

Evidence Brief: Physiotherapy

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Produced by the Knowledge Management team Evidence Briefs offer an overview of the published reports, research, and evidence on a workforce-related topic.

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Key publications – the big picture

[NHS Long Term Workforce Plan](#)

NHS England, 2023 (updated 2024)

More than a third of AHPs could train through apprenticeships, compared to 6% now, but this would vary by professional group. The Plan sets out the following assessment for proportion of entrants joining the AHP workforce via an apprenticeship route by 2031/32: up to 5% for speech and language therapists and physiotherapists. (Page 45) We can support professions with the largest shortfalls by increasing the numbers of supportive and complementary staff. Overall, the Plan will increase the proportion of these wider team roles from 1% in 2022 to 5% by 2036/37. In addition, this Plan focuses on expanding those roles that have a particularly diverse range of skills and can contribute in many care settings, including 3.7–4.0% growth in paramedics, 3.4– 3.7% growth in occupational therapists and 3.3% growth in physiotherapists (assessment of average growth rates per year). (Page 91)

[Revised standards of conduct, performance and ethics](#)

Health & Care Professions Council, 2024

The revised standards of conduct, performance and ethics came into effect on 1 September 2024. Our [guidance on social media](#), which sits alongside the standards, has also been revised.

[Approved programmes](#)

Health & Care Professions Council, 2024

A database of approved education programmes for Allied Health Professionals.

[Recruitment of overseas allied health professionals](#)

NHS Employers, 2024

How overseas allied health professionals (AHPs) can enter the UK for work.

[Innovation and collaboration: supporting Allied Health Professions Return to Practice](#)

NHS England, 2023

It is well recognised that there are significant challenges in AHP workforce supply, retention, and growth across all sectors of health and care. Returning Allied Health Professions are a vital element of the Health Education England (HEE) workforce plan and are essential in re-directing knowledge, skills and experience back into health and care sectors.

[National profiles for Physiotherapy](#)

NHS Staff Council Job Evaluation Group, 2023

A national profile of job roles and responsibilities.

[AHP Educator Career Framework](#)

Council of Deans of Health, 2023

The AHP Educator Career Framework is an outcomebased career framework that describes the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be an effective teacher, learning facilitator, supervisor and role model in AHP education in practice and formal education settings. First and foremost, it promotes the education pillar of AHP professional practice, recognising that education is everyone's responsibility.

[Genomics for allied health professionals: Survey results](#)

NHS England WT&E, Genomics Education Programme, 2023

Overall, your responses showed that a good majority of you feel you don't have a good understanding of genomics.

[Your future allied health professionals](#)

NHS Employers, 2023

This infographic sets out the different routes available for organisations to train allied health professionals.

[A guide to ESR coding for Advanced Practitioner roles](#)

NHS England WT&E, 2022

To ensure that advanced practitioners' skills are consistently recognised, and better enable those skills to be deployed across healthcare settings we must now ensure that the NHS workforce accurately reflects the breadth of the modern clinical workforce.

[The Allied Health Professions \(AHP\) for England: 2022 to 2027](#)

NHS England, 2022

This strategy is a catalyst for change. Wherever you work, every member of our AHP community has a part in realising our collective ambitions through its delivery. I therefore encourage you to take a moment to consider how the AHP community can enable the change required to deliver future care today.

[Allied Health Professions' Research and Innovation Strategy for England](#)

NHS England WT&E, 2022

This Strategy comprises a definitive collective national reference statement that encompasses and supports the existing research and innovation strategies of all the Allied Health professional associations.

[What can AHPs offer in mental health settings?](#)

Health Education England, 2021

AHPs are the key to transforming health, care, and wellbeing. Working at the top of their competencies and skills, AHPs lead mental health teams to new ways of working. Their expertise in rehabilitation and enablement is vital to move away from over-reliance on hospitals and towards professional interventions across health and social care settings.

[My role in tackling health inequalities: a framework for allied health professionals](#)

The King's Fund, 2021

This framework builds on our commitments in the UK allied health professions public health strategic framework 2019–2024 (Allied Health Professions Federation 2019) and we hope AHPs across the UK will find it useful. It aims to help you to consider your own unique contribution to tackling health inequalities and to help maximise this through a series of lenses and questions.

[What is advanced clinical practice?](#)

NHS England WT&E, no date (estimated post-2020)

Advanced clinical practitioners come from a range of professional backgrounds such as nursing, pharmacy, paramedics and occupational therapy. They are healthcare professionals educated to Master's level and have developed the skills and knowledge to allow them to take on expanded roles and scope of practice caring for patients.

[Standards of education and training](#)

Health & Care Professions Council, 2017

In line with the way our education quality assurance model functions, we have split our standards of education and training along institution and programme levels.

See also: [Review of the standards of education and training](#) (2024)

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

[UK physiotherapy workforce review](#)

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, 2024

The workforce review draws datasets together to build a comprehensive picture of the size and diversity of the UK physiotherapy workforce.

[Creating a supported and confident workforce](#)

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, 2024

Hui Jie Chia introduces the new HCPC principles for preceptorship and explains what they mean for members

[Physiotherapy career framework](#)

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, 2024

The physiotherapy career framework is designed to promote and develop physiotherapy practice. We hope to launch our digital career framework in 2025 but you can download the PDF version below.

[Musculoskeletal physiotherapy service standards](#)

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, no date

Eight quality standards that support the development and delivery of musculoskeletal (MSK) physiotherapy services in the public and independent sector.

[Workforce not available to make new backlog plans viable,](#)

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, 2022

The Department of Health and Social Care unveiled plans to expand the use of community diagnostic centres (CDCs) into an additional 19 areas while announcing the formation of a elective recovery task force chaired by a minister.

However, Karen Middleton, chief executive of the CSP, raised concerns about how the centres would be staffed given the ongoing workforce crisis.

