

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT SELF-REFERRAL AND PHYSIOTHERAPY**

### \* **WHAT IS PHYSIOTHERAPY?**

Physiotherapy and Physiotherapists help people who are affected by injury or pain. They frequently use exercise, advice, education and manual therapy to help people recover from injuries or to help people learn how to better manage their condition.

### \* **WHAT IS SELF-REFERRAL?**

This is a new way for people to access our service. It allows you to refer yourself for physiotherapy assessment and treatment without first having to see your GP.

### \* **WHO CAN SELF-REFER?**

If you are over 16 years of age, you have a neck/back problem, a joint/muscle pain or a recent injury such as a sprain then you can self-refer

### \* **WHY SHOULD YOU SELF-REFER?**

Self-referral provides you with an easier route into the physiotherapy service. It allows you to receive a timely consultation with a physiotherapist who will provide you with the support and guidance you need to help you manage your condition/injury and get you back to doing the things that matter to you

### \* **HOW CAN YOU SELF-REFER?**

There are several ways in which you can self-refer to the Physiotherapy service.

**Online form** – this can be accessed via the website:

<https://belfasttrust.hscni.net/service/musculoskeletal-physio-outpatients/>

**PDF form** – this can also be accessed via the website and is a printable version that you can then complete and post back to us <https://belfasttrust.hscni.net/service/musculoskeletal-physio-outpatients/>

**Paper form** – this form can be found on the back of the information leaflet. You can find these leaflets at your GP practice or at a Physiotherapy Department.

### \* **WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE RECEIVE YOUR REFERRAL?**

Upon receipt of your referral you will receive a confirmation email or letter (depending on whether you submitted the electronic form or submitted your form via post). Your form will then be reviewed and triaged by a senior physiotherapist.

If we need further information from you we will contact you using the details provided on your form. Your referral will then be added to the waiting list.

You will be contacted by letter or telephone to invite you to attend an appointment.

### \* **HOW CAN YOU HELP YOURSELF WHILE YOU WAIT FOR AN APPOINTMENT?**

Please see the self-management advice section on our website:

<https://belfasttrust.hscni.net/service/musculoskeletal-physio-outpatients/self-management/>

\* **WHAT SHOULD YOU WEAR?**

Please wear comfortable shoes or trainers and bring appropriate clothing such as shorts or a vest-top/t-Shirt so that your condition can be properly assessed by your Physiotherapist.

\* **HOW LONG WILL THE APPOINTMENT TAKE?**

Appointments run on time and will last approximately 60 minutes on your first appointment and 30 minutes for appointments thereafter.

\* **WHAT HAPPENS IF I FAIL TO ATTEND FOR MY APPOINTMENT?**

To get the best outcome from Physiotherapy we encourage you to attend your appointments, if you fail to attend any appointment this may lead to discharge. You will receive information on our discharge policy when we write to you inviting you to make an appointment and your physiotherapist will remind you of this during your initial appointment.

\* **HOW CAN I FIND OUT MY H+C NUMBER?**

You will find your H+C number on your health and care card or from a previous hospital letter. Your GP surgery will also be able to give you this information.

**Please note than self-referral is not a fast track access to the Physiotherapy service, your referral will be categorised on the same basis as referrals from GPs and other sources.**