

## **Information for Patients**

### **Ankle-Foot Orthosis (AFO)**

### **Physiotherapy Service**

#### **Why do I need to wear a brace?**

The foot brace has been prescribed to you because the muscles in your leg are not working well enough to lift your foot up. The brace is designed to aid your mobility, reducing the possibility of tripping and falling and making your walking more energy efficient.

This brace has been fitted for your use only. Do not adjust it or fit it to anyone else.

It is important to wear the brace as instructed to help you move around safely.

#### **How long do I need to wear the brace?**

The length of time you will wear the brace varies depending on the reason the brace was supplied. Your physiotherapist will discuss with you the length of time you need to wear it. You need to wear it until you are instructed that it is all right for you to walk without it or until a different brace is supplied.

#### **When should I wear the brace?**

The brace should be worn whenever you are walking around; this helps to reduce the risk of you tripping and falling and makes your walking less effortful.

#### **Precautions**

It is advisable to wear a sock underneath the brace to prevent chafing. The brace is flammable so keep away from fire. Always follow the guidance of your orthotist or physiotherapist regarding the use of this ankle brace.

The life span of your brace will depend of your activity level and the frequency of use. If you wish to have more braces, please contact your physiotherapist.

If you present with new symptom(s)/ condition(s) that are unrelated, you may need a review appointment.

<b>Problems</b>	<b>Possible cause</b>	<b>What to do</b>
<i>Persistent skin irritation or red areas</i>	Badly-fitting splint, splint applied incorrectly, poor sensation	Remove the splint Attempt to reapply as instructed
<i>Swelling</i>	Splint is fastened too tightly, poor positioning of the foot	Loosen straps, review instructions on how to apply splint
<i>Pain</i>	Splint or straps applied incorrectly	Loosen straps, review splint wearing duration

If these issues persist, let your physiotherapist know so that the splint can be adjusted.

### **How should I put the brace on?**

The person who fits your brace will explain how to do this. Once you are at home continue to use the same method. The method is shown below.

The AFO should be checked prior to application to ensure no damage or wear to the splint.



Place the AFO into the shoe as shown in the picture. Ensure that the back of the splint is all the way in the heel of the shoe.



The splint should look like the photo opposite when fitted correctly.



Fold the soft strap first around the front of the leg, ensuring no plastic is in direct contact with the leg. Hold the soft strap in place by fastening the Velcro strap firmly.



You should try to wear your splint \_\_\_\_\_ time/s a day for \_\_\_\_\_ hour/s at a time or \_\_\_\_\_.

**“This document is available in Welsh / Mae’r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg”**