Case Studies

[The role of leadership in implementing and sustaining an evidence-based intervention for osteoarthritis \(ESCAPE-pain\) in NHS physiotherapy services: a qualitative case study](#)

Disability and Rehabilitation 44(8), 2022

Managers need to utilise dispersed leadership to empower and enthuse frontline clinicians to participate fully in the work to refine and sustain interventions, because it cannot be achieved by lone individuals.

[Development, implementation and evaluation of a bespoke, advanced practice musculoskeletal training programme within a clinical assessment and treatment service](#) Abstract only*

Musculoskeletal Care 18(2), 2020

This programme describes the competencies and experiences of three individuals progressing to Advanced Practice Physiotherapists. This paper may assist those who manage and commission such services.

[A comparative case study of prescribing and non-prescribing physiotherapists and podiatrists](#)

BMC Health Services Research 20, 2020

This study provides new knowledge that PP-IPs provide high levels of care. PP-IP care delivery was found to be more resource intensive. Further research is required to explore cost effectiveness.

[Physiotherapy placements in new settings: the power of students](#)

NHS England WT&E, no date

The results: These placements highlighted the role and value of physiotherapy to ward staff and senior leadership team and increased knowledge of mental health as a potential career route for physiotherapy students. Most importantly, the service users experience was greatly enhanced, mobility increased, and discharge accelerated. Other staff benefitted from access to a different 'lens' with which to view the needs of the patient.

[Why I decided to become a Physiotherapist](#)

NHS England WT&E, no date

It could be argued that it has been like navigating Spaghetti Junction, me getting to Physio. I was a Chiropractor for ten years before deciding that I needed to move on. I enjoyed the education aspect of my patient interaction and decided to move into teaching.

The Star for workforce redesign

More resources and tools are available in the AHP Quick Reference Guides Upskilling section of the [Star](#). Alternatively, search for 'Allied Health' or 'physiotherapy' in the search bar.

Statistics

You can find relevant statistics on the [Health and Care Statistics Landscape](#).

[Registrant data and statistics](#)

Health & Care Professions Council, 2024

These factsheets provide a breakdown for each of the professions we regulate.

[Key statistics on education and training for HCPC professions](#)

Health & Care Professions Council, 2024

We have provided key statistics as a summary of the picture of education and training for the professions we regulate, and how that picture is changing.

[The physio workforce in numbers - our new influencing tool](#)

Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, 2024

The physiotherapy workforce data portal gives a picture of the current physiotherapy workforce across the UK. [The physiotherapy workforce data portal](#)

[Diversity data: physiotherapists - March 2023](#)

Health & Care Professions Council, 2023

This factsheet provides key EDI information for physiotherapists and how the demographics of this group compare to the demographics of HCPC registrants overall.

[Retention rates of first time HCPC registrants, 2013 to 2018](#)

Health & Care Professions Council, 2023

The HCPC embarked upon this analysis to inform our work on preceptorship. We consider that the findings are of wider value. They have particularly important implications for providers and funders of training, and for workforce planners. They are also likely to be of great interest to other stakeholders including professional bodies.

National Data Programme

Workforce, Training and Education staff can look at the [WT&E Data and Analytics Service](#) resources including the National

Data Warehouse SharePoint site to find out more about datasets and Tableau products.

Published Peer Reviewed Research

Advanced practice

[Developing a core competency and capability framework for advanced practice physiotherapy: A qualitative study](#) Abstract only*

Physiotherapy Theory and Practice 40(7), 2024

This study provides a modified core competency and capability framework comprising 24 competencies grouped under six domains. This study is a step toward international standardization of advanced practice physiotherapy based on a commonly agreed framework for the education and training of advanced practice physiotherapists.

[Shared decision-making in advanced physiotherapy and first contact physiotherapy management of adults with musculoskeletal disorders in the United Kingdom: An online cross-sectional survey](#)

Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice 30(7), 2024

Responses from 49 participants (25 APPs and 24 FCPs) were included in the study. In total, 80% of participants had received SDM training and overall high levels of knowledge were shown. Only 12% of participants used a communication model to facilitate SDM. In total, 80% of participants reported making decisions together with the patient either always or most of the time. FCPs favoured a more patient-led approach to decision-making compared to APPs who favoured collaborative decision-making. The most commonly reported barriers to SDM included lack of time, lack of patient education resources, lack of access to patient decision aids and treatment pathway restrictions.

[Developing an international competency and capability framework for advanced practice physiotherapy: a scoping review with narrative synthesis](#)

Physiotherapy 122, 2024

The synthesis of this scoping review provides the first competency and capability framework for advanced practice physiotherapy that integrates competencies and capabilities from five different countries. With the expansion of advanced practice physiotherapy, the framework developed from this review is the first step towards international recognition, standardization and consistency of education and training of practitioners.

[Scoping of advanced clinical practitioner role implementation using national job advertisements: Document analysis](#)

Journal of Advanced Nursing 79(7), 2023

A total of 143 trainee and qualified ACP roles were identified. A wide range of sectors and specialities were represented from across all English regions. The most common roles were urgent care, emergency medicine and primary care. Most qualified roles were agenda for change band 8A, although this did vary across specialities. Many roles were restricted to a small number of professions, notably nursing, physiotherapy and paramedic. Inconsistent role titles were noted. A lack of understanding of regulation across different professions was noted.

[A narrative review of the training structure, role, and safety profile of advanced critical care practitioners in adult intensive services in the United Kingdom](#) Abstract only*

Australian Critical Care 36(1), 2023

Advanced clinical practitioners are a growing part of the National Health Service workforce in the United Kingdom (UK). The concept stems from the progression of skills, knowledge, and experience of healthcare professionals (including nursing, physiotherapists, paramedics, and pharmacists) to a higher level

of practice. The addition of advanced critical care practitioners (ACCPs) to the multidisciplinary team of the UK adult critical care is recent; they form part of the fabric of the advanced clinical practitioner workforce. This is a narrative review of the role of ACCPs, considering the evolution of the role, training, accreditation, and evidence supporting the safety profile in adult intensive care in the UK.

