

A different communication approach in outpatient physiotherapy

Submission date 21/06/2021	Recruitment status No longer recruiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered
		<input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
Registration date 21/06/2021	Overall study status Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan
		<input type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited 15/04/2024	Condition category Musculoskeletal Diseases	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data
		<input type="checkbox"/> Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

Physiotherapy services that treat bone and muscle injuries (musculoskeletal services) have by definition traditionally focused on service users with physical ailments. The healthcare environment is, however, changing rapidly with an aging population, increasing numbers of service users with multiple diseases and increased awareness of the impact of mental health-related conditions. These changes have challenged outpatient physiotherapy services to deliver different and more effective types of care.

The Fife home visit physiotherapy service (ICASS) has been training physiotherapists on using different types of conversations with service users with long-term conditions. The approach called a 'Personal Outcomes Approach' more readily establishes what matters to service users during their healthcare consultation. Despite the positive feedback from service users and staff, there remains scepticism from some, e.g. staff who focus on the service user's injured body part, rather than on the person as a whole. Similarly, some managers feel healthcare staff do not need additional communication training as staff are already 'experts' in conversations with patients. Whilst the use of a 'Personal Outcomes Approach' appears successful, there is a lack of robust evidence to support its wider adoption.

This project aims to study how the adoption of the 'Personal Outcomes Approach' to healthcare conversations can enhance outcomes for service users and understand more fully how these types of service user-physiotherapist conversations work.

Who can participate?

Patients aged over 16 years referred to the Fife Adult Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy Service with a musculoskeletal-related condition

What does the study involve?

The study involves an analysis of the communication between service users and physiotherapists in their normal consultations to evaluate if adopting a personal outcomes communication approach provides additional benefits for service users and physiotherapists.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

The benefits are that a 'different' communication approach may offer an enhanced experience and outcomes for patients and clinicians. The main ethical issue is that patients will provide

voluntary informed consent to have their physiotherapy consultation audibly and digitally recorded. It is deemed that this would be less intrusive than video recording given that some patients may be in a state of partial undress during their consultation depending on their musculoskeletal condition. The recordings would be given a study code and uploaded after each patient consultation to secure NHS servers and be confidential. Verona coding requires the NHS Fife employed research team to access the live recording to code for cues, style and utterances. The recordings will also be accessed by onsite NHS Fife secretarial staff who have experience in typing and transcribing, thus no data will be leaving NHS Fife premises. At this point, the transcriptions will be anonymised to remove any patient-identifiable information.

Where is the study run from?
NHS Fife Victoria Hospital (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
March 2019 to December 2024

Who is funding the study?
NHS Fife Research, Development and Innovation Service (UK)

Who is the main contact?
Dr Grant Syme
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Contact information

Type(s)
Scientific

Contact name
Dr Grant Syme

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Additional identifiers

Integrated Research Application System (IRAS)
249344

Study information

Scientific Title

The use of a communications-based 'personal outcomes approach' in an outpatient musculoskeletal physiotherapy service: a realist evaluation

Acronym

COPE

Study objectives

To evaluate the use of a communication 'Personal Outcomes Approach' in musculoskeletal physiotherapy consultations to advance understanding what works, for whom, to what extent and in what circumstances.

Ethics approval required

Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)

Approved 07/01/2020, East of England - Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Research Ethics Committee (The Old Chapel, Royal Standard Place, Nottingham, NG1 6FS, UK; +44 (0)207 1048106; NRESCCommittee.EastofEngland-CambsandHerts@nhs.net), REC ref: 19/EE/0356

Study design

Realist mixed methods qualitative and quantitative methodologies of current and emerging practice

Primary study design

Observational

Study type(s)

Treatment

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Musculoskeletal conditions

Interventions

The study will use a 'realist methodology' to explore the use of the Personal Outcomes Approach (POA) within the Fife adult musculoskeletal physiotherapy service. Realist studies explore the particular contexts (C) and the potential way it works (mechanisms) (M) that may combine to produce different patient experiences (outcomes) (O) for a patient's physiotherapy experience.

The study involves analysis of the communication between service users and physiotherapists in their normal consultations to evaluate if adopting a personal outcomes communication approach provides additional benefits for service users and physiotherapists.

Intervention Type

Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)

Communication at the initial physiotherapy consultation evaluated using the Communication Verona Coding Framework at the first consultation

Key secondary outcome(s)

1. Communication styles measured using 4 Habits Communication Coding Scheme at the first consultation and after the conclusion of the physiotherapy treatment episode
2. Care empathy measured using Care Measure at the first consultation and after the conclusion of the physiotherapy treatment episode
3. Quality of life measured using Patient Generated Index (PGI) at the first consultation and after the conclusion of the physiotherapy treatment episode
4. Self-efficacy measured using Two Item Short Form Self Efficacy at the first consultation and after the conclusion of the physiotherapy treatment episode
5. Stage of pain change measured using Pain Stages of Change Questionnaire at the first consultation and after the conclusion of the physiotherapy treatment episode

Completion date

31/12/2024

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

All adult patients (greater than 16 years) referred to the Fife Adult Musculoskeletal Physiotherapy Service with a musculoskeletal related condition(s)

Participant type(s)

Patient

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Mixed

Lower age limit

16 years

Sex

All

Key exclusion criteria

1. Patients under 16 years of age
2. Patients unwilling or unable to give informed consent to participate
3. Acute psychiatric conditions
4. Acute mental illness

Date of first enrolment

01/03/2020

Date of final enrolment

30/08/2024

Locations

Countries of recruitment

United Kingdom

Scotland

Study participating centre

Victoria Hospital

Department of Physiotherapy

Hayfield Road

Kirkcaldy

United Kingdom

KY2 5AH

Sponsor information

Organisation

NHS Fife

ROR

<https://ror.org/05x1ves75>

Funder(s)

Funder type

Hospital/treatment centre

Funder Name

NHS Fife Research, Development and Innovation Department

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study are not expected to be made available as this is a realist study based predominately on personal qualitative information.

IPD sharing plan summary

Not expected to be made available

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
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[HRA research summary](#)

28/06/2023 No

No

[Participant information sheet](#)

version V1.1

08/07/2021 No

Yes