



NAPC | National Association
of Primary Care

The Impact of Community Singing Groups

The Impact of Singing on Lung Health



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A One-Page Summary of the Benefits of Singing Groups

This study involved 29 participants across 4 singing groups, starting in April 2023.

Improved COPD Scores: Most participants had moderate to severe COPD and saw significant improvements in their breathing patterns and lung function.

Reduced Anxiety: Singing groups led to clinically meaningful improvements in anxiety for 45% of participants who met the threshold for NHS talking therapies, with a 46% recovery rate. (This compares favourably to the 50% recovery rate of NHS Talking Therapies at a significantly lower cost.)

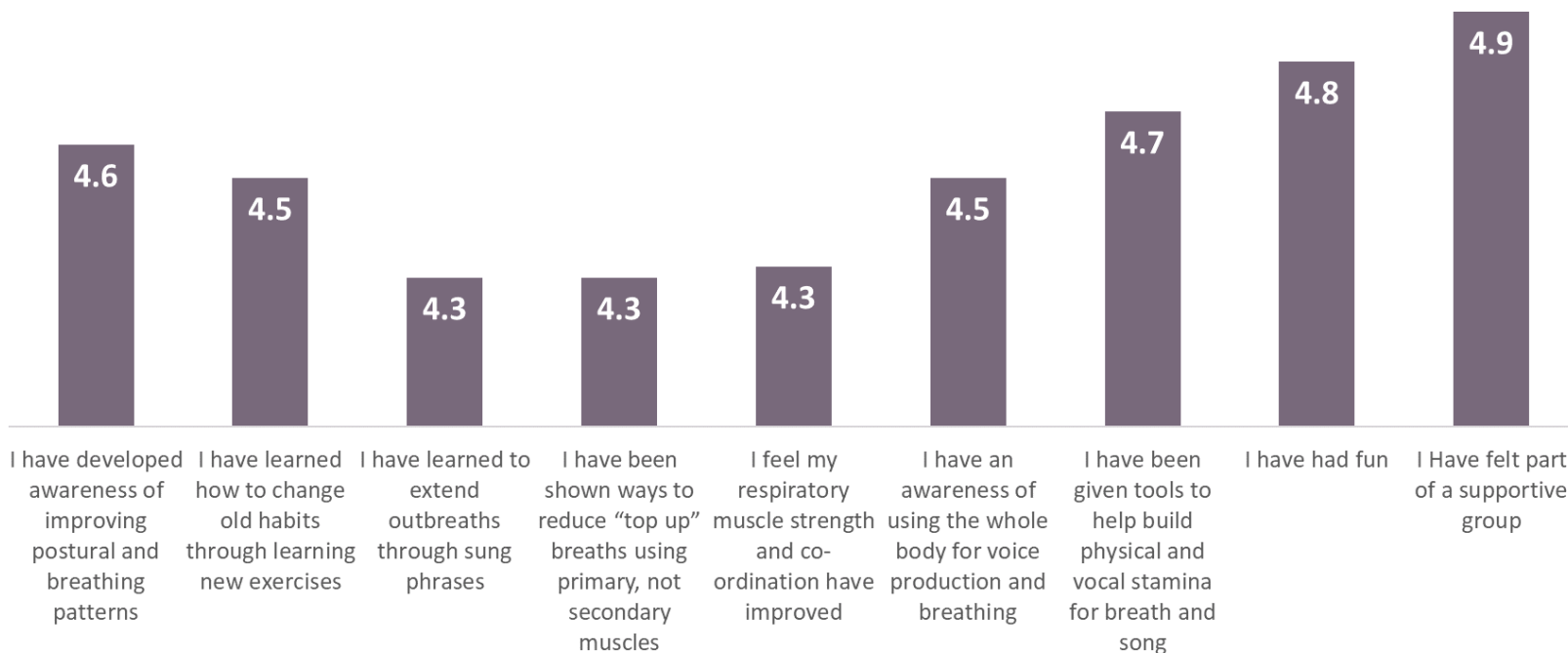
Enhanced Self-Management: Participation in singing groups improved patients' ability to self-manage their condition, suggesting long-term benefits.

“Could I just please make known that this course has not only helped with breathing, but it has also helped greatly with my mental health issues.”

