

Connect

Occupational Health Physiotherapy Launch Pack

Connect Health



West Lothian
Council

Contents

Introduction to Connect Health	3
Connect Occupational Health Physiotherapy Services	4
Aims of Service at West Lothian Council and College	5
What services are provided at West Lothian Council and College? ...	7
Occupational Health Physiotherapists at West Lothian Council and College.....	9
Who should be referred into the service? Our Employee priority system.....	10
Unsure if you should refer to Physiotherapy?	11
How to make a physiotherapy referral	12
Employee referral: Best Practice examples	12
Employee referral pathways and standard processes.....	14
Employee Management Reports	17
Site Management Meetings and Management Information.....	20
Agility – Online Diary and Referral System.....	22
MSD manager training at service launch	23
Additional services available through Connect	24
How to promote the OH Physiotherapy service	26
Getting the most from the service.....	27
Directory.....	30

Introduction to Connect Health

Connect Health are one of the largest providers of musculoskeletal (MSK) physiotherapy services in the UK. Since 1989 we have been providing specialist occupational health physiotherapy to a huge variety of UK businesses.

Our goals are to:

- Improve the health, safety and wellbeing of employees
- Improve the performance and productivity of employees
- Reduce sickness absence
- Prevent accidents at work
- Demonstrate health, work and financial return on investment.
- Save a business £4 for every £1 invested

Connect are SEQOHS accredited. SEQOHS stands for Safe, Effective, Quality Occupational Health Service and is a set of standards and accreditation scheme for occupational health services in the UK and beyond.

SEQOHS accreditation is the formal recognition that an occupational health service provider has demonstrated that it has the competence to deliver against the measures in the SEQOHS standards. Connect were highly commended during the SEQOHS assessment process and held as a benchmark to all Occupational Health Providers



Connect Occupational Health Physiotherapy Services

Our evidenced based proactive service model is centred on a biopsychosocial occupational approach. It is designed to protect and enhance employee health and wellbeing, and simultaneously support the health, safety and wellbeing objectives of the business.

Our services focus on four broad proactive areas:

Prevention services

We empower employees to improve health and well-being and prevent ill health. Educational and supportive services are designed to prevent problems in the first place. This is achieved through increasing employee / employer health awareness, responsibility and management capability.

Assessment services

Proactive assessment of employees, workplace environments, tasks and processes to reduce the risk of musculoskeletal injury and enhance health, safety and well-being.

This addresses the root cause of health and MSD issues, and puts in place measures to remove, reduce, control and manage risks.

Treatment services

Immediate access to expert occupational health physiotherapy support, advice and treatment. Available via telephone, application or face to face.

A biopsychosocial approach to assessment, treatment and rehabilitation provides a holistic work-focussed plan to help each employee get back to full fitness quickly.

Rehabilitation

To support the health and occupational management of conditions that restrict an individual's capacity to work.

Work focussed functional evaluation and rehabilitation services assess an individual's physical limitations and explore the psychosocial barriers to recovery. Tailored support and guidance are provided to optimise work focussed rehabilitation.



Aims of Service at West Lothian Council and College

Why have we introduced Occupational Health Physiotherapy?

Occupational Health Physiotherapy is a specialist area of musculoskeletal physiotherapy that involves occupational health & workplace ergonomics. It is specifically tailored around the worker, work and the workplace.

Our Occupational Health Physiotherapy Service provides a means of reducing, preventing and effectively managing Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD's) in addition to promoting employee health, safety and wellbeing.

An MSD is any injury, damage or disorder of the joints or other tissues in the upper limbs, lower limbs or the back. This could be a result of either a sudden injury or a gradual build up of strain over a period of time

MSD's can cause personal pain and discomfort for individuals, loss of productivity at work (presenteeism), sickness absence and generate significant costs to the business.

What do we hope to achieve from the service?

This service has been introduced as part of our health, safety and wellbeing strategy. The goals are to:

- **Help employees:** Through improving health and preventing, assessing, treating and managing MSDs.
- **Help the business:** Through improving the health, safety and well-being of our employees
- **Help the business:** Through reducing the costs associated with sickness absence and workplace presenteeism (reduced productivity due to health problems)

How will we achieve our service goals?

MSD Prevention



Connect can support our employees by engaging in proactive assessments and supporting health campaigns within our workplace. Identifying, reducing and removing potential risk factors and providing best practice advice can stop MSD's developing

Early and convenient access to specialist physiotherapy

Employees will have early access to a qualified and experienced Chartered Physiotherapist and specialist in Occupational Health.



Local NHS waiting times often be 6-12 weeks for Physio. Such a long delay in treatment and advice can affect recovery and potentially their long-term health. Some people may be off work whilst waiting for much needed physiotherapy to help them deal with their problem.

By seeing employees on 'day 1' of injury / absence, Connect can generally reduce any long-term chronic effects and get them well enough to resume normal life. This means that employees are back to work sooner and absenteeism & presenteeism are reduced.

Relevant, work focussed, advice



The Connect physiotherapist has a good understanding of the work we undertake in the business. This means that they are well placed to advise people and make recommendations particularly regarding working practices and, where appropriate, return to work plans.

