

Higher levels of anxiety and depression are prevalent in patients with HF, with these symptoms often contributing to further cardiac health deterioration and heightening the likelihood of cardiac events and hospital admissions. However, understanding was limited towards whether existing mental health comorbidities would impair the beneficial effects of home-based CR interventions on the health outcomes of HF patients. Therefore, a recent study by [Lambert et al. \(2025\)](#) aimed to determine whether the known benefits of the REACH-HF programme would be moderated by elevated baseline levels of both anxiety and depression in this patient population.

Notably, findings revealed that:

- HF patients who had inflated baseline levels of depression exhibited greater improvements in HRQoL and depression symptoms following REACH-HF programme participation, than those without these elevated levels of depression.
- Although there were greater levels of physical inactivity found in HF patients with elevated baseline anxiety levels, these patients also demonstrated higher levels of light physical activity following programme engagement, in comparison to HF patients who did not have these heightened anxiety levels.

Overall, and conflicting with assumptions that existing mental health conditions may hinder the benefits of home-based CR interventions, this study emphasises that, following engagement with the REACH-HF programme, HF patients who exhibit increased anxiety and depressive symptoms reap greater benefits from home-based CR, than patients who did not possess these symptoms.

How Does the HM Influence Psychological Wellbeing?

Further demonstrating the vital role that home-based CR interventions have in mental health promotion, the HM programme has been shown to strongly influence the reduction of anxiety and depression levels in patients, following their myocardial infarction or revascularisation procedures.

HM patients revealed that the HM programme was able to effectively enhance their psychological wellbeing through:

- Addressing misconceptions and inaccurate health beliefs
- Facilitating the reshaping of their negative perceptions towards their condition and recovery
- Enabling their successful implementation of relaxation and stress management strategies