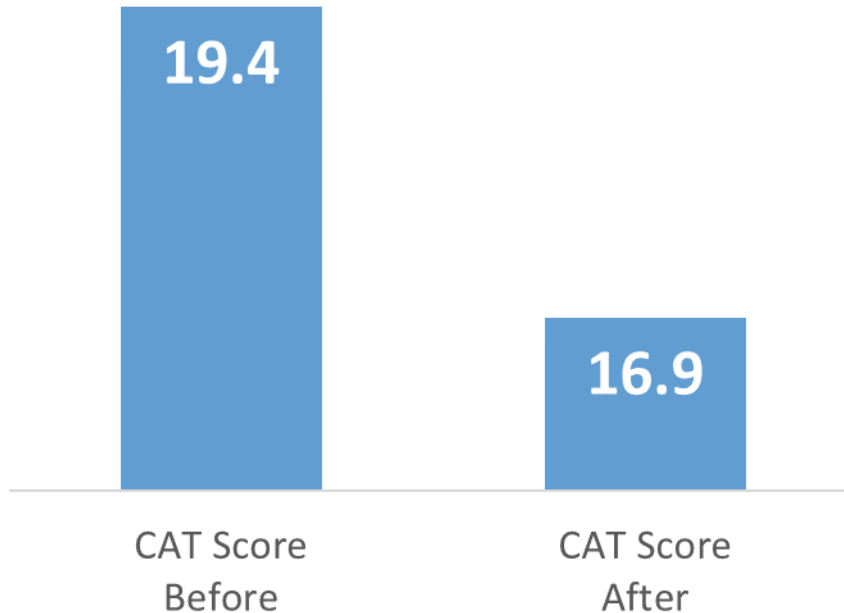
The Impact of Singing on Patients

Participants reported feeling that the singing group's objectives were met.

Please rate how well you feel the singing group achieved its objectives, on a scale of 1 (not achieved) to 5 (fully achieved).



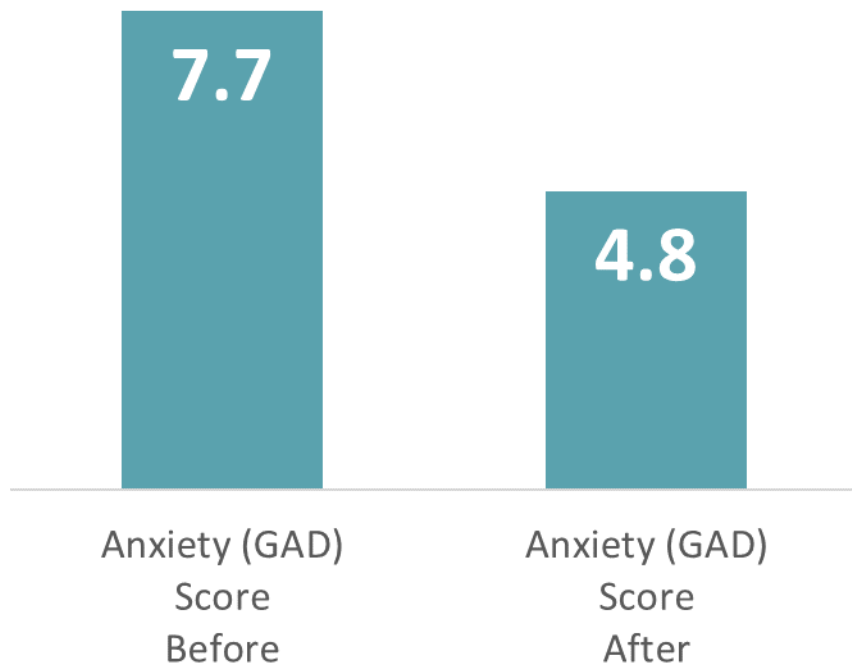
The Benefits of Singing on COPD and other respiratory conditions



Singing in a group led to significant improvements in COPD and CAT scores (a COPD assessment tool measuring the impact of symptoms on daily life) for participants.

These improvements exceeded the minimum clinically important difference of 2 points, with scores dropping from an average of 19.4 to 16.9.