Reduce time off or away from work



Connect can manage most musculoskeletal problems in the workplace. This means getting our employees back to an active life sooner, with less time off work, either waiting for or attending NHS Physio appointments.

Improved performance & productivity in work



Connect work with our employees to reduce pain, improve movement and maximise physical function. This helps performance in the workplace as pain reduces and function improves. Assessment, treatment and management information is tailored specifically around the person and the workplace to maximise the benefits.

Managing long-standing or recurring problems



Not only can Connect help people with recent onset or acute problems, but they can help people learn to manage long standing or recurring problems. Such cases are always managed to ensure that the employee is fully empowered with the knowledge they need to best manage their condition

What services are provided at West Lothian Council and College

- **Initial assessment via Physioline (Connects telephone assessment and management service):**

Line Managers at West Lothian Council identify employees with a musculoskeletal disorder (MSD). The referral form is completed and emailed to occupational health administration.

HR at the West Lothian College identify employees with a MSD. Referral form completed and emailed to occupational health administration.

Employees will call Connect.

Connect will book an initial telephone assessment. This will involve telephone triage, assessment and self-management advice. The Connect telephone physiotherapist will clinically reason the appropriate next steps in terms of clinical management. This may involve ongoing management with an Occupational Health Physiotherapist over the telephone, or appointment for face to face treatment on site.

Onsite Occupational Physiotherapy:

The following is available as part of the onsite physiotherapy service:

Regular attendance of a specialist Occupational Health (OH) Physiotherapist to provide

- Clinical and functional assessment
- Treatment and functional rehabilitation
- Employee specific management reports including recommendations regarding return to work and normal function
- Regular communication and liaison with our management teams on MSD prevention and health promotion

General workplace assessment (Individual):

Employee led, ergonomic evaluation of an individual at their workstation or workplace. This assessment will be carried out for individuals following an MSD, having received treatment/review via the onsite OH Physiotherapy service

A clinical assessment takes place first, before the workplace assessment. This allows the physiotherapist to have a clear understanding of all influencing clinical factors and facilitates safe and effective planning, then delivery of the workplace assessment.

General workplace assessment (Task):

An ergonomic review of general processes / area via observation and quantitative task analysis. This should be viewed as a collaborative assessment (often with health and safety) in which a process is reviewed and simple recommendations are made verbally or via a simple report.

If the physiotherapist assesses a process / task / area and clinically reasons that a more detailed ergonomic risk assessment is required, they will make that recommendation to the referring manager and escalate the requirement to their Connect team leader. An ergonomic risk assessment can then be purchased via Connect who will support the business in this process (see additional services available).

Functional Rehabilitation:

Small group-based rehabilitation classes for individuals following an MSD. This service is aimed at conditioning employees to return to work safely and promoting normal, healthy activity.

Functional rehabilitation is the focus of every clinical interaction within Connect, whether this be on a one to one basis, or as part of a group setting.

Connect will work with a business to plan and deliver class sessions should there be the requirement and facilities to do so.

Prevention Services:

Proactive intervention including onsite exercise sessions, promotion of best practice in working environments and support in health promotion campaigns

Occupational Health Physiotherapists at West Lothian Council and College

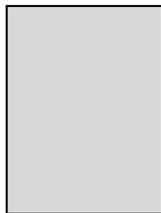
The Physiotherapists available in your workplace, provided by Connect Health, are members of the chartered society of physiotherapy (CSP) and registered with the health and care professions council (HCPC). This means they are robustly governed and have undergone the rigorous training to pass national examinations, enabling them to practice within the United Kingdom in line with high professional standards.

All the Connect team are Occupational Health Physiotherapists with comprehensive post graduate training in occupational health and members of ACPOHE (the association of chartered physiotherapists in occupational health and ergonomics).

An Overview of the Connect Onsite Physiotherapy team



Neil Duff



Pauline Austin

Who should be referred into the service?

Our Employee priority system

It is important that the business understands exactly who should be referred into the physiotherapy service. We must ensure that those employees with the most need are seen as a priority as we only have a set number of hours available each week.

As specialist Occupational Health Physiotherapists, Connect have a work focussed approach. As such, the immediate goal is to help employees where the MSD is affecting work or at high risk of doing so.

The following guidelines have been provided to help referring managers and gatekeepers to the physiotherapy service determine the priority of employees. Utilising this simple system will facilitate the effective booking of employees into the clinic within optimum timescales.

The physiotherapist will continually prioritise clinical and occupational need based on the number and nature of cases within the clinic. As such, at certain times, appointments may need to be changed to accommodate high priority cases.

High	Medium	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off sick with Musculoskeletal Disorder • Post work accident • RIDDOR Reportable <p>Booking: Employees should be given an appointment within 3 -7 days. If the diary is full, lower priority employees should be re-arranged.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In work but with high risk of going off sick • In work on restricted duties • In work with a planned MSD absence (i.e. upcoming surgery) <p>Booking: Employees should be given an appointment within 7-10 days. If the diary is full, lower priority employees should be re-arranged.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In work (on full duties and low risk of MSD Absence) <p>Booking: Employees should be considered a discretionary referral.</p> <p>Employee would benefit from 'one off' physiotherapy assessment and self-management advice.</p> <p>Should be monitored that they do not worsen and become a 'H or M' case and impact on work</p>

Unsure if you should refer to Physiotherapy?