[Assessment of advanced clinical practitioners](#)

Journal of Interprofessional Care 36(6), 2022

The insights from this study enabled lessons to be drawn for those responsible for workforce development who are key to the future development of the ACP role and to ensure high standards of interprofessional care.

[Characterising the outcomes, impacts and implementation challenges of advanced clinical practice roles in the UK: a scoping review](#)

BMJ Open 11(8), 2021

This review suggests a need for educational and role standardisation and a supported career pathway for advanced clinical practitioners (ACPs) in the UK. Future research should: (i) adopt more robust study designs, (ii) investigate the full scope of the ACP role and (iii) include a wider range of professions and sectors.

Community and Primary Care

[Employment and deployment of additional roles: What works for whom, how and why?](#)

British Journal of General Practice, 2024

This study provides novel insights into the complexities of different employment and deployment models of ARRS staff. These findings will be invaluable for creating a sustainable GP

practice workforce and informing future workforce strategies as the scheme expands to include recently qualified GPs

[A narrative synthesis of the effectiveness and acceptability of musculoskeletal first contact physiotherapy practitioner roles in primary care](#)

Musculoskeletal Care 22(2), 2024

Although the review identified consistent positivity relating to effectiveness, satisfaction and acceptability across the reviewed publications, conclusions are limited due to the relatively recent introduction of the FCP role leading to limited availability of relevant publications.

[Patient access to first contact practitioner physiotherapists in the UK: A national survey](#)

Musculoskeletal Care 21(4), 2023

This research has provided clarity regarding how patients access the rapidly growing speciality of FCPP within GP practices in the UK. The role of GP Reception staff in facilitating access to FCPPs, the application of triage and the use of digital or online systems were highlighted as important elements for enabling efficient access to FCPPs by patients with MSK conditions.

[School-based allied health interventions for children and young people affected by neurodisability: a systematic evidence map](#)

Disability and Rehabilitation 45(7), 2022

Our interactive evidence map can be used to help stakeholders prioritise the interventions most in need of further evaluation and implementation research, including tiered models of universal, targeted, and intensive allied health support.

Digital

[Shaping the future: perspectives on the Integration of Artificial Intelligence in health profession education: a multi-country survey](#)

BMC Medical Education 24, 2024

This study clarified key considerations when integrating AI in HPE. Enhancing students' awareness and fostering innovation in an AI-driven medical landscape are crucial for effectively incorporating AI in HPE curricula.

[Exploring the delivery of remote physiotherapy during the COVID-19 pandemic: UK wide service evaluation](#)

Physiotherapy Theory and Practice 40(10), 2024

Remote physiotherapy was safe, feasible, and acceptable for those who accessed it. There were patients for which it was deemed unsuitable across clinical areas. In practice, it should be combined with in-person consultation based on patients' needs/preferences. Further research should explore post-pandemic maintenance of remote delivery.

Diversity and inclusion

[Explorations of strategies for inclusion for newly qualified physiotherapists from racially minoritised groups in a large, urban NHS Trust, UK](#) Abstract only*

Physiotherapy 126, 2025

The findings reflect previous studies that racially minoritised physiotherapists experience additional burdens not fully understood by their white peers. There are implications for the department which are currently being enacted and evaluated and will be reported elsewhere.

[An Exploration of the Experiences of Physical Therapists Who Identify as LGBTQIA+: Navigating Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Clinical, Academic, and Professional Roles](#)

Physical Therapy 102(3), 2022

Findings suggest that cultural norms may need to be reconceptualized in physical therapy to promote inclusion and belonging of individuals who identify as LGBTQIA+. Approaches to upskill new and existing physical therapists may include elements such as individual and institutional reflexivity, learning and implementing appropriate terminology, displaying indicators of inclusivity, and cultural safety training.

["Raising the curtain on the equality theatre": a study of recruitment to first healthcare job post-qualification in the UK National Health Service](#)

Human Resources for Health 20, 2022

The Healthcare Workforce Equity + Diversity Lens we have developed can help to 'raise the curtain on the equality theatre' and inform more inclusive approaches to recruitment such as contextualised recruitment or effective allyship between employers and universities.

[Blind and partially sighted physiotherapy in the United Kingdom. A century of development, success and challenge. Will it still belong?](#) Abstract only*

Physiotherapy Theory and Practice 37(3), 2021

Significant changes in physiotherapy educational and training arrangements for blind students and changes in physiotherapy practice generally over the last four decades engender serious questions about whether blind physiotherapy will still "belong", despite the increasing aspiration within society toward acceptance of diversity and inclusion.

[The challenge of diversity in the allied health professionals](#)

Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, 2020

Although the Allied Health Professions (AHPs) are a diverse range of professions in terms of their skill set. The workforce which makes up the professions lacks diversity.

Education and curriculum

["It is great what we have learned from each other!" - Bedside teaching in interprofessional small groups using the example of Parkinson's disease](#)

GMS Journal for Medical Education 41(4), 2024

The course was first conducted in the winter semester 2021/22. Participants were medical and physiotherapy students. Teaching teams were also interprofessional. A concurrent evaluation was carried out using the University of the West of England Interprofessional Questionnaire (UWE-IP) before and after course participation. UWE-IP scores in all sub-scales indicated a positive attitude, except for the "Interprofessional Learning" scale among physiotherapy students, which reflected a neutral attitude. Significant group differences were observed in the same scale at the pre-course time point between medical and physiotherapy students ($p < 0.01$) and among medical students before and after course participation ($p = 0.02$).

