

Community Paediatric Physiotherapy

Information for parents on initial referral

This leaflet is for parents / carers of children who have been referred to the Community Paediatric Physiotherapy service by their GP, consultant or other health professional. It is designed to give you more information about the service.

What happens next?

When we receive a referral letter, we register your child and send you a letter to let you know we have received and accepted a referral for your child.

Your child will be added to our waiting list and allocated a named physiotherapist as soon as possible. We will make contact with you to arrange your child's first physiotherapy appointment for initial assessment. You may be offered a home visit or a clinic appointment depending on which best suits your child's needs.

What if I am unable to keep an appointment?

If you fail to keep your appointment and do not let us know that you are unable to attend, we will send out a reminder letter to you to contact us to make another appointment. If you fail to ring back or fail to keep this appointment, your child will be discharged back to the referring doctor.

If you are unable to keep a pre-arranged appointment you should ring your physiotherapist and leave a message at the department. A wasted appointment could be an appointment for another child.

What happens at this assessment?

We will listen to your concerns and look at your child's abilities and together decide how best we can help your child. You will have a named qualified children's physiotherapist who will give advice and activities to help your child's ongoing development, with agreed goals and outcomes.

Your child will need to dress appropriately. Younger children can be assessed in their baby vests or underwear. Older children will probably prefer shorts and T-shirt, which they can wear or bring along to change in to.

Advice will be given to you at the end of the assessment as to how you can begin to help your child. This advice is often put into a written programme, which is sent to you. We will write to your GP and consultant (if you have one) regarding the outcome of your assessment.

How often will I see the physiotherapist?

This is decided by the physiotherapist in agreement with you. You and your family can carry out most activities and exercises on a daily basis, and the physiotherapist is able to review progress and give pointers to ongoing advice and activities for the future. The physiotherapist may see your child on a

regular basis i.e. monthly, or may feel that they are doing particularly well and will see them on a review basis i.e. three or six monthly.

A home activity/movement programme will be given to you to work through with your child on a daily basis or as agreed with your physiotherapist. Your physiotherapist will then agree a convenient time for both sides to monitor your child's progress and at those times give further advice on activities to continue their improvement.

What if I have any queries?

You may discuss any queries you have with your physiotherapist. Should you have any queries before you have your initial assessment, please contact the department and ask to speak to the clinical team manager, who will return your call as soon as possible, and hopefully answer your queries.

Your physiotherapist and the clinical team manager are available for any questions you may have at any time. You may telephone the department to speak to them.

Alternatively, we have a 24 hour answering facility where you can leave a message and will return your call.

What if my child is at mainstream school?

Every effort will be made to see your child so that it does not interfere too much with their schooling. However, sometimes this is unavoidable and if it occurs, we try to keep this to a minimum. If it is possible we will try to see them after school or in the school holiday times. We will liaise with the school staff to ensure they can make adjustments for their needs into the classroom environment and will show them how to use specialist equipment or orthotics given for your child.

What if my child is at special school?

Appointments will be made for your child to be assessed at their school or during the holiday time. If this takes place at school, we will arrange a time when you can come to school to be part of this first assessment appointment so that we can discuss your child's needs and agree the way forward together. Depending on your child's individual needs, you may be given a home activity/movement programme to carry out at home. Advice will be given to the school staff to enable them to incorporate activities/movements into their school daily programme and curriculum. Your physiotherapist will monitor your child at school and will invite you in should a change in their physical activity programme be needed. Alternatively, you may be offered a clinical appointment or home visit in the holiday times to go through any ongoing needs or changes.

How can I contact you?

Community Paediatric Physiotherapy
Community Business Unit
Bensham Hospital
Gateshead
NE8 4YL

Telephone: 0191 445 3124

Data Protection

Any personal information is kept confidential. There may be occasions where your information needs to be shared with other care professionals to ensure you receive the best care possible.

In order to assist us to improve the services available, your information may be used for clinical audit, research, teaching and anonymised for National NHS Reviews and Statistics.

Further information is available via Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust website

(<https://www.gegateshead.nhs.uk/fairprocessing>) or by contacting the Data Protection Officer by telephone on 0191 445 8418 or by email ghnt.ig.team@nhs.net.

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**This leaflet can be made available in other languages and
formats upon request**