When considering an employee referral, the key is to focus on the employee priority system. This should be your 'go to guide', but please speak to the onsite physiotherapist for any support. They will be very happy to help

Some commonly asked questions about the need for a referral, and their subsequent answers are listed below.

Q) An employee is off work with an MSD – should I refer

Yes. Early intervention is key and will help reduce the risk of prolonged absence. Our aim is to support our employee to return to work at the earliest opportunity with the right support.

Q) An employee is in work with an MSD – should I refer?

Look at the priority level. Is it impacting on work – yes, then refer straight away. If it is not impacting on work, make a referral as a low priority, the physio will manage and prioritise the clinical case accordingly.

Q) An employee is already having NHS physio, should I refer?

If the employee is not in work or not completing their full duties, make a high or medium priority referral as it is impacting on work. The Connect physios are specialists in occupational health and will provide bespoke work information and guidance, thus making the intervention more specialised and work focused. This is not provided by the NHS as they are not OH physios, nor do they have contact with the workplace.

If the employee is in work and completing their full, unrestricted duties, a referral is a lower priority, however a referral for workplace advice and a one-off assessment would still be valid.

Q) An employee is waiting for a consultant opinion or an investigation for an MSD – should I refer.

Yes, Connect will provide bespoke work information, this may be in the form of an assessment, pre-habilitation exercises (before an operation) and the setting of sensible and safe work expectations prior to a return to work. This is not provided to this extent by the NHS.

Musculoskeletal conditions are a costly and growing problem.



How to make a physiotherapy referral

Physioline Occupational Health Physiotherapy

- Managers at West Lothian Council /HR at West Lothian College complete a physiotherapy referral form and email it to occupational health administration. Employee given number to call Connect. 0330 124 5742 for Council employees, 0330 124 5741 for College employees
- opsadmin@connecthealth.co.uk
- The form contains basic details for a manager to complete and will help guide and inform the process
- Occupational Health Admin will register the employee on the Connect online system 'Agility'
- Occupational Health Administration will make the appointment for the employee on Agility into Physio Line clinic and inform the employee and referring line manager
- Agility will email the employee to inform them of the appointment date and time. Connect recognise that not every employee will have an email address. As such a template letter / email is provided for the business to use in communication with the employee
- The employee will be assessed by the onsite physiotherapist who will clinically reason the appropriate management / rehabilitation plan. The physio will book appointments directly with the employee based on the management plan. The employee will receive an appointment card or confirmation email

Employee referral: Best Practice examples

The golden rules here are to refer to the priority system and refer all MSD cases very earlier, aiming for absence cases referred on day 1 of the absence. Below are some case study examples of 'good' and 'bad' referrals, and their associated impact / benefits.

Good referral of Absent employee: An employee is **absent** with an MSD and **identified on day one** by line manager / HR. They **are referred immediately (same day)** for the next available appointment.

- **Work benefit:** The physio is able to intervene early and manage the case effectively. This significantly reduces the risk of prolonged absence and expedites a safe effective and productive return to work at the earliest available opportunity
- **Employee benefit:** The physio is able to provide effective assessment and treatment that will optimise employee health and well-being – take away the pain and improve the function. This is highly likely to stop the condition worsening (for example back pain spreading into the leg). It will also give the individual all the tools they need to make a prompt recovery in addition to proactive advice on how to stop it happening again
- **Physio benefit:** The earlier connect see an absence problem, the easier it is for the physio to manage it, and the less appointments it will take. This creates capacity for other employees to be seen within the service

Bad /'late' referral of Absent employee. Employee who is **absent** with an MSD **is identified late** by the line manager / HR and **referred late** for a physio appointment.

- **Work impact:** The physio is not able to intervene early and manage the case effectively. Delays in referral for absence cases have a significant impact on work (operationally and financially). Late referrals (anything over a week late) significantly increases the risk of prolonged absence and delays a safe return to work. This has a significant impact on the business
- **Employee impact:** Prolonged absence and a delay in getting expert help significantly increases the risk of secondary complications (MSD's getting worse unnecessarily). There is also a considerable risk of unhelpful attitudes and beliefs about pain and function building up for the employee. This can further increase pain and present barriers to a prompt recovery. A simple example of an unhelpful belief would be that pain is causing irreversible damage and that movement must be avoided. This is very rarely the case and can significantly impact on recovery if this belief is present. Physios are very good at addressing the physical and psychological aspects of rehabilitation, the earlier they see employees, the better and easier it is.
- **Physio impact:** The later that connect see an absence problem, the harder it is for the physio to manage it, and the more appointments it will take. This creates availability issues for other employees who may need to be seen within the service