[Advice-giving skills in pre-registration physiotherapy training](#)

Physiotherapy 113, 2024

With increased emphasis on enabling people to self-manage, it is important for clinicians to develop skills in offering advice to patients to help them reach their optimal outcome. To date, little is known about how clinicians develop these skills, making it challenging for students to learn strategies to confidently offer advice. Therefore, the aim of this study was to describe how physiotherapists in training acquire knowledge, skills and confidence to offer advice to patients in clinical practice.

[Evaluating the impact of a blended interprofessional education course on students' attitudes towards interprofessional education: a pre-post study](#)

BMC Medical Education 24, 2024

Students' attitudes towards IP relationships improved significantly after the course. The score on this subscale (min 8; max 24) changed from 11.18 (SD 2,67) before the course to 10,38 (SD 2,55) after the course, indicating a significant improvement in attitudes towards IP relationships ($p < 0,001$). More specifically, students had more positive attitudes on the item "I have a good understanding of the roles of different health and social care professionals." and the item "I feel that I am respected by people from other health and social care disciplines." after the course. A positive change in students' attitudes towards IP learning was observed, but the results were not significant.

[Evaluating the perceived impact and legacy of master's degree level research in the allied health professions: a UK-wide cross-sectional survey](#)

BMC Medical Education 24, 2024

The focus of master's degree level research was largely self-generated with the highest perceived impact on individual outcomes rather than broader clinical service and organisation influence. Formal output from master's research was low, but ongoing research engagement and activity was high suggesting master's degree training is an under-recognised source for AHP research capacity building. Future research should investigate the potential benefits of better coordinated and prioritised research at master's degree level on professional and organisational impact.

[Dementia content and delivery in physiotherapy curricula: an international study of entry level physiotherapy programmes in Ireland the United Kingdom and New Zealand](#)

Physiotherapy 125, 2024

Whilst dementia education is included in many HEI programmes, we need to consider more time, a curriculum that meets learner's needs and include the patient voice. Further research is needed to develop bespoke dementia curricula specific to physiotherapy.

[A modern way to teach and practice manual therapy](#)

Chiropractic & Manual Therapies 32, 2024

Manual therapy interventions should include both passive and active, person-empowering interventions such as exercise, education, and lifestyle adaptations. These should be delivered in a contextualised healing environment with a well-developed person-practitioner therapeutic alliance. Teaching manual therapy should follow this model.

[The impact of game play on dementia knowledge: A student evaluation of the Dementia Inequalities Game](#)

Dementia, 2024

Playing the Dementia Inequalities Game is an effective tool to improve knowledge about dementia and associated inequalities in health care and psychology students. Using the game as an educational and sociable intervention in health and social care professionals is a next avenue to test.

[Supporting physiotherapy learners in practice settings: a mixed methods evaluation of experiences of physiotherapy educators](#)

Physiotherapy Theory and Practice 40(8), 2024

Practice educators need accessible opportunities for professional development. Practice-based education should be embedded as an integral component of all staff roles. A team approach is essential to developing the future physiotherapy workforce.

[Impact of an interprofessional training on students' attitudes toward interprofessional education](#) Abstract only*

Journal of Interprofessional Care 39(1), 2024

A short exposure to an IPE course could improve students' attitudes toward IPE and, more specifically, toward IP relationships. Our findings could inform IP leaders to design repetitive, various, and longitudinal IPE experiences to balance the development of uniprofessional and interprofessional identity.

['Not the last resort': The impact of an interprofessional training care home initiative on students, staff, and residents](#)

Journal of Interprofessional Care 37(5), 2023

We found that care homes provided students with many opportunities for interprofessional working and learning. Through better understanding the dimensions of different perspectives and approaches, students improved their education and transformed their perceptions of aged care. Having a diverse range of professionals allowed staff to gain insight into the latest evidence-based practice and address the multiple needs of the residents more holistically. Residents gained an enriched sense of meaning and purpose in their daily life by engaging in fulfilling and meaningful activities. The complexities of undertaking an IPE initiative in this setting are also considered and we conclude by proposing important avenues for future research.

[A proposed anatomy syllabus for entry-level physiotherapists in the United Kingdom: A modified Delphi methodology by physiotherapists who teach anatomy](#)

Clinical Anatomy 36(3), 2023

A first ever core anatomy curriculum for entry-level physiotherapists has been created for entry-level physiotherapists, typically Band-5 NHS physiotherapists, and takes an integrated learning approach. The anatomy curriculum brings clarity to students, teachers, clinical supervisors and future employers on the expected anatomical standards for entry-level physiotherapists.

[The paediatric physiotherapy curricula landscape: A survey of United Kingdom entry-level programs](#)

Physiotherapy Research International 28(4), 2023
Fifty-five responses were submitted, providing a 67% completion rate. Faculty perceived that students' felt the inclusion of paediatric content within the curricula was 'Important' (Mean 3.60 \pm SD 0.74). Of 30 diagnoses surveyed, only two were covered 'Well' within curriculums, despite 23 rated at least 'Important' by respondents. Of the 18 assessment/examination components, 13 were covered 'Well' with five 'Somewhat'. All were considered to be at least 'Important'. Perceived strengths were grouped into three main categories (1) integrated/lifespan approach, (2) links to clinical specialists, and (3) a broad/detailed curriculum. Perceived weaknesses included curriculum time pressures and paediatric placement availability.

[Pedagogical principles used by anatomy teachers to facilitate the teaching and learning of anatomy to physiotherapy undergraduates in the United Kingdom](#)

Clinical Anatomy 36(5), 2023
The study proposes a new modified version of CLT which acknowledges that newly acquired knowledge is fragile in novice learners, who have limited long-term memory capacities, and subsequently require regular revisitations, and also acknowledges kinesthetic input and germane cognitive load metacognition strategies. The study recommends appointing anatomy theme leads to take responsibility for the spiral curriculum approach across the 3 years and to introduce explicit anatomy teaching during the later clinical years.