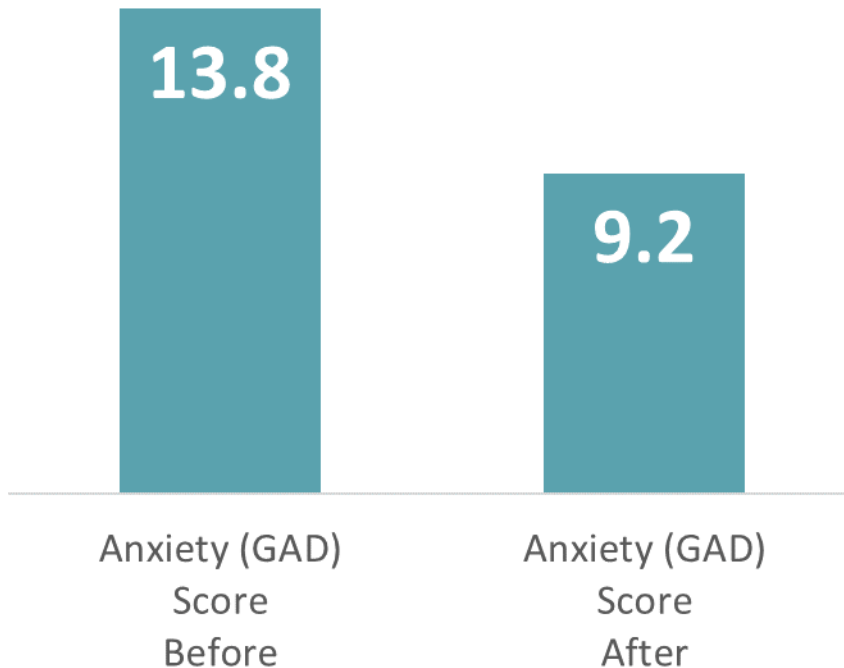
The Benefits of Singing on Anxiety



Participation in the singing group also led to a significant reduction in anxiety for participants.

Average anxiety scores dropped by 2.9 points, from 7.7 (considered mild anxiety) to 4.8, which is near minimal anxiety

The Benefits of Singing on Anxiety

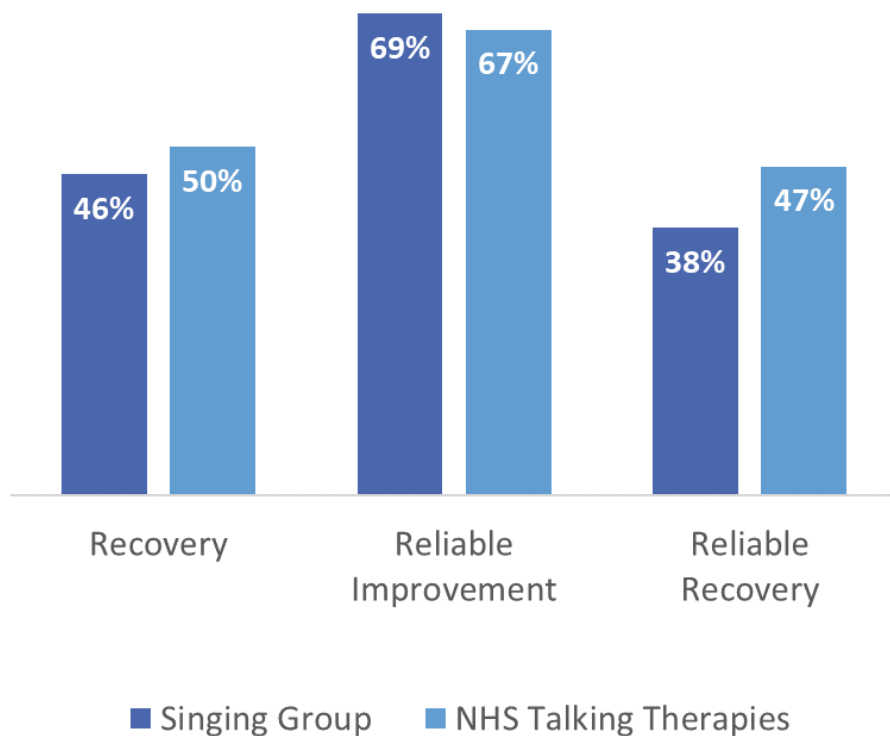


For the 45% of participants whose anxiety met the threshold for NHS talking therapies, the singing group yielded even more impressive results.

Their average anxiety scores dropped by a clinically significant 4.6 points, from 13.8 (moderate anxiety) to 9.2 (near mild anxiety).

This reduction is above the minimum considered clinically important and similar to the improvement achieved by IAPT.

