

# Penn Farm Physio

## Covid-19 update

September 2020

COVID-19 is a virus about which little is known; we all have to take extra precautions to protect ourselves and those around us.

Lockdown rules have eased but our professional body, the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy and the private sector body, PhysioFirst, have produced guidelines on how to manage face to face physiotherapy appointments safely. The guidance remains that we should offer virtual appointments as standard practise in the first instance. However, for a small group of patients and with prior discussion and consent, we are able to offer face-to-face appointments. At the moment, this is reserved for patients with an urgent or highly complex problem where a remote appointment may not allow the best management for that patient.

The main aim of these guidelines is **to minimise the risk to both therapist and patient**. Fortunately, we can communicate effectively with our patients without any virus transmission risk with the use of phone or video consultations.

Following this guidance, we are therefore offering all patients a 'virtual' first appointment. We can then advise whether a further virtual, or a face-to-face appointment is appropriate.

### **First appointments (remote)**

First appointments will involve taking personal details, enquiring about underlying health conditions, home circumstances, and doing a subjective assessment, using remote means, for example Zoom, Skype, Teams, Hangouts, or via a telephone call.

Using video, the therapist can view the patient and ask more pertinent questions and suggest remedial actions for the patient to perform. We have a whole range of exercises that can be selected for individual patients, demonstrated by online videos and downloaded onto mobile phones. At the end of this first consultation, the therapist and patient will need to consider the best way forward. Most importantly, the therapist will have to establish whether it is appropriate and safe to move on to a face to face appointment. The information below is designed to help you to understand what you as the patient and we as the service provider can do to speed your recovery in the safest way possible.

The *Subjective Assessment* involves the patient informing the therapist about his or her current problem, including easing and aggravating factors and the scale of any pain.

For the *Objective Assessment*, you may be asked to go through a range of movements whilst the physiotherapist watches to analyse your movement. A diagnosis may be formed at this point and discussed with you.

You will then be given advice, and if appropriate, exercises to do on your own at home. These may be sent to you by email or to an app on your mobile phone.

Following this initial appointment, it will be decided whether or not a face to face appointment is required and safe to carry out, or whether another virtual appointment will suffice.

### **Face to face appointments**

A face to face appointment may be offered if the health implications of not providing further assessment or treatment outweigh the risks involved in a face to face appointment, and / or to avoid placing extra burden on other services in the health service if not treated.

If you have ANY of the symptoms of COVID-19 or are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable, we will be unable to offer you an appointment at that time.

If anyone in your household falls into these categories, you must inform us.

You will have been made aware of the risks and be asked to sign a statement that this has been explained to you.

We have made a series of changes to the way that the practice is run to minimise the risks, but it is not possible to state categorically that there is no risk involved.

### **At the practice**

#### **Risk minimisation – ‘COVID-19 Secure’ environment.**

These measures are based on the updated government guidance and the PPE advice as provided by the NHS, CSP and HCPC. They will be reviewed regularly.

- Patients are asked to be punctual and not arrive before their appointment time, they will be asked to remain in their car until called inside for the appointment.
- Patients should bring their own face covering

Patients will be required to wash their hands or use the sanitizer supplied, upon arrival, and when leaving.

- All loose personal property (keys, pens, phones etc) to be kept in pockets or handbag
- Payment method is by Bank Transfer, contactless card, or payment over the phone.
- Patients will be able to use a paper hand towel to open the door to leave, and for the toilet door.
- Each appointment will be followed by a 15 minute break to enable cleaning and to avoid contact between patients.
- Except under special circumstance patients will be unable to be accompanied in any part of the practice.
- The physiotherapist will be wearing appropriate PPE.
- We will also be asking both patients and therapists to have a temperature check taken prior to treatment