Physiotherapy post fracture: An integrated approach to delivering an Orthopaedic Physiotherapy service in Primary Care in Cavan Monaghan

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**Introduction**
Cavan Monaghan Physiotherapy Department is an integrated department covering a rural service area. The Orthopaedic Trauma site for Cavan Monaghan is Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda, and the majority of post fracture referrals originate in OLOLH.

**Objective**
The objective of the project was to design an integrated referral pathway for patients presenting to physiotherapy post fracture in Cavan Monaghan.

**Project Description**
A project group was set up chaired by the Physiotherapy Manager 3 with membership including Senior Physiotherapists from each Acute Hospital site and from Primary Care Teams (PCT) in each county. Key issues identified included:

- Quality and patient safety risks for complex patients receiving services at PCT level
- Access issues for patients travelling long distances to access hospital OPD
- Lack of access to Radiology from PCT’s
- Different work practices across various PCT’s
- Additional demands placed on stretched PCT’s
- Training needs for physiotherapists in PCT’s
- Difficulty for referring hospitals in knowing which PCT’s accept fracture patients and how to refer

**Outcomes**
Integrated referral pathway for post fracture patients agreed ensuring that patients with non-complex conditions receive a local service that is safe and quality assured.

Physiotherapy referrals post fracture are sent to Hospital Orthopaedic OPD.

All patients receive their first appointment in the Orthopaedic OPD and are screened for complexity by Senior Physiotherapists in Orthopaedics.

Patients with complex conditions receive their course of physiotherapy in the Orthopaedic OPD.

Patients with non-complex conditions are offered a choice of continuing to receive their care in the Hospital OPD or of transferring their care to their local PCT Physiotherapist.

If the PCT Physiotherapist has any concerns the patient can be referred back for review or advice to the Orthopaedic OPD.

**Additional Outcomes Achieved**
- Support/advice function for PCT Physiotherapists from Orthopaedic OPD Physiotherapists in place.
- Complex case SOP developed for patients with complex fractures who require domiciliary visits from PCT. The Senior Physiotherapist in Orthopaedics provides advice and support in relation to patient care, and if required can attend a joint home visit with the PCT Physiotherapist.