Good referral of employee in work. Employee in work with an MSD is identified early by manager and **referred early** for the next available, appropriate appointment. **Referral is made before the MSD impacts on work.**

- **Work benefit:** The physio is able to intervene early and manage the case effectively. This significantly reduces the risk of an MSD impacting on work. If an MSD is already impacting on work, Connect can limit the impact and quickly remove the problem.
- **Employee benefit:** The physio is able to provide effective assessment and treatment that will optimise employee health and well-being – take away the pain and improve the function. This is highly likely to stop the condition worsening and impacting on work.
- **Physio benefit:** The earlier connect see an absence problem, the easier it is for the physio to manage it, and the less appointments it will take. Often, minor problems can be managed effectively with 1-2 sessions and an emphasis of work specific self -management. This creates capacity for other employees to be seen within the service



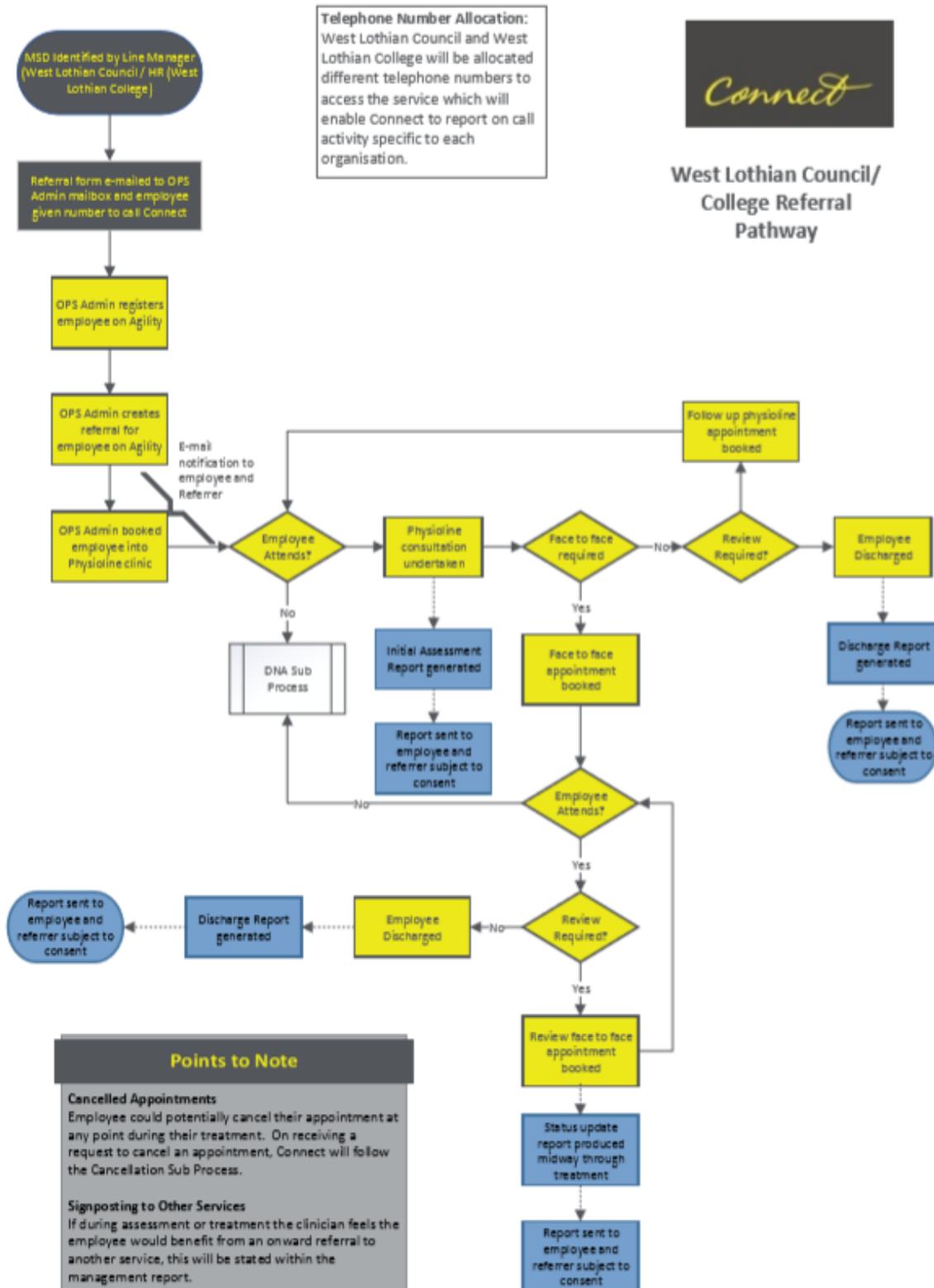
Employee referral pathways and standard processes