[Students' perceptions of a UK physiotherapy student-led clinic](#)

The Clinical Teacher 20(6), 2023
The findings of this study suggest that physiotherapy SLCs in a UK context can contribute positively to student experience and skill development, particularly in relation to the learning

environment, development of clinical skills, leadership and autonomy. Some aspects related to, for example, student induction and preparation could be further developed. Further research should explore if these findings are applicable in other countries where SLCs are less established.

[Wellbeing and coping of UK nurses, midwives and allied health professionals during COVID-19-a cross-sectional study](#)

PLoS One 17(9), 2022

This workforce would benefit from additional support/services to prevent further deterioration in mental health and wellbeing and optimise workforce retention.

[Exploring the workplace mentorship needs of new-graduate physiotherapists: a qualitative study](#) Abstract only*

Physiotherapy Theory and Practice 38(12), 2021

New-graduate physiotherapists perceive workplace mentorship as a critical factor during the transition from student to clinician, which extends to the broader workplace. New-graduates place a strong value on individualized mentorship to support their professional development, which can influence self-perceived stress and anxiety and their perception of the workplace.

[A qualitative study exploring experiences and challenges of combining clinical academic training with family life](#)

BMC Medical Education 21, 2021

Although people manage to find ways to successfully combine clinical academic roles with family life, findings highlight a need to identify ways of supporting and encouraging trainees with caring responsibilities.

[Evaluating a specialist education programme for nurses and allied health professionals working in older people care: A qualitative analysis of motivations and impact](#)

Nurse Education Today 97, 2020

Understanding the motivations to undertake a specialist gerontological programme and the impacts on practitioners and older people care and services will help inform the continuing professional development agenda for nurses and allied health professionals working in this field of practice.

[Advanced musculoskeletal physiotherapy practice: Informing education curricula](#)

Musculoskeletal Science and Practice 48, 2020

Despite variances in profiles of APPs both between and within countries, common themes emerged regarding their expected competencies and skills.

Leadership, coaching and supervision

[Factors that influence the quality of the clinical supervision experience in a first contact physiotherapy \(FCP\) role - The perspectives of supervisors and supervisees - A qualitative analysis](#)

Musculoskeletal Science & Practice 70, 2024

There were numerous factors influencing the quality of clinical supervision. Adequate preparation of the supervisor and supervisee is critical to success. The attributes of the supervisor were important in the enhancing the quality of supervisory process. Time afforded to undertake supervision and access to appropriate supervisors need to be adequate and accounted for in workforce planning. A paradigm shift in workplace culture is required so clinical supervision is seen as an integral component in maintaining quality and assuring patient safety.

[To dictate or collaborate? A phenomenological exploration of physiotherapists' leadership styles](#)

Full text available with NHS OpenAthens account*

BMJ Leadership, 2022

The framework identified gives insight into a group of clinical leaders not yet explored and provides a foundation for the development of leadership behaviours throughout physiotherapy. These clinicians should be supported by senior leaders to develop more transformational styles which have the potential to impact on staff well-being and patient care.

[Employing a coaching model of supervision during physiotherapy placements: Charting the student experience](#)

Physiotherapy 114, 2022

Placement capacity during physiotherapy degree programmes is presently under unprecedented stress. In the wake of COVID-19, Health Education England has moved to increase university places across all Allied Health Professions (AHPs) by 50%, without any reduction in quality of education. In order to facilitate this increase in student numbers, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and healthcare teams are being asked to change their ways of working and consider alternative supervision models. One such model is the group-based 'coaching' approach which is commonly used in the education of medical students but seldom employed on AHP programmes, where one-to-one supervision remains the default. The research reported herein was tasked with qualitatively elucidating student experiences of such a coaching supervision initiative, introduced by the research team across a set of undergraduate and postgraduate physiotherapy placements in two NHS Trusts the north of England during 2020 and 2021.

[Expanding physiotherapy placement capacity: Clinical educators' experiences of implementing a coaching approach to supervision](#)

Physiotherapy 114, 2022

Increasing by 50% the UK's capacity for training students in the Allied Health Professions (AHPs), as recently mandated by Health Education England, represents a significant challenge for universities and healthcare providers alike. This challenge is,

perhaps, felt most acutely in the domain of placement provision, where resources are not necessarily available to support the clinical supervision of large numbers of additional students. In response to this, a trial 'coaching' model of clinical supervision in physiotherapy was introduced by the researchers across two NHS Trusts in the North of England in 2020 and 2021.

Commonly used in the practical training of medical students, this entails extensive group-based learning activity, rather than the one-to-one approach traditional across most AHP areas. The research reported herein explores the experiences of Clinical Educators (CEs) in implementing this approach for the first time, with a view to more clearly understanding its impacts upon their own working practices and those within their departments.

[Light-touch mentorship of physiotherapists in face to face and digital consultations supports development of clinical expertise](#)

Physiotherapy 114, 2022

There is a current, and increasing, need to develop musculoskeletal advanced practice physiotherapists (APP)—with an immediate requirement for clinical expertise within physiotherapy services, supporting the pressing needs of GP services (Primary Care Improvement Plans) and supporting secondary care musculoskeletal services (Waiting Times Improvement Plan). Mentorship is highly valued and offers high-level personalised development, with clinical mentorship in physiotherapy also shown to improve patient ...

[Professional diversity in leadership – Inclusion of the smaller professions](#)

Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, 2022

There are 14 Allied Health Professions (AHPs) in England with approximately 170,000 AHPs working within the NHS. Physiotherapists represent the largest group of AHPs with approximately 61,000 registered with the Health and Care

Professions Council, whilst Prosthetics and Orthotics represent the smallest profession with approximately 1000 registrants.

