

P20

THE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH VALUE OF AN NHS STAFF PHYSIOTHERAPY SERVICE

H. L. Kroening, H. Tutton, P. Giri, NHS Sheffield, UK

Background:

Access to early intervention and rehabilitation in the management of musculoskeletal disorders was recommended in Carol Black's report "Working for a healthier tomorrow", and there is evidence for the value (financial and other) of NHS Trust-associated occupational physiotherapy. Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Staff Physiotherapy Service is easily accessible to all 18,500 hospital and 900 Integrated Care System employees via straightforward self-referral (with priority for individuals currently off sick) to facilitate retention at/return to work.

Aims:

Evaluation of the local staff physiotherapy service was used as an Occupational Health learning opportunity.

Methods:

Data from the Staff Physiotherapy Service/"Family and Friends" feedback was shared with the Occupational Health Service for qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Results:

Between April and November 2022, monthly referral numbers ranged from 113 to 240; out of 1492 total referrals, 66% were "routine/at work" compared to 28% "urgent/at work" and 6% "urgent/off sick". Back pain/sciatica was by far the commonest complaint, with upper limb and leg/knee problems the next greatest concern. 90% of appointments occurred face-to-face. Overall patient feedback (January 2022 – January 2023) was extremely positive, with staff commending ease of access, timely assessment, friendly and knowledgeable physiotherapists, and good outcomes.

Conclusion:

There was evidence that the system in place is efficient, needs-orientated and greatly valued by staff members who have accessed the service, with little scope for improvement. Data collection and analysis in relation to sickness absence / return to work facilitation and timings would perhaps be helpful for future service evaluation and development.

References:

1. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/209782/hwwb-working-for-a-healthier-tomorrow.pdf
2. <https://www.proquest.com/openview/bf8e9b57ee5d70e23b88ca8442f8beaf/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=49149>