Comparing Singing Groups to NHS Talking Therapies

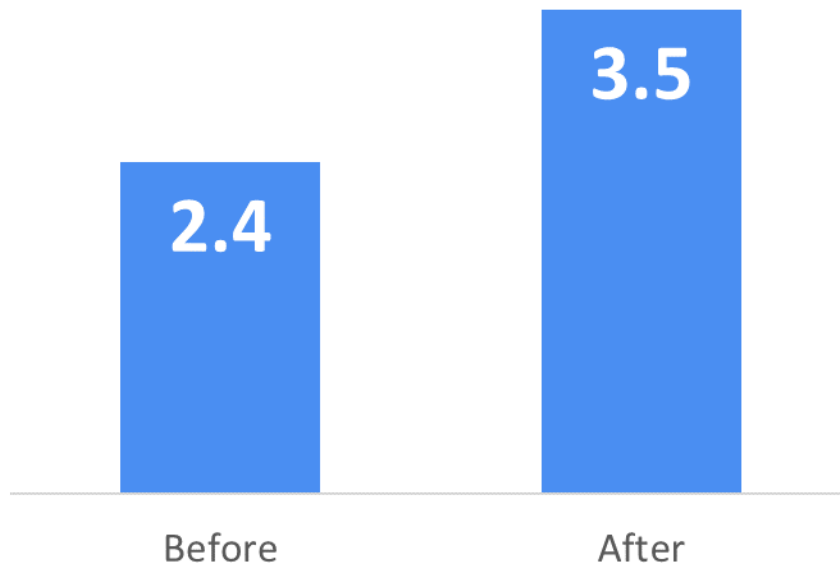


Singing groups show promise as an alternative therapy, achieving a 46% recovery rate similar to NHS Talking Therapies (50%)

In IAPT, recovery means no longer being a clinical case for anxiety/depression, reliable improvement shows a big difference in symptoms, and reliable recovery requires both.

The singing group also cost only **£61** per patient compared to IAPT's **£877** - a cost that's **14x higher**

The Benefits of Singing on Ability to Self-Manage



**Rate your ability to manage your own
lung health and wellbeing**
on a scale of 1 (not able) to 4 (very able)

Participation in the singing group enhanced patients' self-management abilities, suggesting the benefits are likely to be sustainable and cumulative.

This empowers them to independently manage their physical, mental and lung health, with the potential to share these benefits with others.

Quotes from Patients

Could I just please make known that this course has not only helped with breathing, but it has also helped greatly with my mental health issues.

