



Supporting occupational health
and wellbeing professionals



BESPOKE WELLBEING

Perspectives on return to work with long COVID - Physiotherapy

Colette Owen BSc MSc HCPC MCSP
Clinical Director, Bespoke Wellbeing

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Perspectives on return to work with long COVID - Physiotherapy

- Living with Long Covid
- Physiotherapy role
- Non-clinical and clinical challenges
- Key Physiotherapy interventions
- Return to work and Physiotherapy

Living with Long-Covid

- Initial infection can be mild or severe
- Multiple symptoms
- Fluctuate over time
- Unpredictable
- Recovery unknown
- “Expert by experience”

- Patchy access to care
- Varied healthcare experiences
- Isolated & not heard
- Frustrated & anxious

Physiotherapists:

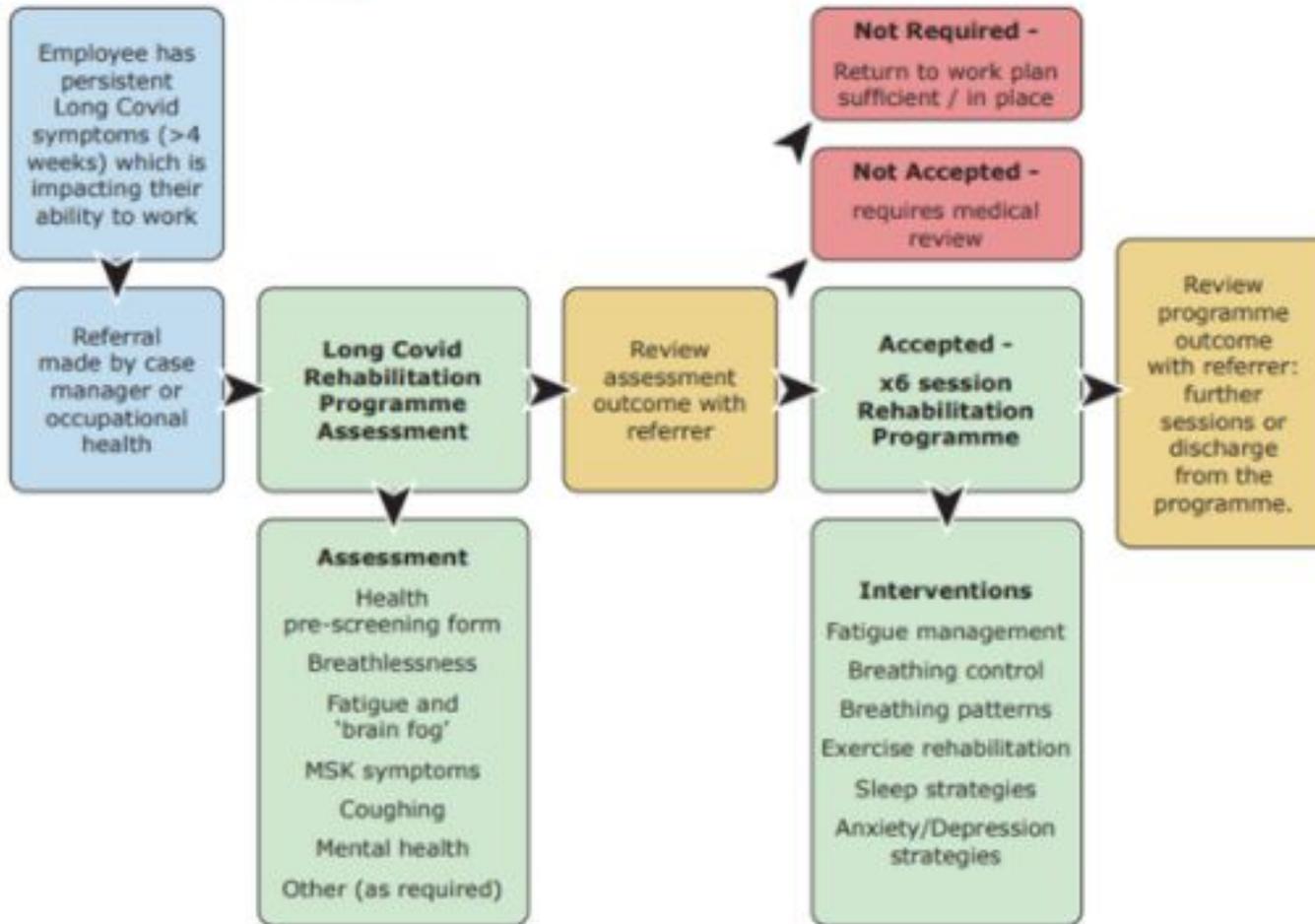
- help people affected by injury, illness or disability
- utilise a variety interventions
- help manage & prevent disease
- encourage development & facilitate recovery
- enable people to stay in work
- helping them remain independent for as long as possible.

Work in a variety of specialisms in health and social care:

- Neurological
- Neuromuscular
- Cardiovascular
- Respiratory

Are rehabilitation specialists

The referral pathway



Non clinical & clinical challenges

Non-clinical:

- Access to services: NHS, OH, private
- Attendance policies
- Appointments: number & flexible delivery
- Service delivery: F2F, online, individuals, group.
- Staff specialism & knowledge

Clinical:

- Diverse presentations: safe, best practice rehab
- Deconditioned vs Fatigue
 - different rehab approach
 - Post exertional malaise
 - Cardiac dysfunction
- Person-centred, risk-stratified care
- Education & self management

Return to Work and Physiotherapy

- Co-ordinated approach between employer, employee and clinician
- Understanding of Long Covid symptom fluctuation
- Understanding of differences in symptom management
- Goal-setting with individualised approach
- Functional restoration/ acceptance
 - Task frequency
 - Job physicality
 - Cognitive tasks
 - Shifts/ hours
 - Commute
- Optimise function & independence in everyday activities
- Promote self-management and peer support

Summary

- Living with Long Covid: series of challenges which may vary in symptom presentation & recovery
- Physiotherapists well placed to help & support
- Services adaptable to Long Covid symptoms
- Recognise differences in managing Fatigue, Deconditioning and MSK
- Before any form of exercise, screening is key
- RTW must be flexible to those living with Long Covid