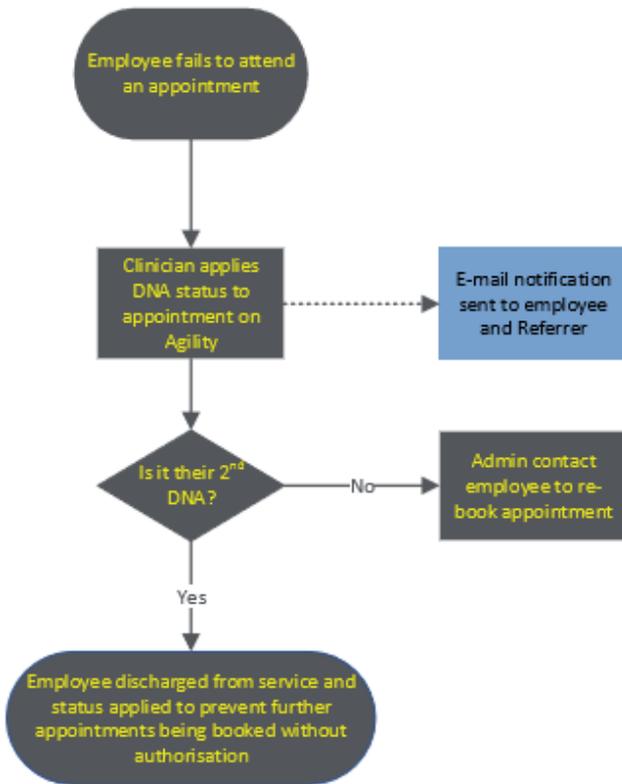
It is important that we have a standardised approach to how an employee enters the service and completes the clinical journey. After referral for assessment (and potential treatment if appropriate), several scenarios may occur.

Connect have produced standardised process flows to explain the steps involved:

- Referral for Assessment and Potential Treatment: The normal employee cycle
- DNA process (did not attend): When an employee misses an appointment without giving prior notice
- UTA Process (unable to attend): When an employee misses an appointment with giving prior notice
- Employee led work place assessment process: When there is a need identified to complete an assessment of the employee in the workplace

- Workplace assessment process: When there is a need identified for an 'general' assessment of a process or task in the work place





**West Lothian Council/
College DNA Sub
Process**

Employee Management Reports

Connect will produce detailed and concise employee management reports as it is important that the business understands how an MSD is (or may be) impacting a worker, the work or the work place.

To support the business management of any case, Connect will produce a management report for each employee and publish them on the secure online system (Agility). These reports will be available to view by Vera Bole and Derek Stevenson who are able to download and cascade them to the referring line manager.

What information do the reports contain?

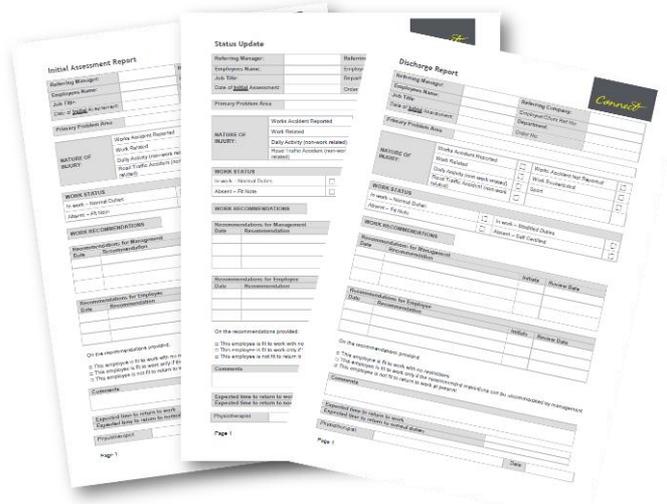
- Detailed, work specific information to assist in the management of the case.
- A return to work plan and timeframes (where required / for absence cases)
- Recommendations (where required) for temporary changes to working practice or temporary changes to specific aspects of work exposure.
- If a case is following a work accident or reasoned to be potentially work related (and subject to RIDDOR procedures), it will be detailed explicitly in the report to allow the business to action in a timely fashion.
- The physiotherapy intervention required, and the timescales involved.

All medical information disclosed is held in the strictest of confidence and no confidential information is included in the management report. Employees have the right to gain access to any clinical notes or management reports at any point.

What type of report will I get and when will I get it?

There are three types of employee management report that can be produced. All will include clear, work specific recommendations and comment.

- **Initial Assessment Report:** Produced after an employee is seen by the physiotherapist for the first time
- **Interim Report (status update):** Produced during the course of a treatment cycle. These reports will be produced when there is any change in work status / capability to update line management with relevant information.
- **Discharge Report:** Produce at the end of an employee case / treatment cycle. This will summarise and close the case in addition to advising management of any ongoing recommendations



How do I understand and use the reports?

It is paramount that referring line managers and 'gatekeepers' to the service read the reports, disseminate them and apply the recommendations appropriately. The reports are easy to follow and simply include management information, not confidential medical information.

Connect will endeavour to work with the business to ensure that reports are as specific as possible to the work place. Reports will detail functional advice / recommendation combined with work specific information.

The line manager is then responsible for implementing the recommendation or communicating with the physiotherapist if any area of the report is not understood.

