

# NHS70 – CSP

# Briefing



## Introduction

This briefing was produced to coincide with the 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the NHS on July 5 2018.

It is an at-a-glance resource for CSP members and others who wish to know more about the NHS history and development from the perspective of physiotherapy.

We would encourage CSP members to get involved in any local and national activities that celebrate the NHS and highlight the amazing work you and your predecessors have done to support the health and wellbeing of millions of people across the UK, from the founding of the NHS in 1948 to today.

The NHS is currently facing one of the worst funding crises in its 70-year history as demand for services rises faster than funding. Physiotherapy and other NHS staff are working in incredibly difficult conditions to try to deliver the very best services, suffering stress, long hours and excessive workloads.

So the CSP among other trade unions and health professional organisations are taking the opportunity of the 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday to campaign and influence to ensure the NHS is properly funded in the long term.

We want the NHS to have another amazing 70 years ahead of it: one where staff have decent working conditions and are properly rewarded for the fantastic work they do; one where patients - wherever they live, whatever their income, whatever their age or walk of life - get receive a first class service.

## How can I join in birthday celebrations?

Look out for local activities from this official NHS resource <https://www.nhs70.nhs.uk/>

On June 30 there will be an event in London organised by the NHS trade unions, Health Campaigns Together and People's Assembly. There will be a CSP speaker and it will be fun, family day out. Starts midday, Portland Place, London W1A.

[http://www.thepeoplesassembly.org.uk/nhs\\_70](http://www.thepeoplesassembly.org.uk/nhs_70)

## What can physiotherapy offer the NHS?

Physiotherapy staff work in all settings and specialisms across the NHS, providing crucial services to patients that improve their quality of life.

This might be rehab for someone after major trauma, helping a person manage their long-term condition or preventing future ill-health and hospital admissions.

The profession delivers cost-effective, innovative solutions that continue to help the NHS meet many of its biggest challenges.

Find out more at [www.csp.org.uk](http://www.csp.org.uk)

## NHS & Physiotherapy - in a nutshell

We often talk about how much physiotherapy is developing NHS services to improve the health and wellbeing of NHS patients while making the NHS more efficient. The NHS in turn has been critical to development of physiotherapy since its foundation in 1948. Here's how

### *World leading*

NHS-led development in physiotherapy has created ripples globally, for example in the development of roles and scope of practice, like independent prescribing; these have been examined and replicated by health systems in other countries. Thus the NHS has developed global physiotherapy practice.

### *Research and development*

The NHS is the leading home for physiotherapy research and development in the UK. This is set to be accelerated under recent plans for an enhanced environment for clinical trials in the NHS.

### *Scope of practice & roles*

UK physiotherapy leads the world in scope of practice. Most if not all of the new advanced scopes of practice have evolved within the NHS, for example independent medicine prescribing. Advanced clinical practice and consultant roles are all features of the NHS; fulfilling its mission to respond to population needs demands staff to be working at the top of their scope and their professional license. This in turn drives career opportunities for physios. Furthermore as the focus of NHS care has moved to supporting increasing numbers of patients and specifically those who are older and living with multiple long term conditions, the NHS has expanded and developed its support workers workforce with Physiotherapy Assistant Practitioners able to work with greater autonomy and responsibility to support the NHS Physiotherapy workforce to meet changing demand.

### *Integrated, collaborative system*

In contrast to fragmented, privatised health systems, such as in the US, the NHS facilitates provides a common, safe UK wide system to share advanced practice, incentivised through clinical excellence awards and through NICE. Showcasing what physiotherapy staff do, and learning from others in the NHS enhances physiotherapy practice locally. The interlinked NHS structure also means the UK has the opportunity to learn from other health systems and respond as a system, applying the learning and scaling it up more rapidly and effectively than fragmented systems. Plans for a fully integrated health and social care system promises benefits to physiotherapy and physiotherapy patients in the future.

### *Free, universal care for all*

There are few if any other countries who offer the same breadth of free access to physiotherapy services as the UK under the NHS. Significant portions of the population of many other similarly wealthy countries but with different health systems find access denied on grounds of cost. The NHS allows physiotherapists in the UK to focus on quality of care rather than the ability of the patient to fund their treatment.

### *Public Health*

The public health agenda that has long been championed by the profession and the CSP is facilitated by the universal access to free healthcare the NHS provides. Physiotherapists can access disadvantaged groups who benefit most from preventative approaches that when effective save the economy billions (eg frailty or pre-frailty).

### *Efficiency and productivity*

The new first contact physiotherapy role in GP practices is the most recent example of the opportunities for physio the NHS offers in terms of delivering quality services that are also cost effective. Even when money is tight the NHS' shared system means any measures to improve the efficiency of physiotherapy and other health services can be approached in a more rational manner than with a fragmented /

privatised systems. The principle that everybody has the same right to access physiotherapy free on the NHS avoids some of the waste and perverse incentives in privatised/insurance based systems that may include payment per appointment/treatment episode, that can drive poor clinical behaviour.

### *Workforce and training*

The NHS has funded the studies and training placements for tens of thousands of physiotherapists over many decades, helping to create the future healthcare workforce the nation needs. While the funding of undergraduate courses has now ceased, the NHS continues to provide physio work placements in excess of 1,700 annually in recent years.

### *Social Partnership, Unions and Staff Voice*

Employers in the NHS are recognised as undertaking a partnership approach to working with unions at national, regional and local level across the UK. The Social Partnership Forum in England and equivalents in the UK, and the UK-wide negotiating fora, the NHS Staff Council have ensured relative industrial peace and employment terms and conditions – contained in the Agenda for Change agreement – that are among the most advanced in the country.

