

CASE STUDY

Senior Orthopaedic Practitioner

At a Glance

Overview

Development of a physiotherapist role into a key member of an acute orthopaedic surgical team, bringing diagnostic imaging, surgical assistance and conservative management skills.

Approach

Development of a multi-functional role in clinic and theatres with support and training from the consultant team.

Impact

Improved upper limb diagnostic and treatment pathways and reduced waiting times.

Team collaboration, job satisfaction & career progression.

OVERVIEW

An MSK extended scope physiotherapy practitioner was TUPED into an acute orthopaedic service to support the junior and middle grade rota. The role was designed and developed around the skillset of the individual, their specialist interests and the needs of the service. The role was developed through in-house training and specialist training courses.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide stability in delivery of outpatient services.
- Assist in theatres as part of the team rota.
- Free up clinician time and facilitate better teaching and learning.
- Bring physiotherapy lens to the service.
- Bring US scanning skills into the orthopaedic team to improve patient pathways and reduce waits for diagnostics and treatment.

APPROACH

The role was initially intended to create a one-stop shop for shoulder services. The existing pathway included multi clinic and diagnostic appointments. Training in US scanning and injection meant that patients could be scanned, listed direct for surgery, have therapeutic injection or diverted to physio pathway from first appointment.

Further training as surgical first assistant means the practitioner can give informed advice and consent to patients in clinic and is also a valuable member of the theatre team.



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RESULTS

The role has developed further to be an all-round member of the middle grade team. The practitioner now works alongside medical staff in the assessment of patients in clinic, extending their range of expertise to include lower limb patients. The practitioner manages their own US clinics and will scan upper and lower limb patients.

LESSONS LEARNED

This is a rewarding opportunity to develop AHP roles to become a central part of an orthopaedic surgical team. The role design and development has been based around the skillset and career aspirations of the individual, and the development needs of the service. The stability within the delivery of the service provided by this role has led to better opportunities for teaching and training for other junior members of the team.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This role provides an opportunity to push the boundaries of what non-medical practitioners can do and the addition of a therapeutic lens to the team can reap positive benefits for the all the team and their patients.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Sarah Rayner, Senior Orthopaedic Practitioner, Trauma & Orthopaedics, York & Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust Sarah.Rayner6@nhs.net

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"Its fantastic to have Sarah's physiotherapy and ultrasound skills in clinic. These have significantly enhanced the service we are able to offer our patients leading to a more timely diagnosis and treatment."

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