



First Contact Physiotherapist (FCP) Patient Information

First Contact Physios are physiotherapists with expertise in the assessment and management of Musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions. They can help patients with musculoskeletal issues such as back, neck and joint pain by:

- assessing and diagnosing issues
- giving expert advice on how best to manage their conditions
- referring them onto specialist services if necessary

The benefits to patients of having First Contact Physiotherapist service in their GP practice is:

- Quicker access to treatment and diagnosis - patients can contact their local physiotherapist directly via their GP practice, rather than waiting to see a GP or being referred to hospital.
- By making it easier for patients to access physiotherapist, patients will have quicker access to diagnosis and treatment, helping them to manage their conditions more effectively and recover faster, so they can get back to normal life quickly.
- Having FCPs in the GP practice will also support the workload of GPs and reduce the need for onward referrals.

Who are your First Contact Physios (FCPs)?

We currently have four FCPs working across the five practices in Altrincham Healthcare Alliance PCN: Nathan Hall, Shruti Joshi, Patricia McCann and Aanal Shah.

How do I get referred to a First Contact Physio?

Patients are able to self-refer - just ask the receptionist in your GP surgery to book you in with the First Contact Physio – or GPs may also refer patients directly to the service.

Can I see a First Contact Physio for any condition at any age?

Please see the inclusion/exclusion criteria below:

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All soft tissue injuries, sprains, strains or sports injuries ● Arthritis – any joint ● Possible problems with muscles, ligaments, tendons or bone (eg tennis elbow, carpal tunnel syndrome, ankle sprains) ● Spinal pain including lower back pain, mid-back pain and neck pain ● Spinal-related pain in arms or legs, including nerve symptoms (eg pins and needles or numbness) ● Changes to walking ● Post-orthopaedic surgery ● Women’s health, antenatal and postnatal problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Acutely unwell ● Children under 18 ● Medical management of rheumatoid conditions ● House-bound patients ● Medication reviews for non-MSK conditions ● Neurological and respiratory conditions ● Headaches ● Acute mental health crises

How will I be seen/treated?

Patients are first contacted via a telephone consultation. First Contact Physios will then advise if a Face to Face (F2F) appointment is required after their assessment.

What you might expect from an FCP appointment

A brief history of the problem will be taken before several clinical tests will be performed. The aim of the FCP is to assess the problem in order to decide what the patient requires to maximise their recovery.

A majority of patients with MSK problems will be discharged with advice and exercises: providing a clear, concise programme to manage recovery. If symptoms persist, the patient has the ability to book again to see the FCP and further treatment options can be discussed. The FCP also has the ability to refer patients on for further care if deemed appropriate - this may include referral for imaging (x-rays or scans), joint injections or to the local orthopaedic team.

For further information regarding First Contact Physios please visit the NHS website

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/gp/expanding-our-workforce/first-contact-physiotherapists/>