An example work specific recommendation in the report: *The employee is fit to do activities A, B and C in area X. They should avoid overhead lifting activities for a period of 10 days. This would necessitate avoiding activity D in area Y.*

Report orientation:

- **Employee information section:** Contains employee identifiable information

- **Primary problem area:** Details the affected body part / the primary problem area. It will not detail specific medical diagnosis as this is not relevant to the line manager, nor the operational management of the employee. Inclusion of employee confidential medical information is not permitted within such reports.
- **Work recommendations for Managers.** This section is vital and a key focus for referring line managers and gatekeepers to the service to read and understand. This section will detail specific recommendations (where required) for temporary work modifications / adaptations. They will have a timeline associated with each recommendation and be specific to the work place.
- **Work recommendations for employees.** Provides an overview of specific recommendations and information given to the employee. Employees are expected to play an active role in the management of their case and any rehabilitation that is required
- **Fitness for work statement:** Provides clear guidance for a referring manager on the fitness of an employee to work. Three options will be available:
 - **This employee is fit to work with no restrictions**
 - **This employee is fit to work only if the recommended restrictions can be accommodated by management**
 - **This employee is not fit to return to work at present**
- **Comments:** Provides the physio an opportunity to give extra detail (where required) in relation to a specific case
- **Expected time to return to work:** Provides a timeline for a return to work (in instances of absence)
- **Expected time to return to normal duties:** Provides a timeline for a return to normal duties (in instances of restricted duties)

Important information:

- **The reports are independent, expert recommendations:** They will be work focused and reasonably practical in the view of the OH physiotherapist who has a good knowledge of the workplace. The referring manager must decide how best to implement them and discuss with the physiotherapist
- **The reports are specialist OH musculoskeletal advice:** They are centred on supporting and protecting employee health and well being and written by an expert in OH physiotherapy. They are also business focused to support safe, effective and productive work at the earliest available opportunity.
- **A GP does not need to sign an employee off as fit before they return to work:** Your OH physiotherapy report will

provide the guidance you need for an MSD case. Employees can return to work if they feel they are fit or if deemed fit and safe by the OH physiotherapist.

- **A GP note in relation to a MSD case does not overrule a OH Physiotherapy report.** In the rare event of a GP saying that an employee is not fit to return to work and the OH physiotherapist reporting they are fit; a business must decide on which piece of advice to take.

Both reports are recommendations, however the onsite OH physiotherapist report is more specialised. Onsite OH physiotherapists are experts in OH, understand the business and have a detailed and comprehensive knowledge of the clinical complaint. Employee Health, safety and wellbeing is central to OH physiotherapist and we would not recommend a return to work (or modified) duties if it was not beneficial for the employee.

In the event of complex cases, that may involve non-MSD conditions, the physio will differentiate clearly and link with other health professionals accordingly.

Site Management Meetings and Management Information

Site meetings

Connect will meet regularly with the business to analyse the service, identify and discuss trends and evolve service delivery. This is done through meeting regularly with key stakeholders:

Management information

Connect produce detailed management information (MI) to review at the meetings.

The MI includes a detailed breakdown of service specific information and their interdependencies. Using this data allows the business and Connect to discuss the data, identify trends and formulate proactive strategies.

Connect will report on the following metrics (as a minimum)

- Key service measure dashboard – one stop shop of service effectiveness
- Attendance
- Non-attendance
- Referrals by department
- Nature of employee job
- MSD causation (origin of injury)
- Referral source

- Stage of condition
- Type of condition
- MSD sickness absence (volume and referral stage)
- MSD sickness absence cost
- Employee outcomes
- Cost benefit / return on investment
- Employee satisfaction

Cost Benefit / Return on investment reporting

Connect produce cost benefit report for review with the business. This details the return on investment for the business associated with having expert occupational health physiotherapy onsite.

The cost benefit report focuses on employees where absence has either been reduced or prevented. The onsite physiotherapist will select the employees based on their clinical expertise and occupational health experience. They will consider many factors when determining whether absence prevented or reduced. These include:

- The biopsychosocial presentation and history of the employee
- The work the employee does and the workplace environment
- The severity, irritability and nature of the presenting complaint
- The present work status and level of absence
- National statistics regarding condition specific absence
- Validated disability duration data: Condition specific research that details the 'disability duration' (timeframe to achieve a return to function / work) associated with MSD's

If the physiotherapist clinically reasons that they have either reduced or prevented absence through their intervention they will collate the following:

- The level of absence prevented and reduced in weeks
- The cost of the savings (based on salary information provided by the business)

Connect will then take the sample and produce a report for the business. This will contain.

- The number of weeks of absence prevented and the associated savings
- The number of weeks of absence reduced and the associated savings

- The total savings
- A ratio that details how much has been saved by the business for every £1 invested in the business

For this report, Connect focus on employees where absence has been prevented or reduced. The entire case load is not included in the report as not every case will have associated absence (as per the priority criteria). The Connect team will discuss these reports in detail with the business and draw on example cases to highlight the process.

Agility – Online Diary and Referral System

Connect have a bespoke online diary and referral management system 'Agility'. This is the system used by the gatekeepers to the service, typically HR or Occupational Health (known as 'the referring manager'). In some instances the Connect OPS admin team may be the gatekeeper.

