States proposals on the transformation of health and care services in the Bailiwick of Guernsey

Date: 11 December 2017

Introduction

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) is the professional, educational and trade union body for physiotherapists, physiotherapy support staff and students in Guernsey. The majority of registered physiotherapists in both employment and private practice across the Bailiwick are CSP members.

The CSP has provided advice to the States Committee for Health & Social Care directly and through our Guernsey Network in the lead up to the publication of the new proposal. It is heartening to see that physiotherapy is recognised within the proposals. As with any proposals there are areas where we will be seeking clarification, however much of the thrust for the new strategy reflects the policies and service approaches which the CSP has recommended.

The focus on the promotion of health and wellbeing, prevention, early intervention, enhanced access and focusing on more cost effective interventions were all issues the CSP raised with the HSC. Proposals which are especially relevant to physiotherapy include:

- **Providing health and care services that promote independence** - physiotherapists focus on enabling people to be independent from falls prevention to rehabilitation following illness or injury and supporting people with disabilities or long-term conditions.

- **Providing timely and appropriate diagnosis, treatment, support and care, based on need, for all those who need to access it** – this is fundamental to the ethos of physiotherapy.

- **Encouraging and facilitating active lifestyles** - as clinical experts in movement, physiotherapists have key roles to play; developing exercise programmes for delivery by a wider care team; giving expert exercise support to people with long-term conditions or disabilities and in helping to manage risks of injury at work or play.

Principles

The proposed principles underlying health and care in the islands are ones which the CSP support.

**Prevention:** Physiotherapists can play a big role in this, for example running falls prevention services, advising on avoiding work or sports related injuries and in antenatal care. For Islanders who have long term conditions, physiotherapists have a key role in providing specialist support, to prevent secondary complications of their condition.

**User-centred care:** Physiotherapists are trained to identify the needs and aspirations of patients at the forefront of treatment plans, including goal setting. Physiotherapists are trained to work flexibly within resources to achieve care that is tailored to the needs of the individual.
Fair access to care: Affordable healthcare is recognised by the UN as essential\(^1\). CSP members in the Bailiwick are concerned about financial barriers to accessing care and support moves which reduce these barriers.

Proportionate governance and regulation: The CSP supports effective and supportive oversight of services. We welcome the recognition that physiotherapists are already professionally regulated via the HCPC and agree that additional local regulation is not needed to ensure patient safety.

Direct access to services: Direct access to physiotherapy has long been shown to be clinically effective, safe, easier for patients and cost effective\(^2\). Islanders already have direct access to a small range of physiotherapy services from the States: including post-natal services provided by Women’s Health Specialist Physiotherapy Team and Pre-school Triage Clinic provided by Children’s Physiotherapy service. These have been successful and efficient schemes for service delivery and our members have identified other areas which could benefit from similar direct access schemes.

Self-referral is already available to independent physiotherapists in the islands, predominately for MSK problems. We believe this should be available for all relevant services as it is faster, more effective and less costly than referral via a GP or Consultant.

Effective community care: Community rehabilitation should be a key element of reducing emergency care, acute care demands and social care needs. We are disappointed this is not recognised explicitly in the proposals.

Focus on quality: The commitment to ensuring high quality care is welcome as the CSP promotes evidence based practice and the better use of measurement in all areas to enhance outcomes, safety and experience.

A universal offering: the CSP is fundamentally committed to promoting access to healthcare for all those who need it, free at the point of use. Moves towards a more universal service in the Bailiwick would be welcome, but the details of the offer are not yet clear.

Partnership approach: The commitment to cross-sectoral partnership is welcome as physiotherapists work across sectors and as both employees of major providers and as private practitioners.

Empowered providers and integrated teams: Physiotherapists are used to working in multi-disciplinary teams and across clinical boundaries.

Partnership of purpose

The proposal to establish a Partnership of Purpose of providers is welcome, providing this is genuinely inclusive. We assume the major providers of care to the States will be invited to join the Partnership. There may be concern amongst private practitioner physiotherapists that their voice may not be heard in the Partnership. This would limit the contribution physiotherapists could make to improving care in the islands. We would therefore welcome further discussions with the HSC about involvement of all physiotherapists and physiotherapy services in the Partnership, and particularly what role the CSP Guernsey Network could play in the Partnership.

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The Universal Offer

Moves to make some forms of care more affordable are welcome, although the CSP’s policy is that all health services should be available to all on the basis of need and free at the point of use. Our members have expressed concern at the barrier which charging for primary care physiotherapy presents. We have pointed out the potential added costs involved if patients delay seeking advice or treatment and then need acute services due to developing more severe problems.

We would urge the HSC to ensure that relevant physiotherapy, rehabilitation and preventative services such as falls prevention are included in the Universal Offer and are free to the patient. In making changes to the funding regime it will be necessary to introduce fairer payments for independent providers to ensure they are able to continue to provide services.

Care Passports

Our members see this as an exciting development with the potential to support people with long term conditions to access specialist services and equipment. Many of our members in Guernsey work with adults or children who have long-term conditions. They would welcome the opportunity to contribute to the development of Care Passports within their specialist fields of expertise. Physiotherapy has a particular contribution to make in relation to:

- Stroke
- COPD
- Cerebral Palsy
- Cystic Fibrosis
- Physical disability
- MS
- Motor Neurone Disease
- Osteoporosis
- Asthma
- Cardiovascular disease.

Information on the contribution physiotherapy can make with these conditions, and the evidence for the value of physiotherapy, can be found at: [www.csp.org.uk/your-health/conditions](http://www.csp.org.uk/your-health/conditions)

Health and Care Campus and Community Hubs

We welcome the recognition that physiotherapy is a “first port of call” service and therefore needs to be offered in community hubs.

We welcome the recognition that the Adult Musculoskeletal (MSK) Service Primary Care pilot has been a success. Developing enhanced physiotherapy in the community, using both States commissioned services and independent physiotherapists, needs to be a key part of these plans. Physiotherapists will need to be involved in developing the hub concept. Demand, and the transformation agenda, will mean that it will need both states contracted and independent practitioners to support patients locally.

We welcome the recognition that developing “enhanced practitioner” roles and maximising the skills of health practitioners is needed. It is disappointing that only nurses and pharmacists are mentioned. Advanced Practitioner (AP) physiotherapist roles could be offering: first contact assessment, prescription, injections, diagnostics and other enhanced skills within MSK services.

It is not only in MSK where AP physiotheprists could contribute more. Across orthopaedics, respiratory care, women’s health and neurology AP physiotherapists could maximise the skills available on Island, both within the community and in hospital settings.
We would like to see the involvement of physiotherapists in developing AP roles across a wider range of clinical areas. Supporting the development of AP roles will need assistance with the training costs of developing enhanced skills.

**Alderney**

There are additional challenges in ensuring access to physiotherapy in Alderney. We welcome the hub proposal for Alderney and believe there is a strong need for residents to have access to on island, resident physiotherapy support.

There are particular challenges in ensuring access to specialist physiotherapy, including those for children, in Alderney. It is important that alongside improved primary provision, specialist physiotherapy services are planned for Alderney residents.

**How to contact the CSP**

To contact the Guernsey CSP Network about local services or to arrange to see physiotherapy in practice please contact: PhysioGuernsey@csp.org.uk

To support the CSP in promoting active lifestyles please contact: daubenym@csp.org.uk

For enquires about CSP polices or the evidence for physiotherapy please contact: yeldhamr@csp.org.uk