



Service Priorities and Programmes
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Triage and Severity Specific Physiotherapy Intervention and Follow Up Program (TIP) for Adolescent Idiopathic Scoliosis

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Introduction

Introduction Adolescent Idiopathic Scoliosis (AIS) is a common orthopaedic conditions in school aged children. There are more than a thousand new cases per year attending the Specialist Orthopaedic Clinic in the Duchess of Kent Children's Hospital in Sandy Bay (DKCH). Majority of them will require physiotherapy intervention for exercise training and monitoring. A well designed triage, intervention and follow up service is necessary to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of physiotherapy service that are provided to this patient group.

Objectives

Objectives: A Triage and severity specific physiotherapy Intervention and follow up program (TIP) was designed and implemented by Physiotherapy Department in DKCH with which patients were better provided with timely and condition specific interventions with follow up to monitor for condition changes and treatment progress.

Methodology

New AIS cases were triaged by specialty trained physiotherapist within 7 working days into three tiers. Tier one was condition with Cobb angles $<20^\circ$ or reaching skeletal maturity. Group therapy was given with educational talk, pamphlets, exercise demonstrations and telephone follow up. Tier two was condition with Cobb angles $>20^\circ$ that required bracing. Individual treatment was provided for exercise training with bracing, education that help minimize misunderstanding and worries on brace wearing and empowered them to take an active role in compliance of brace wearing. Regular follow up was arranged for monitoring. Tier 3 was condition with Cobb angles $>45^\circ$ requiring surgery. Preoperative intervention was started before hospital admission with emphasis on explanation of post-operative physiotherapy management, assessment and chest condition optimization in preparation for surgery. Post operative intervention was started one day after surgery and continued as outpatient after discharge.

Result

Results In 2012, 407 new patients with Idiopathic Scoliosis were included in the TIP. 100% were triaged within the time frame. 47 were group under tier 1 with overall patient satisfaction rate of 89% for the program. 293 patients were grouped under tier 2. Waiting time for first appointment was reduced from 11 weeks to 7 weeks. 67 patients were group under tier 3. 100% received pre op intervention regime before operation. Follow up treatment was also arranged for all of them after surgery. Conclusion TIP is efficient and specific in providing a full scope of physiotherapy service to AIS patients with timely follow up and interventions that are targeted according to disease severity. Pre and post operative physiotherapy interventions are also comprehensively provided under this program.