Agility allows Connect to manage the employee pathway from referral to discharge. It's a system designed to simplify the assessment and treatment process by creating a single point of access for the employee, the physiotherapist, and the referring manager.

Agility acts as a full case management system, recording all clinical details and providing a complete patient history of clinical interactions and occupational / management reports.

Key features and benefits

- Quick and easy online referral process
- Online clinical diary management: Referring managers can book directly into the diary and manage employee appointments
- Online case management note taking for clinicians: Allowing robust governance and audit by Connect
- Prompt and effective reports: Made available to referring managers as soon as these are generated (consent permitting)
- Integration with Connect business intelligence and data warehousing functionality: Allowing detailed reporting on wealth of continuously evolving management information
- Employee information library to give information, advice and guidance on MSD and wider health promotion

MSD manager training at service launch

It is vital that all business stakeholders fully understand the OH physiotherapy service and how to use it effectively. As part of the service launch, Connect will deliver a training session to ensure this is achieved from the outset. This can be reinforced by the onsite physio at times to suit the business.

MSD Manager Awareness Training: The effective prevention and management of MSD

This training details the key principles of prevention/effective management of MSD, highlighting the associated benefits for both the employee, manager and business.

The course is designed for any manager who line manages employees potentially at risk of MSD's within the workplace.

Objectives:

- Understand Occupational Health Physiotherapy and the onsite service
- Define Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD's)
- Raise awareness and understand the impact of MSD's
- Recognise the signs & symptoms of MSD's
- Understand the role & responsibilities of managers in early reporting/ onward referral
- Understand how to complete a physiotherapy referral and interpret reports
- Recognise the benefits of phased return to work plans
- Understand preventative strategies to drive best practice and prevent MSD's

Total training time: 60 mins

This training will be arranged as part of the service launch by the Connect team and a nominated site contact. Should further training be required, please discuss with the onsite Physiotherapist or contact the Connect site team leader

A copy of the presentation will be made available on request for the business to reinforce key messages and further bespoke for their needs

Additional services available through Connect

In addition to the onsite service offering, Connect have a comprehensive suite of additional services to support business health, safety and well being objectives.

The following services are not part of the onsite offering, however can be purchased from directly from Connect. Connect will support the business in helping decide which service will meet organisational needs and bespoke the service accordingly.

Please speak to the business Connect account manager to access more information or arrange any of the below services.

Training

The main aim of Connects training packages is to provide interactive educational programmes, designed to give targeted employee groups an understanding of injury prevention, management and the promotion of health and wellbeing best practice.

The training programmes typically involve both practical and theory-based teaching with an emphasis on active participation and empowering prevention / self-management

All delegates will receive information and handouts for future reference and Connect always demonstrate a transfer of knowledge via pre and post training questionnaires based on the content of the training delivered.

Typical training packages available (not an exhaustive list) include:

Manual handling

This comprehensive, interactive and hands-on training programme is primarily aimed at employees who undertake manual handling tasks such as lifting and carrying or frequent and repetitive handling of loads. Training is task and people specific, with workplace examples incorporated to bring the session to life.

Key emphasis is placed on widening the scope of what traditional manual handling training should be about. Specifically, we focus on promoting effective, healthy movement – in and out of the workplace and making healthy lifestyle choices.

The effective management and prevention of MSD

This training programme is aimed at managers and groups of employees to give them a greater understanding of how to prevent, identify, report and manage musculoskeletal disorders within the workplace.

Ergonomics risk assessor training

This training is aimed at line management and health and safety representatives. The focus is importance of early identification, prevention and management of MSDs in the workplace. The content covers ergonomics, anthropometrics, functional working zones and

good manual handling techniques, with guidance on delivery of risk assessment and effective tools.

Content includes preventative exercise programmes and health and wellbeing advice.

DSE assessor

This training programme is designed to educate, and train nominated assessors from within your organisation to conduct a detailed DSE user workstation assessment, and understand the principles of occupational health, safety and ergonomics.

Connect widen the scope of this session to include preventative workplace exercise and key health promotion advice

Assessments

Ergonomic Risk Assessment

An ergonomic risk assessment focuses on a specific task(s) which has been identified as potentially causing a risk of injury in the workplace.

The objective of these assessments is to gain an in-depth understanding of the process through objective movement and functional task analysis. Specific screening tools are used to quantify the process in order to provide a rigorous evaluation and evidence-based recommendation for change.

These recommendations will advise on ergonomic modifications and identify training needs to prevent injury and achieve best practice. This will be detailed in a comprehensive report.

All assessments will be carried out by a Physiotherapist specialising in ergonomics, or an Ergonomist, and meet HSE standards

Functional Capacity Evaluation

Connect's Functional Capacity Evaluations (FCE) is a series of evidence based functional tests aimed to replicate an individual's work practices and determine their fitness for work.

