

Information for Patients

Attending for Outpatient Physiotherapy Treatment

You have been referred to physiotherapy. This leaflet will help you to prepare and understand what to expect from your physiotherapy assessment.

What is physiotherapy?

Physiotherapists help people to regain their function and movement to achieve their full physical potential. They use a variety of approaches to promote, maintain and restore wellbeing. In most cases the physiotherapist will identify a home exercise programme or suggest ways in which you can alter your lifestyle to benefit your health and wellbeing. This is often an essential part of the treatment plan and it is important that you follow this advice.

What should I bring?

- A list of medication you are currently taking
- A pair of shorts (if you have some) if you have a back, leg or mobility problem
- You may also wish to bring or wear a vest if you have an upper back, neck or arm problem
- Reading glasses (if you need them)
- If you are pregnant please bring your maternity notes with you
- Lightweight clothes and soft soled shoes for classes

Can I bring someone with me?

Yes, you are welcome to bring someone. If you need an interpreter or wish a chaperone to be provided, please let us know in advance and we will try our best to make one available.

If I am under 16 years old do I have to bring a parent or guardian with me?

No. You will be assessed the same as everyone else. However, after the assessment and following discussion with you, it may be decided you need to bring your parent or legal guardian to your next appointment.

What if I would prefer to be assessed by a male/female physiotherapist?

Please let us know as soon as possible and we will do our best to arrange this.

What can I expect at my physiotherapy assessment? During your assessment the physiotherapist will need to ask you questions about your condition, as well as your general health and lifestyle. You may also be asked to complete questionnaires. The sort of questions you may be asked include:

- When and how your problem started?
- What makes your symptoms better and worse?
- What time of day are your symptoms better or worse?
- How the problem is affecting your day to day activities?
- What are you expecting from physiotherapy?
- What activities do you want to get back to doing?

Your physiotherapist will need to examine you, so you may be required to partially undress. They will also need to find the positions or movements which give you difficulties and this may involve touching or moving a painful part.

The physiotherapist will discuss and explain your treatment options. Due to the need to work on the area of your body that is painful, the treatments offered may be uncomfortable. If you find any part of the assessment or treatment too painful please inform the physiotherapist immediately. If you are concerned about ongoing or new pain following a physiotherapy appointment, please contact the department to request advice as soon as possible.

What if I have something more personal to tell the physiotherapist?

Curtains separate the cubicles so please let your physiotherapist know if you require more privacy.

How do I know my physiotherapist is qualified?

All the physiotherapists working in the Health Board are Health and Care Professions Council registered. Physiotherapists may delegate some aspects of your care to a clinical support worker who has been trained to assist in delivering elements of physiotherapy. Please feel free to ask to speak with your physiotherapist if you would like to discuss your case.

Will I be treated by a physiotherapy student?

You may be asked if you are happy to be assessed and treated by a physiotherapy student. All students will have a senior physiotherapist supervising their work, though the visibility of the supervision will vary dependent on the student's experience. Please ask to talk with the supervisor if you would like to discuss your case or have any concerns. If you prefer not to be treated by a student, this will not affect the quality of your treatment in any way.

How do I find out information about my local department? Local departmental information is available on the Health Board physiotherapy web page www.aneurinbevanhb.wales.nhs.uk or contact your local physiotherapy department as identified on your appointment letter or card.

What happens if I fail to attend my appointments?

Missed appointments within physiotherapy departments means wasted treatment time which could be used for other patients. We therefore follow a strict policy for managing this situation.

If you are unable to attend for your first or any subsequent appointments please contact the department as soon as possible **before** your appointment date so the appointment can be offered to another patient.

If you fail to attend an appointment without prior notification or cancel two consecutive appointments you **will be discharged** from physiotherapy. Only in exceptional circumstances, that are outside your control, will you be offered another appointment.

What if I want to offer comments, ideas or complain about the physiotherapy service?

We are always grateful for feedback from patients and welcome your ideas to improve the service. If you have any concerns we encourage you to raise them at the time either with your physiotherapist directly or with the local department manager. The contact telephone number is available on the appointment letter or card. They will do all they can to help you.

If you would prefer to speak to someone independently you can contact the Health Board call centre 01495 745656. There are also leaflets available in departments which explain the Health Board complaints procedure 'Putting Things Right'.

Aneurin Bevan Health Board aims to provide safe, high quality services to all service users. The Health Board has a zero tolerance approach towards violence and aggression against our staff and on our premises and may utilise CCTV and/or audio recording devices whenever personal safety is threatened. Evidence obtained will be used to secure sanctions against perpetrators.