

ACPWH CONFERENCE 2012

“Do you have a problem with your bladder or pelvic floor?” Evaluation of self-referral to women’s health physiotherapy

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Abstract

Self-referral is a system of access that allows patients to refer themselves directly to a physiotherapist without having to see anyone else first, or without being prompted to refer themselves by a health professional. It has been available in the UK for over 30 years, but until relatively recently, the service has not been available in the National Health Service. Self-referral to musculoskeletal physiotherapy services is now commonplace and the benefits are well documented. Since 2010, the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy has been working with the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Women's Health (ACPWH) on a project to evaluate the effect of self-referral to women's health physiotherapy. Working with physiotherapists at seven sites across England, the primary focus of the research is to assess the impact of self-referral on women with urinary or pelvic floor dysfunction. The database used to upload patient data (submitted at time of discharge) was closed in July 2012. Preliminary findings were presented at the 2012 ACPWH Conference in relation to: access for patients; clinical outcomes; demand; effectiveness; and waiting times. Also, feedback from both patients and physiotherapists was included in the presentation. The final report has been compiled and is circulated with this edition of the *Journal*.

Keywords: bladder, pelvic floor, physiotherapy, self-referral, women's health.

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women's health physiotherapy. Teresa also works in postgraduate education, both independently and for the University of Bradford, and in health-care regulation.

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