[Supervision models in physiotherapy practice education: student and practice educator evaluations](#)

Abstract only*
Physiotherapy Theory and Practice 37(11), 2021

While the 1.1 model remains the most widely used supervision model in physiotherapy practice education, other models also score positively, offering choice to placement providers when determining the model that best suits their service.

[Telehealth e-mentoring in postgraduate musculoskeletal physiotherapy education: A mixed methods case study](#)

Abstract only*
Musculoskeletal Science and Practice 56, 2021

Telehealth e-mentoring is a valuable alternative to face-to-face mentored physiotherapy practice to support development in advanced musculoskeletal physiotherapy practice. Findings indicate that technical and professional skills are required, high levels of communication skills were valued, there is a need for reconceptualisation of musculoskeletal physiotherapeutic interventions.

[Digital learning designs in physiotherapy education: a systematic review and meta-analysis](#)

BMC Medical Education 21, 2021

The current findings from physiotherapy education indicate that digital learning designs in the form of blended learning and distance learning were equally or more effective compared to traditional teaching.

[Characterising the outcomes, impacts and implementation challenges of advanced clinical practice roles in the UK: a scoping review](#)

BMJ Open 11(8), 2021

This review suggests a need for educational and role standardisation and a supported career pathway for advanced clinical practitioners (ACPs) in the UK. Future research should: (i) adopt more robust study designs, (ii) investigate the full scope of the ACP role and (iii) include a wider range of professions and sectors. academic pathway.

[Who Coaches the Coaches? The Development of a Coaching Model for Experiential Learning](#)

Innovative Higher Education 46, 2021

We recommend practices for coaching that can support gains for students and faculty in experiential, project-based, interdisciplinary courses.

Mental health

[Risk factors associated with physical therapist burnout: a systematic review](#) Abstract only*

Physiotherapy 116, 2022

Fifty-three risk factors were identified, with four being classified as unavoidable and forty-nine determined as avoidable. The avoidable risk factors were further categorized as either structural/organizational (32%), psychological/emotional (19%), environmental (19%), or sociodemographic (13%).

[The relationship between burnout and empathy in physiotherapists: a cross-sectional study](#)

Annals of Medicine 54(1), 2022

There was an association between burnout and empathy. Specifically, higher levels of burnout are associated with lower levels of empathy, whilst years of work experience is associated with lower levels of burnout.

[The first year of private practice - new graduate physiotherapists are highly engaged and satisfied but edging toward burnout](#)

Abstract only*

Physiotherapy Theory and Practice 40(2), 2022

Resilience was positively associated with job satisfaction suggesting those with capacity to 'bounce back' were more satisfied and engaged with their job. Although moderate levels of burnout were reported at 12-months, those with higher job satisfaction and employee engagement had lower levels of burnout. Participants proposed practical strategies to help mitigate burnout.

[The placement wellbeing project: A remote intervention to support student health and wellbeing whilst on practice placement](#) Abstract only*

Physiotherapy 114, 2022

Physiotherapy students commencing their practice placement journeys in the Covid-19 pandemic experienced unique challenges. Prior to the pandemic there was already an exponential rise in student mental health needs and higher education institutions (HEIs) have been urged to be proactive in preparing to support students' mental health. The Placement Wellbeing Project (PWP) was a newly constructed, remote intervention delivered using Microsoft Teams (MS Teams) and was piloted to support students' health and ...

[Joining the workforce during the COVID-19 pandemic: views of Allied Health Profession students](#)

Journal of Interprofessional Care 36(5), 2022

Although the transition from student to practitioner continues to be a stressful period, only a minority of participants reported COVID-19 as an explicit stressor.

[Stress and burnout: exploring postgraduate physiotherapy students' experiences and coping strategies](#)

BMC Medical Education 20, 2020

Student consistently identified periods of stress and burnout, with curriculum coursework in particular being a trigger. Findings acknowledge the need for further investigation on sources of perceived stress, burnout, and coping mechanisms to optimise student welfare and enhance Higher Education Institution outcomes.

[Stress and burnout in physiotherapists. A literature review of causative factors, the impact on patient care and coping strategies](#) Abstract only*

Physiotherapy 107, 2020

To analyse and add further understanding of the extent and nature of stress and burnout in the physiotherapy workforce, its impact on the workforce and patient care. To identify coping strategies that can be used by clinicians and managers in the workplace to reduce stress and burnout.

Prescribing

[The experiences of physiotherapy independent prescribing in primary care: implications for practice](#)

Primary Health Care Research & Development 24, 2023

Whilst physiotherapists were empowered by their independent prescribing qualification, they were frustrated by current UK Controlled Drugs legislation. Physiotherapists reported vulnerability, isolation, and risk as potential challenges to independent prescribing, but noted clinical experience and 'patient mileage' as vital to mitigate these. Participants identified the need to establish prescribing impact, particularly around difficult to measure aspects such as more holistic conversations and enhanced practice directly attributed to prescribing knowledge. GPs were supportive of physiotherapists prescribing.

[Barriers and facilitators to implementation of non-medical independent prescribing in primary care in the UK: a qualitative systematic review](#)

BMJ Open 12(6), 2022

A more coordinated and targeted approach is key to overcoming barriers identified in the four stages of implementation and would help ensure that IP is recognised as an effective approach to help alleviate workforce shortfalls in the UK, and around the world.

[A comparative case study of prescribing and non-prescribing physiotherapists and podiatrists](#)

BMC Health Services Research 20, 2020

This study provides new knowledge that PP-IPs provide high levels of care. PP-IP care delivery was found to be more resource intensive. Further research is required to explore cost effectiveness.

