



The Institute of
Physical Therapy

Student Clinic





Student Clinic

The Student Clinic, located at the Priory Clinic, Stillorgan, is one of the venues for training students enrolled in the 3 year Physical Therapy programme. It is here that students put the skills learned in class into practice under the supervision of an experienced practitioner.

The aims of the Student Clinic are:

- To provide a high quality service to the community, in the prevention and management of musculo-skeletal conditions.
- To enhance the clinical training of each student in the prevention and management of musculo-skeletal conditions.
- To contribute to the students on-going professional development.



Types of problems treated

Clients attend the Student Clinic with a range of problems ranging from headaches, neck pain and stiffness, frozen shoulder, tennis elbow, muscle injury, ligament injury, mild to moderate osteoarthritis, low back pain, referred pain into arm and leg etc. In training as a Physical Therapist, emphasis is placed on screening clients to ensure that they are suitable for treatment. Occasionally, what appears as musculo-skeletal pain may in fact be due to something else, e.g. gall bladder problems often cause shoulder pain or perhaps the problem may be severe enough to warrant medical attention. Hence the need for the student to conduct a thorough history and assessment to determine if your symptoms and their findings match, and if your problem suits their level of competence.

Due to the progressive nature of most musculo-skeletal conditions and the hands-on nature of our work Physical Therapy is ideal in the identification of potential trouble spots and the prevention of needless pain and disability. Therefore many people, particularly sports people, attend the clinic for a complete evaluation and maintenance treatment aimed at improving overall function.

What to expect

On first contacting the clinic you may speak with either the Clinic Manager or the Supervisor who will discuss your problem to decide if the clinic has the potential to treat your problem successfully.

Your first visit, which will last an hour, will consist of a detailed medical history and musculo-skeletal assessment, to help identify the specific structures both directly and indirectly contributing to your problem. Based on the clinical findings the student plans your individual treatment programme. This is discussed with you and only if you are happy with this approach does treatment proceed. Occasionally the student, in consultation with the supervisor, may request that you see your doctor first as they may feel that possibly something other than a musculo-skeletal problem might exist.

Treatment consists of a combination of what are called 'Soft Tissue Techniques' aimed at lengthening shortened muscles, strengthening weakened muscles or ligaments, teasing out matted fibres in muscles or improving range of movement in joints.

Each subsequent visit lasts 45 minutes and consists of a short examination of the problem areas originally identified to determine if an improvement has occurred. Treatment continues and appropriate stretches or strengthening exercises are prescribed to speed up the process. Compliance with home advice and exercises is of the utmost importance if progress is to be achieved.



As this is a teaching clinic there are a few things to be aware of

The Clinic Supervisor's role is to ensure the safe, effective management of your particular problem. This may mean that the supervisor will double-check the student's clinical findings or they may ask additional questions. Generally we allocate two additional students to sit in on your consultation and treatment. Their role is to sit and observe how the senior student takes a case history, or how efficiently they examine and use specific techniques. They act as an observer and are only invited to become involved if the senior student or supervisor wishes to demonstrate something important. If you feel uncomfortable about having an observer in the room for any specific part of the session please tell us. This will not be held against you in any way as we are fully aware that people differ in their reaction to this element of the Student Clinic.

Physical therapists rely on developing a good working relationship with their clients and view the issue of informed consent very seriously. Therefore it is the student's responsibility to ensure that you are sufficiently informed about the examination, the proposed treatments and overall management of the problems.

Before beginning a course of treatment think carefully about the day and time that suits you best as changing your appointment may necessitate your seeing a different student. While we are aware that at times this is unavoidable, it may lead to some disruption of your progress.

Where possible we endeavour to ensure that you see the same therapist for the duration of your treatment. However as students work in 5 week blocks this does depend on whether your start date corresponds with that of your student therapist. In the event that you are continuing treatment with a different therapist, your details are relayed both verbally and through your case notes.



How many treatments will I need?

This varies depending on the severity and length of time the problem has been present. Generally weekly treatments, possibly for five weeks are recommended. Occasionally twice weekly appointments may be necessary for a few weeks if the problem is either very acute and painful or involves more than one area e.g. neck / shoulders and lower back / hip. Where maintenance treatment is required, fortnightly or monthly visits may suffice.

Your role

Generally clients, in deciding to attend the Student Clinic do so for many reasons, one of them being an understanding that student practitioners need a venue to work under supervision, where they get an opportunity to practise all the skills they will need to operate as competent physical therapists. Receiving feedback on their performance is essential. For this reason your input, through the completion of a questionnaire on your perception of different aspects of the treatment is invaluable.

Student Clinic appointments are available on Mondays Wednesdays and Fridays between 5.00p.m. and 7.00pm. Consultations are by appointment only and the cost is €30.00 per session.

To book an appointment call now on freephone: 1 800 254 642