

A Two Year Service Evaluation of First Contact Musculoskeletal (MSK) Physiotherapy roles within Primary Care in Taunton

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Background

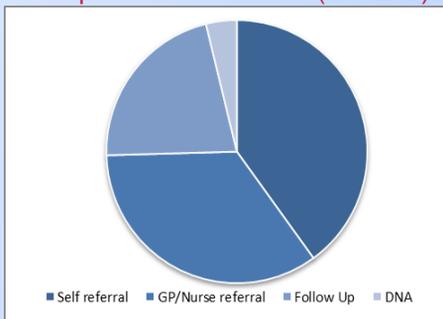
- Increasing pressures on primary care due to aging population and a potential workforce crisis ¹.
- 30% of consultations in primary care are musculoskeletal (MSK) related ².
- NHS Somerset CCG data ³ shows 26.1% of full time equivalent (FTE) GPs are due to retire in the next 5 years.
- First contact MSK physiotherapist (FCP) roles have been introduced to provide a streamlined and cost-effective service, promoting self-management, enhancing patient care and reducing GP workload ⁴.

Methods

- Data was collected at French Weir Health Centre (FWHC) between Sept 2015 and Dec 2017 and Warwick House Medical Centre (WHMC) between Sept 2016 and Dec 2017.
- Each practice offered 8 x 20 min appointments per session and the physiotherapist was able to request investigations, provide injection therapy and prescribe.
- The number of FCP sessions per site differed across GP practices (FWHC = 0.5 FTE and WHMC = 0.2 FTE) but ratio of population per session was similar at FWHC (3226) and WHMC (3525).

Results

Composition of Contacts (n= 3287)



Patient Satisfaction Questionnaire

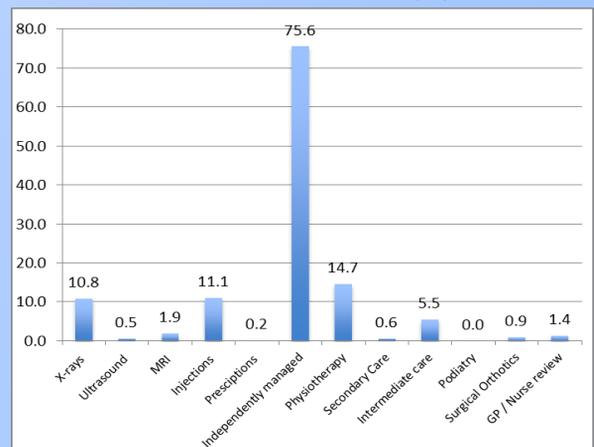
(n = 215 - Likert scale of 0 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree)

I felt listened to
(mean = 4.9)

I found the
consultation helpful
(mean = 4.7)

I was happy with
the outcome
(mean = 4.6)

Outcome of Contacts (%)



Reduction in number of Patients seen in Intermediate Care from each GP surgery



Conclusion

- The FCP role is effective in independently managing MSK conditions, whilst providing appropriate triage and management.
- The benefits of the role extend beyond primary care by reducing the demand on intermediate/secondary care services and accelerating the patient pathway with excellent patient satisfaction.
- It would be helpful to explore the impact of the FCP role on the wider healthcare community e.g. effects on referrals to physiotherapy and referral to treatment times, Emergency Department attendances and conversion rates of surgical referrals.
- Future research should also aim to establish the most effective model of delivery for the long-term sustainability of the role.

References

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