Role progression and development

[United Kingdom physiotherapists injection therapy practice for musculoskeletal complaints: A cross-sectional survey](#) Abstract only*

Musculoskeletal Science and Practice 69, 2024

Highlights

- A description of the UK physiotherapy practice of using injection therapy.
- Variation exists in the pre and post injection procedures.
- Drug choices are based on a various factors beyond drug efficacy.
- Differences in drug dose used are evident among UK physiotherapists.
- Body sites frequently injected have a limited evidence base to support such practice.

[A proposed framework for point of care musculoskeletal ultrasound and ultrasound image-guided interventions by physiotherapists: scope of practice, education and governance](#)

The Ultrasound Journal 15, 2023

Acknowledging the breadth of MSK physiotherapy PoCUS practice, this paper draws upon a framework approach to provide integrated ScoP, education/competency and governance solutions, along with mechanisms for other professions working with MSK PoCUS—and physiotherapists/physical therapists outside of the UK—to consolidate and expand their practice.

[Consensus on occupational health competencies for UK first contact physiotherapists](#)

Physiotherapy 121, 2023

This paper provides an empirically derived list of OH competencies for FCP education in primary care 'first point of care' physiotherapy with a high level of expert agreement and high retention rate between rounds.

[A multi-site prospective, observational study of physiotherapist independent prescribing activity across musculoskeletal clinics in the United Kingdom](#) Abstract only*

Musculoskeletal Science & Practice 61, 2022

Physiotherapist independent prescribing was used within all health sectors in conjunction with advanced skills in musculoskeletal physiotherapy as part of a multimodal physiotherapeutic approach. Prescribing activity was dictated by the clinicians' clinical reasoning and use of joint decision-making.

[Investigating the use of digital health tools in physiotherapy: facilitators and barriers](#)

Physiotherapy Theory and Practice 39(7), 2022

We reveal how physiotherapists and patients use the app in physiotherapy and identify 16 interdependent factors, on the

macro-, meso-, and micro-level, that either facilitate or hinder its use.

[An adventurous learning journey. Physiotherapists' conceptions of learning and integrating cognitive functional therapy into clinical practice](#)

Physiotherapy Theory and Practice 38(2), 2020

Four themes emerged from the data: 1) membership of work community; 2) learning journey; 3) transition to new working methods; and 4) professional role as a physiotherapist.

[The transition from physiotherapy student to new graduate: are they prepared?](#) Abstract only*

Physiotherapy Theory and Practice 38(1), 2020

Four themes emerged surrounding the transition from physiotherapy student to new graduate: 1) preparedness for practice; 2) protected practice; 3) independent and affirmation of practice; and 4) performance expectations.

[Capitalising on the transformational opportunities of early clinical academic career training for nurses, midwives and allied health professionals](#)

BMC Medical Education 20, 2020

Stakeholders need to recognise that a cultural shift about the purposes of research training from a transactional to transformative approaches is required to facilitate the development of NMAHPS clinical academics, to enable them to contribute to innovative health and patient care.

[Relationship between labour force satisfaction, wages and retention within the UK National Health Service: a systematic review of the literature](#)

BMJ Open 10, 2020

Pay was found to influence satisfaction, which in turn affected retention. An increase in wages alone is unlikely to be sufficient to ameliorate the concerns of NHS workers.

[Developing a consolidated research framework for clinical allied health professionals practising in the UK](#)

BMC Health Services Research 20, 2020

The consolidated framework was entitled 'Shaping Better Practice Through Research: A Practitioner Framework' by stakeholders, thus emphasising its ambition to embed research activity into practice.

Secondary and tertiary care

[The experiences of patients attending the emergency department who were managed by physiotherapists: a person-centred perspective](#)

Disability and Rehabilitation, 2024

Novel contributions from the patient perspective, here, reflected a cognisance of certain environment limitations to PCP, as well as institutional challenges to their personhood, with a suggestion that ED patients anticipated a validation of their visit and valued the educational aspects that the physiotherapists provided. Considering this new knowledge can help ED physiotherapists to be more person-centred.

[An exploration of person-centredness among emergency department physiotherapists: a mixed methods study](#)

Disability and Rehabilitation 46(23), 2024

ED physiotherapists were mindful of an apparent, yet unspoken struggle between the competing philosophies of biomedicine and person-centredness. The results here support entering a patient's world as a person-centred approach to help navigate the line between what an ED attender wants and the clinical need of their visit.

[Agreeing priority categories and items for inclusion in a future best practice delegation framework for musculoskeletal outpatient physiotherapy services: A consensus groups study](#)

Musculoskeletal Science and Practice 72, 2024

Highlights

- Delegation of clinical tasks is common in musculoskeletal outpatient physiotherapy services.
- Nevertheless, delegation varies considerably in practice leading to variation in patient care.
- Developing consensus amongst clinicians is an important step towards identifying best practice.

[Physiotherapy-Led Musculoskeletal Telephone Triage and Advice Service: A Valid Option for Patients Referred From the Emergency Department](#)

Cureus 15(2), 2023

The introduction of a TTAD service for referrals from the emergency department has been demonstrated to be effective in reducing the number of face-to-face appointments required in the MSK physiotherapy management of these patients. Both initial and follow-up face-to-face appointments were lower in 2018 when compared to 2017, this is despite an 11.2% increase in the number of referrals throughout August, September, and October. It can therefore be concluded that the TTAD service also had a positive impact on the failed attendance rate of initial face-to-face appointments.

[Musculoskeletal physiotherapists' discharge practices for people treated with low back pain: A United Kingdom survey](#)

Musculoskeletal Care 22(1), 2023

This UK survey established that discharge practices for people with LBP after physiotherapy vary. Whilst the majority of people are currently discharged with a PIFU appointment, a graded discharge approach may be more beneficial for people who are

less likely to initiate a PIFU appointment. Further consideration on the development of such a pathway is now required.