The assessment is carried out by a specially trained Chartered Physiotherapist and adopts a biopsychosocial approach. It consists of three stages which includes:

- A physical musculoskeletal assessment
- Exploration of psychosocial barriers associated with their condition via consultation and questionnaire
- Functional testing of tasks that have been identified as relevant to the employee's role at work such as bending, lifting, reaching and carrying

Connect's FCE's are valuable for assessing employees who have complex needs, repeated absence associated with the same condition, or those returning to work following an extended period of

absence. The key outcome is to provide information on prognosis, capability to work and necessary occupational rehabilitation.

Connect will support the business in ascertaining if an FCE is appropriate for any particular case.

How to promote the OH Physiotherapy service

It is important that the service is fully understood by the business and highly visible to employees and managers.

Connect have a huge variety of information leaflets and supporting collateral to enhance the onsite service. The business will be provided with key documents for circulation:

- The service launch pack (for managers)
- Service information leaflets (FAQ) for employees
- Service information leaflets (FAQ) for managers
- Posters (paper and digital) for display
- Patient (employee) information leaflets on the self-management of common MSDs

The Connect team will ensure that that a full suite of information is provided at service launch and maintained onsite.



Getting the most from the service

As a business it is important that we get the most from our onsite Occupational Health Physiotherapy Service. The service is aligned to our health, safety and well-being objectives; therefore, its success greatly helps the business to realise its goals.

Key concepts to support the service

There are several key concepts that underpin effective MSD workplace management. It is important for the business to understand and enable them in the workplace

- **Early intervention is key (day 1)** - Early identification, reporting and referral of MSD's is crucial for the effective management of workplace MSD. The earlier the Connect team see an employee with a MSD, the quicker they can assess, treat, rehabilitate and provide expert guidance for both the employee and the employer.

Often, if an employee is seen at an early stage, the employee will remain in work, and complete their normal duties whilst they undertake a short course of physiotherapy. In some instances, it may be that a one-off assessment and work-focussed advice on self-management strategies are all that are required.

The later an MSD is identified, reported and referred into the service (particularly if the employee is 'off sick'), the longer it takes to achieve the optimum outcome of full, safe and effective return to work.

- **Ensure 100% of work impacting MSD is referred for assessment** - It is crucial that 100% of employees who are off sick with an MSD or not able to complete full duties at work (because of an MSD) are referred to the physiotherapy service for expert assessment (as per referral criteria)

This is the group of employees who will benefit most from the support Connect will offer. They are also the group who are most impacting on the business in terms of sickness absence costs, operational pressures and potential issues with productivity

- **Occupational Rehabilitation** - The focus of occupational rehabilitation is to ensure employees are safe, effective and productive in their role. Therefore, the treatment and advice provided by Connect is focussed on work and the workplace.

Employees do not need to be 100% better or 100% pain free to make a safe and effective return to work. Indeed, well planned and designed work is vital in the healing and rehabilitation process. As such, work or a return to work, should be considered 'part of the treatment'. This will complement their work focussed and functional physiotherapy program.

- **Managing the Return to Work** - The reports issued by the physiotherapist will offer guidance for managers on return to work plans and detail any simple (temporary) changes to working practice or exposure.

Connect will work hard to build relationships and understand the business processes and job tasks so they can offer advice and recommendations that are appropriate and easily implemented by managers.

Equally it is important that managers are flexible in their approach and implement the recommendations provided. The Connect physiotherapists will be more than happy to further discuss any recommendations to ensure that they are completely aligned to the needs and requirements of the business

10 Practical top tips!

1. **Focus on priorities:** Ensure all MSD absent cases are being actively managed in the clinic and referred at the first available opportunity. Use the priority system and guidelines to help you identify and refer all MSD cases early
2. **Refer all MSD cases:** Complete the full referral process online even if the physio service is booked up will allow you to see all cases awaiting action and their priority level; you can book an appointment once a gap becomes available.
3. **Develop a waiting list:** Review it with your onsite Physiotherapist. This will help to prioritise cases if you have a full referral list.
4. **Speak regularly with the physiotherapist.** Ask for any help with reports or individual cases. Build a rapport through regular liaison – this will help increase the specificity of advice and proactive recommendations
5. **Schedule proactive site visits:** The physios will be very happy to accompany key stakeholders (line managers, H&S) on site visits to support basic assessments and increase the visibility of the service
6. **Schedule health promotion events:** The physios can support business health and wellbeing initiatives and deliver MSD drop in advice sessions (canteen / conference room etc)
7. **Utilisation:** If there are any gaps in service consider having awareness sessions or asking the physio to go out on plant to support DSE assessments – this could be done at short notice if there is a last-minute cancellation .

8. **Review the Management Information:** If you notice a peak in cases for a specific group you could organise a workplace assessment in coordination with your HSE Manager or a training session for a specific group of employees. The physio will support this process.
9. **Celebrate success and showcase best practice:** For example, If a manager consistently identifies and refers MSD cases early, showcase this as best practice to support other areas. This is a highly effective strategy.
10. **Proactive ergonomics and musculoskeletal review:** If you are considering a workplace task / process change or a large purchase of equipment, consult the physiotherapist on the potential musculoskeletal impact. They will be able to advise on sensible next steps for assessment or task change that may affect the

Directory

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