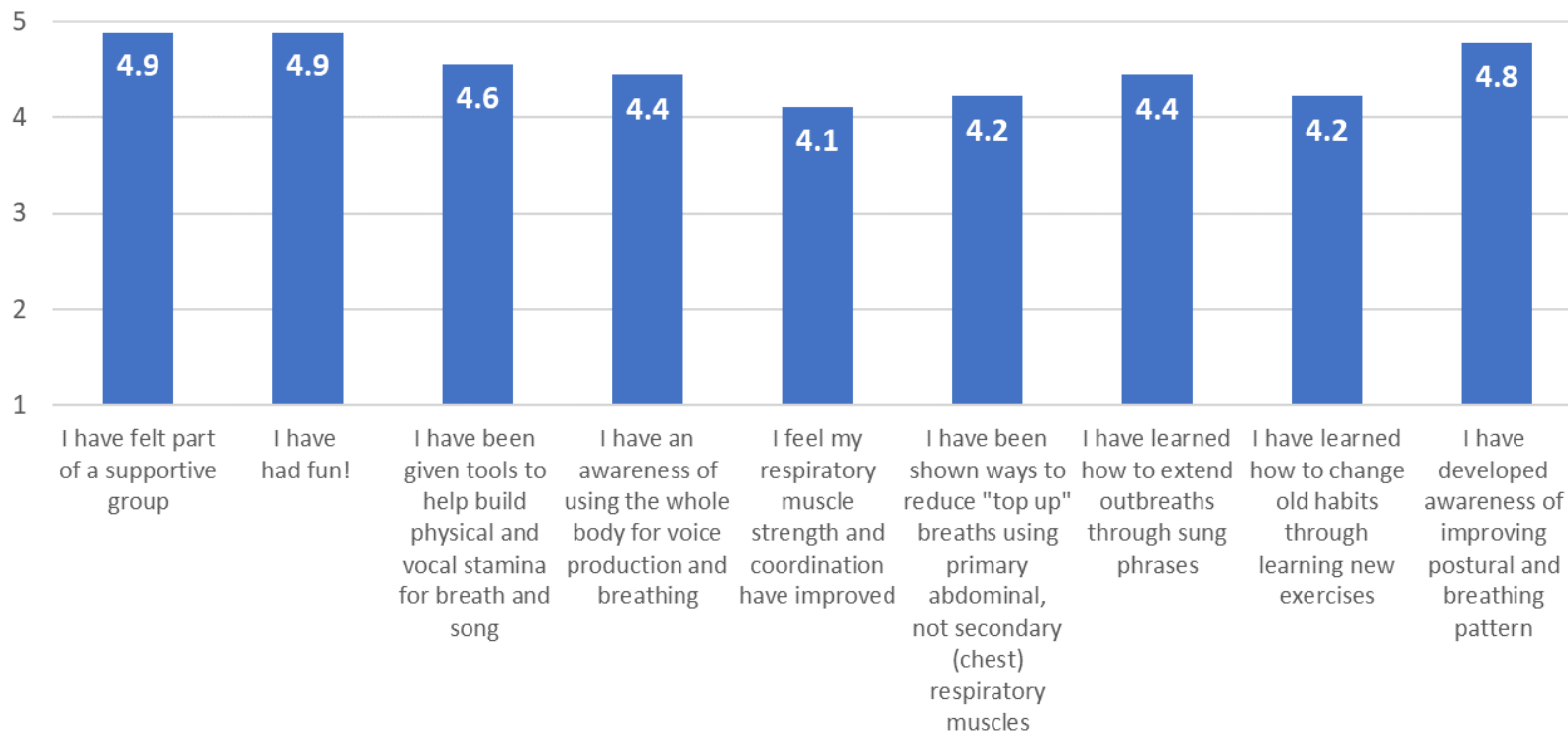
I feel this type of programme should be available for people suffering from mental illnesses such as anxiety and depression.

Personally, my GAD (anxiety) score has reduced greatly, and this has been greatly assisted by this course.

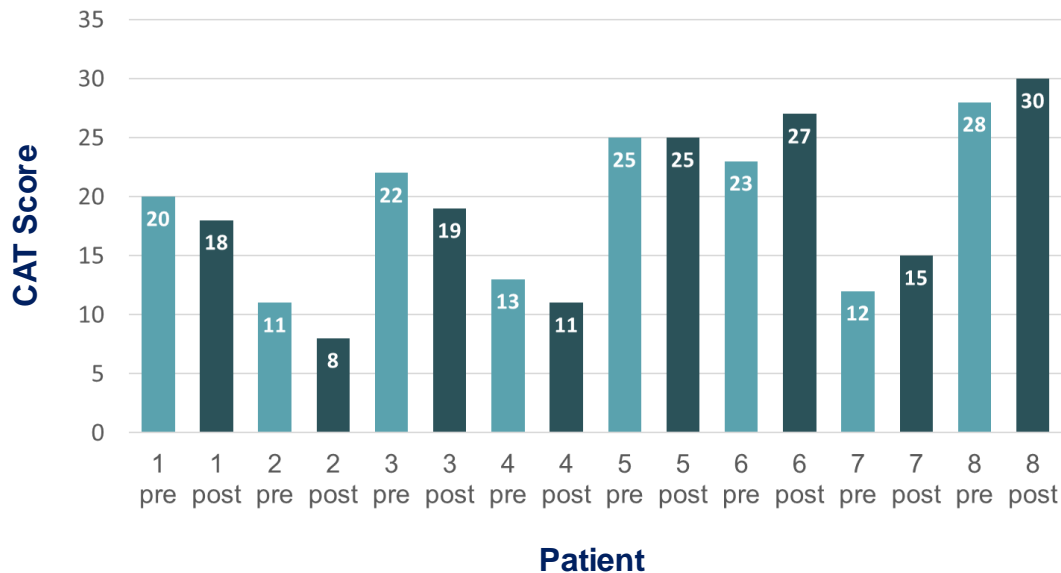
Appendix

The Impact of Singing on Patients

On a scale of 1 to 5, rate the following objectives of the singing group sessions with 1 being 'not achieved' to 5 being 'achieved'