[Therapy professionals in critical care: A UK wide workforce survey](#)

Journal of the Intensive Care Society 24(1), 2023

There is significant variation in access to therapists for patients admitted to critical care in the UK, with many services not having services for core therapies such as psychology and OT. Where services do exist, they fall below the recommended guidance.

[Physiotherapy for primary frozen shoulder in secondary care: Developing and implementing stand-alone and post operative protocols for UK FROST and inferences for wider practice](#)

Physiotherapy 107, 2020

We developed physiotherapy protocols despite incomplete empirical evidence. Their clear structure enabled implementation in data-sheets designed to facilitate recording, monitoring of fidelity and reporting of interventions.

Workforce perspectives and experiences

[Working as a physiotherapist in a rapid response team: 'An emotional rollercoaster'](#)

Physiotherapy Theory and Practice 40(7), 2024

This study provides valuable insights into physiotherapists' experience and conceptualization of working within this discipline, which may have implications for physiotherapy practice, workforce development, new and current RR physiotherapy services, RRT health professionals, and physiotherapy education.

[Musculoskeletal physiotherapists' experiences of using remote consultations during the COVID-19 pandemic: A qualitative study](#)

Musculoskeletal Science and Practice 72, 2024

Highlights

- Remote consultations sustained musculoskeletal service provision during COVID-19.
- Remote consultations may negatively impact the therapeutic relationship.
- Remote assessment is challenging and may lead to diagnostic uncertainty.
- Technology positively impacted peer support, reducing uncertainty.
- Novice physiotherapists need extra training for successful remote consultations.

["It's a lot more complicated than it seems": physiotherapists' experiences of using compensation strategies in people with Parkinson's](#)

Frontiers in Rehabilitation Sciences, 2023

Two main themes were developed from the data. The first theme, optimizing compensation strategies through personalized care, shows how physiotherapists accounted for the individual needs and characteristics of people with Parkinson's, which resulted in them individually tailoring compensation strategies. The second theme, delivering compensation strategies effectively, considers the available support and perceived challenges with work settings and experience that impact physiotherapists' ability to deliver compensation strategies.

[Physiotherapists' perspectives of barriers and facilitators to effective community provision after hip fracture: a qualitative study in England](#)

Age and Ageing 52(9), 2023

Physiotherapists propose that effective provision of community physiotherapy following hip fracture could be improved by refining care coordination, utilising stratification techniques, employing enhanced recruitment and retainment strategies and addressing fear avoidance behaviours.

[The experiences of uncertainty amongst musculoskeletal physiotherapists in first contact practitioner roles within primary care](#)

Musculoskeletal Care 21(3), 2023

This study demonstrates the multifaceted phenomenon of uncertainty amongst Musculoskeletal First Contact Practitioners. Uncertainty appeared to be influenced by the primary care environment, preparedness for the role and perceived burden of responsibility. Diagnostic uncertainty was prevalent with concerns of missing serious pathology evident. The impact of uncertainty on wellbeing was linked to possible burnout and retention issues. Consultation approaches, access to support networks and a cultural shift in tolerating uncertainty were reported to mitigate uncertainty. Further research into possible differences in experiences related to employment models appears warranted.

[Allied health professional's self-reported competences and confidence to deliver physical activity advice to cancer patients at a single Centre in England](#)

Disability and Rehabilitation 45(24), 2023

Although the merits of physical activity for people affected by cancer is clearly evidenced, low levels of AHP confidence and competence in discussing this topic limit patients' awareness and access to services. Addressing this confidence and competence has potential to improve patient outcome.

[Physiotherapists' Perceptions of the Influence of Their Health Behaviours on Their Advice to Patients](#)

Cureus 15(2), 2023

In this study, 13 out of 15 participants believed their lifestyle impacts their counselling to patients. Despite this, multiple barriers to health promotion were identified. This study highlights the need for training physiotherapists about certain lifestyle

behaviours, including smoking cessation, alcohol misuse and basic nutrition counselling which may improve their health promotion messages, potentially leading to patient behaviour change which ultimately may have a positive public health impact.

[Physiotherapists' views and experiences of health literacy in clinical practice](#)

Musculoskeletal Care 21(4), 2023

The findings highlighted that physiotherapists identified a patient's health literacy abilities by picking up tacit clues throughout their consultations and they pre-dominantly viewed health literacy as the ability to read, write and communicate effectively. They reported having a limited exposure to health literacy training and recommended raising awareness and education as key to improve practice.

[Future-proofing the Profession: Physiotherapists' perceptions of their current and emerging role](#)

Physiotherapy 119, 2022

Physiotherapists need to re-evaluate their role so a clear vision for the future can be co-created to ensure they remain contemporary and continue to optimise their potential.

[What are the views of musculoskeletal physiotherapists and patients on person-centred practice? A systematic review of qualitative studies](#)

Disability and Rehabilitation 4(6), 2022

Empowerment of patients in musculoskeletal physiotherapy contexts might be improved through a more narrative approach to assessment, with clinical bravery recognised as a specific person-centred physiotherapy trait able to facilitate this.

Competency Frameworks

[The standards of proficiency for physiotherapists](#)

Health & Care Professions Council, 2023

These standards set out safe and effective practice in the professions we regulate. They are the threshold standards we consider necessary to protect members of the public.

[AHP Critical Care Capability Framework](#)

Intensive Care Society, no date (estimated post 2022)

The Allied Health Professions Critical Care Capability framework has been developed to highlight the experience, expertise and contributions of dietitians, occupational therapists, operating department practitioners, physiotherapists and speech and language therapists in intensive care.

[Musculoskeletal core capabilities framework for first point of contact practitioners](#)

NHS England WT&E, 2018

This framework was commissioned by Health Education England and NHS England, building upon work previously undertaken by the national programme delivered by the Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Alliance (ARMA) and its member organisations.

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