## **What CSP members say**

*We asked a few CSP members who are employed in the NHS as physiotherapists and physio support staff what's special about the NHS, why it mattered to them as staff and patients, and to comment on the issue of funding*

“The NHS is special because of the concept that health service is free at the first point of contact and not based on whether you can afford it. It is still a service which puts patients first (which is important to me). It needs more funding to ensure the quality of patient care is maintained rather than having an overworked, stressed, unhappy staff. “

*Belinda*

“Staff have a genuine design to just help people, constantly going the extra mile to do this. It is seen by other health policy makers in the world as a model to strive for. It is one of the UK's greatest achievements. The NHS has cared for my family and myself on numerous occasions and has probably saved our lives.”

*Chris*

“The NHS is a world leading service which has played its part in eradicating infectious diseases and pioneering new treatments – it has come a long way in 70 years. To have access to healthcare without having to pay through the nose for it is

excellent and life changing for many. This should be celebrated. I am incredibly proud to work for our NHS. We need to keep supporting it! Scientific advances and people living longer mean our NHS is needed more than ever! NHS staff work so hard to provide quality care and it is so frustrating when we don't have the resources required to do more."

*Shelley*

"The NHS provides care for everybody, with cost to patients at the point of delivery and the NHS does not discriminate. I used the service personally and find it essential for my health and well-being. I feel supported and safe knowing I can access care. But our population is growing, we do not have enough staff, facilities or services. Patients are having to wait longer for treatment."

*Sophie*

## **NHS70: Timeline of physiotherapy and the NHS**

### **1948**

The NHS is founded. Universal healthcare – and physiotherapy - is available for free for all. State funding means sourcing equipment is no longer dependent on staff raffles. The British people feel they now have a right to physiotherapy.

### **1949**

Physiotherapy services are expanded to include regional/local and domiciliary provision but there is a shortage of physios estimated to stand at around 5,000.

### **1950s**

A series of major polio epidemics boost the profile of physiotherapy - working alongside other health professions – in the NHS and lead to new developments in the delivery of respiratory care by physiotherapists. These early years in the NHS also give physiotherapists valuable experience in rehabilitation, as they treat a wider section of society than before.

### **1954**

Physiotherapy staff numbers rise to 4,310, a 20%-plus increase on 1949.

### **1960**

Professions Supplementary to Medicine Act – most recently amended as The National Health Service (Professions Supplementary to Medicine) Amendment Regulations 2000 - establishes the Council for the Professions Supplementary to

Medicine (CPSM) to regulate the initial training, fitness to practice, and the conduct of physiotherapy and other allied health professions.

### **1969**

Requirement of students in receipt of government grants to work for at least 2 years in the NHS after qualification (introduced in 1961) is abolished in 1969; CSP council nevertheless urges students to take up NHS posts to fulfil a “moral obligation and to obtain experience”; at the end of 1969 2,819 students are in training in 38 schools.

### **1970-71**

A ‘helper’ grade is established in the NHS to address the shortfall of physios for ‘non-professional’ aspects of physiotherapy i.e. dressing, tidying and maintenance exercises.

### **1977**

The Department of Health memorandum HC (77)33 establishes professional autonomy for physiotherapists.

### **1981**

Fred Frazer is the first member to gain a PHD. 'Domiciliary physiotherapy: cost and benefit' (Aston University)

### **1988**

The National Health Service Training Agency (NHSTA) undertakes a project to survey the work done by support workers and develop new training systems.

### **1998**

NHS physio staff are represented by the CSP in the tripartite Social Partnership Forum that is established in England and which brings together Government, Employers and health unions to advance quality employment in the NHS.

### **2002**

The first physiotherapy consultant, Paul Watson, is appointed honorary consultant physiotherapist at NHS University Hospitals of Leicester Trust.

### **2003**

CSP endorses a professional doctorate for the first time (University of Brighton) enhancing physiotherapy research that is largely conducted thanks to NHS and other public funding.

## **2004**

Agenda for Change is agreed with the NHS unions, including the CSP. Replacing the decades-old Whitley Council-based NHS pay system, it introduces simplified national pay 'spines' covering different staff groups, a national job evaluation scheme and a competency-based career framework (later named the Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF)). It becomes the benchmark for pay-setting for physiotherapy staff outside the NHS too.

## **2005**

Supplementary prescribing rights are extended to physiotherapists by the Department of Health and the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency.

## **2006**

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) is created to support, promote and develop the 'Best Research for Best Health' and within the first 10 years of the NIHR's existence, 100% of the UK's NHS Trusts have registered as conducting research. The NIHR goes on to support a growing number of physiotherapy research projects nationwide.

## **2013**

Physiotherapists in the UK became the first in the world to be able to independently prescribe medication to their patients. Statutory Instrument No 1855 Medicines: The Human Medicines (Amendment) Regulations 2013 enables physiotherapists and podiatrists to prescribe, after suitable training without supervision by a doctor.

## **2018**

Critical point reached across UK in ongoing development of advanced practice physio roles to provide initial MSK consultation and assessment instead of GPs within primary care

The Department of Health in Northern Ireland announced a package of investment to establish first contact physios in two large pilot sites, to cover 200,000 of population.

The number of physiotherapy staff employed by the NHS UK-wide reaches record number of just shy of 28,000, an eight-fold increase since the founding of the NHS. Around two third of working physiotherapy staff are employed by the NHS, compared to around a third in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

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