

FIRST CONTACT PRACTITIONER SERVICE

Patient Information

WHAT IS AN FCP?

A first contact practitioner (FCP) is an experienced physiotherapist who has the advanced skills necessary to assess, diagnose and manage musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions. MSK conditions affect the bones, joint and muscle but can include other problems such as back pain and related nerve pain.

An FCP service allows patients who would normally present to their GP with an MSK issue, to self-refer to a professional with expertise in that field. You don't need to see your GP for back pain, neck pain, osteoarthritis or general joint pains, you can now see a FCP.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR FCP APPOINTMENT?

- FCP clinician will ask you some questions to understand the problem/issue you are looking for help with (subjective assessment)
- They will then complete a physical assessment (objective assessment)
- They will discuss the assessment findings with you and provide you with their thoughts on potential diagnosis (working diagnosis)
- They will discuss management options with you and provide their recommendation on the best course of action (initial management plan)
- Management options might include providing you with advice and exercises or referring you for further investigations (eg imaging or blood tests), specialist options (eg. refer you to a specialist department or consultant-orthopaedics/neurology/rheumatology) or treatment (eg. Out-patient physiotherapy)
- If needed the FCP can arrange a follow-up appointment with you to monitor your progress and progress the management of your condition
- Please be aware FCP's are specialist musculoskeletal (MSK) clinicians available to you instead of seeing your GP - they are there to help assess, diagnose, and manage your condition - they are not able to provide out-patient style physiotherapy treatment in your GP surgery. If it is felt you require out-patient physiotherapy treatment they will refer you to this service.

Any questions or queries please contact
your GP practice