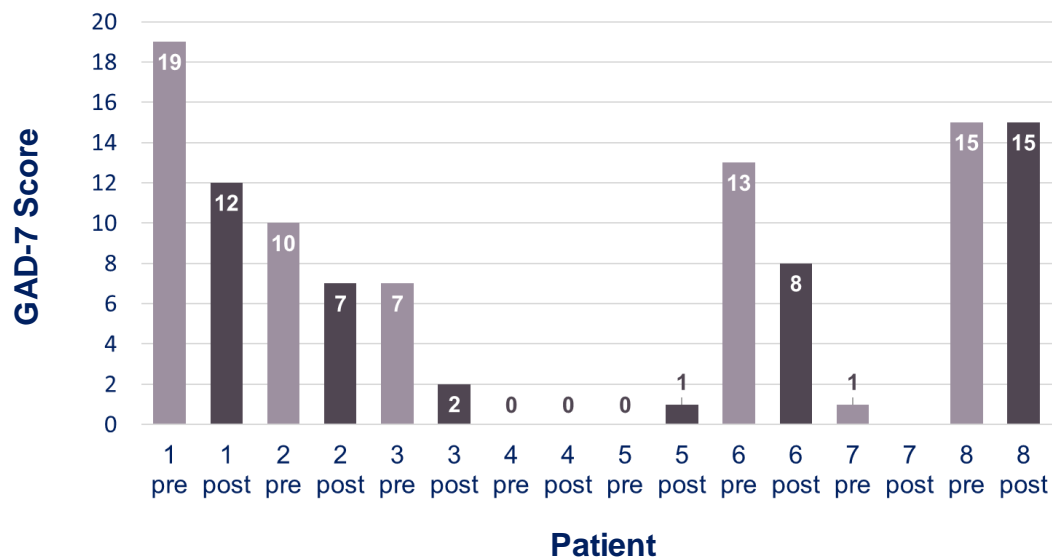
The Benefits of Singing on Lung Health



The singing group led to minimal change in COPD symptom severity, indicating more time may be needed for clinically significant improvement in symptoms

- A COPD Assessment Test Score (CAT) 0-9 indicates low impact, 10-20 indicates medium impact, 21-30 indicates high impact, and 31-40 indicates very high impact on health and quality of life
- The average CAT score across all 8 patients decreased by 1% from 19.3 to 19.1, a reduction of 0.3
- This is a minimal change in COPD symptom severity and is less than the Minimally Important Difference of 1-2 points
- 75% of patients felt much more confident in managing their breathing with the remaining 25% feeling a little more confident
- Additional time may be needed to observe a clinically significant improvement in COPD symptoms

The Benefits of Singing on Anxiety



The singing group resulted in a large reduction in anxiety symptom severity, comparable to that achieved by IAPT at a significantly lower cost

- A Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD-7) score of 0-4 indicates minimal or no anxiety, 5-9 indicates mild anxiety, 10-14 indicates moderate anxiety, and 15-21 indicates severe anxiety
- The average GAD score for patients with some level of anxiety fell by 32% from 13 to 9, a reduction of 4 and 80% of patients experienced a drop of one category in their anxiety severity rating e.g. moderate to mild anxiety
- A 4-point reduction in GAD score exceeds the minimally important difference (MID) of 2-3 points, indicating that it is clinically significant and meaningful for patients
- A 4-point reduction in GAD score is linked to 12% fewer GP contacts, 18% fewer A&E visits, and 9% fewer hospital admissions ^[1] – a 10% reduction in NHS demand ‘saves’ approximately **£281** per patient per year ^[2]
- The singing group cost **£61** per patient, with a **£15 per point** reduction in GAD score
- IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) has an average cost of £877 per patient ^[3], with an average reduction of 5.55 points ^[4] on the GAD scale, costing about **£158 per point** reduction in GAD score – a cost per point that’s **10 times greater than the singing group**

Treating Dysfunctional Breathing May Improve COPD Symptoms

Dysfunctional breathing is more frequent in chronic obstructive pulmonary disease than in asthma and in health

- Dysfunctional breathing occurs in up to 50% of COPD.
- It is more common in COPD than in asthma or in health.
- COPD Assessment Test (CAT) scores correlate with dysfunctional breathing scores.
- Treatment of dysfunctional breathing may reduce COPD symptoms.

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1569904817301829>



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