



# Expanding the Public Health Workforce

**Tom Sullivan**

Public Affairs & Policy Manager

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy NI

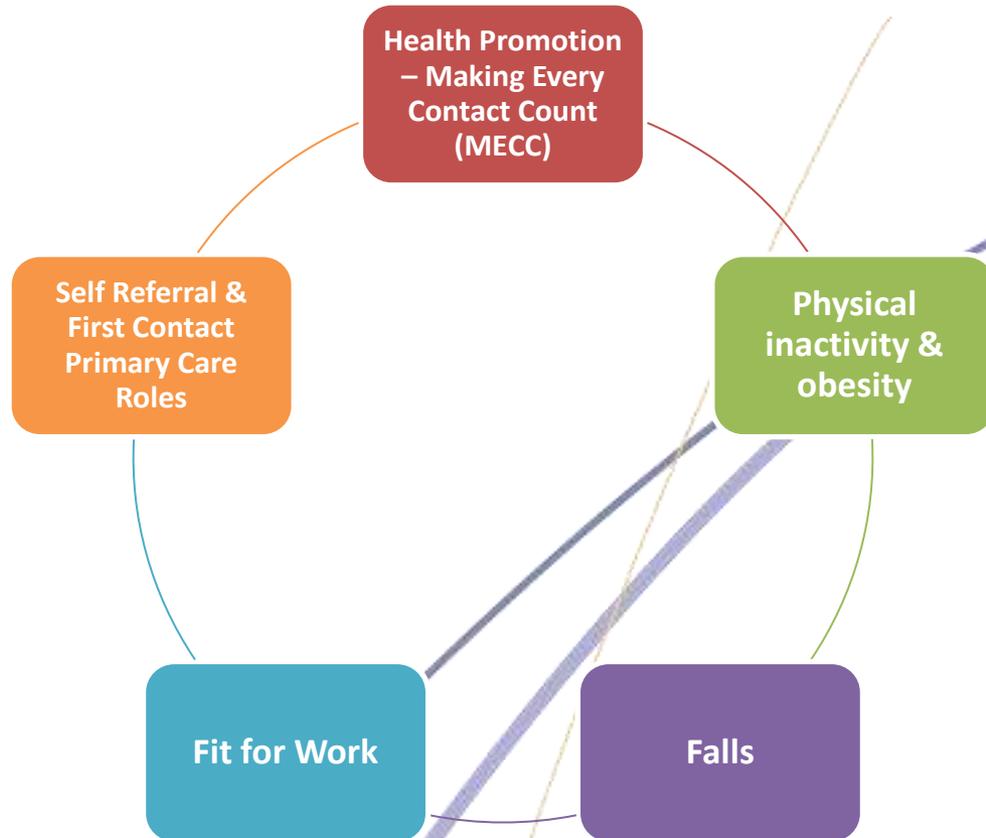


[sullivant@csp.org.uk](mailto:sullivant@csp.org.uk)

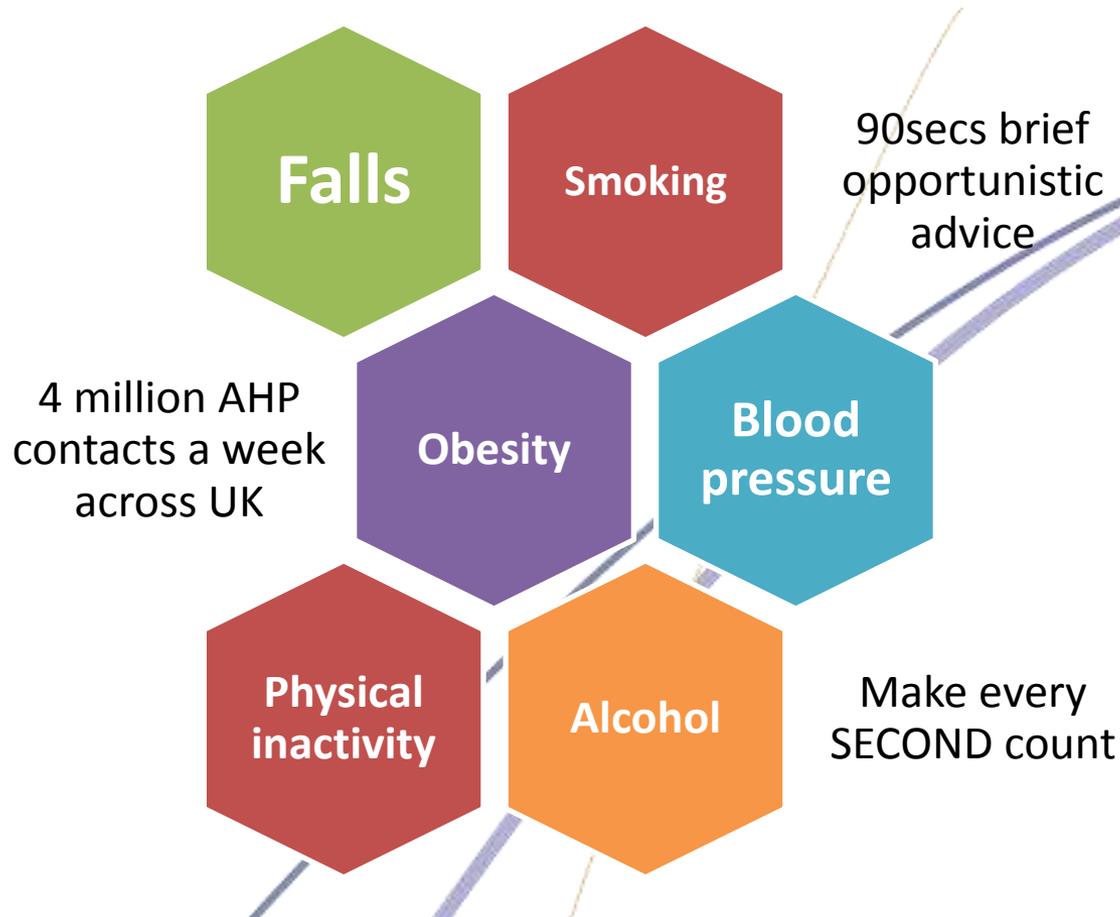
# Allied Health Professionals (AHPs)

- Are autonomous professionals and regulated by HCPC.
- Are able to take direct referrals from patients.
- Have high-level decision-making, clinical-reasoning and communication skills
- Complex knowledge of physiology and pathophysiology
- Can assess, diagnose and triage patients presenting with single or multiple pathologies
- Some are able to independently prescribe

# Physiotherapy & public health



# Health promotion – ‘Making Every Contact Count’ (MECC)



# Fit for work

- Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are the most common type of work related absence
- Over 8 million lost days(2012-2013)
- Long term absence accounts for over 40% of working time lost

## Case Studies

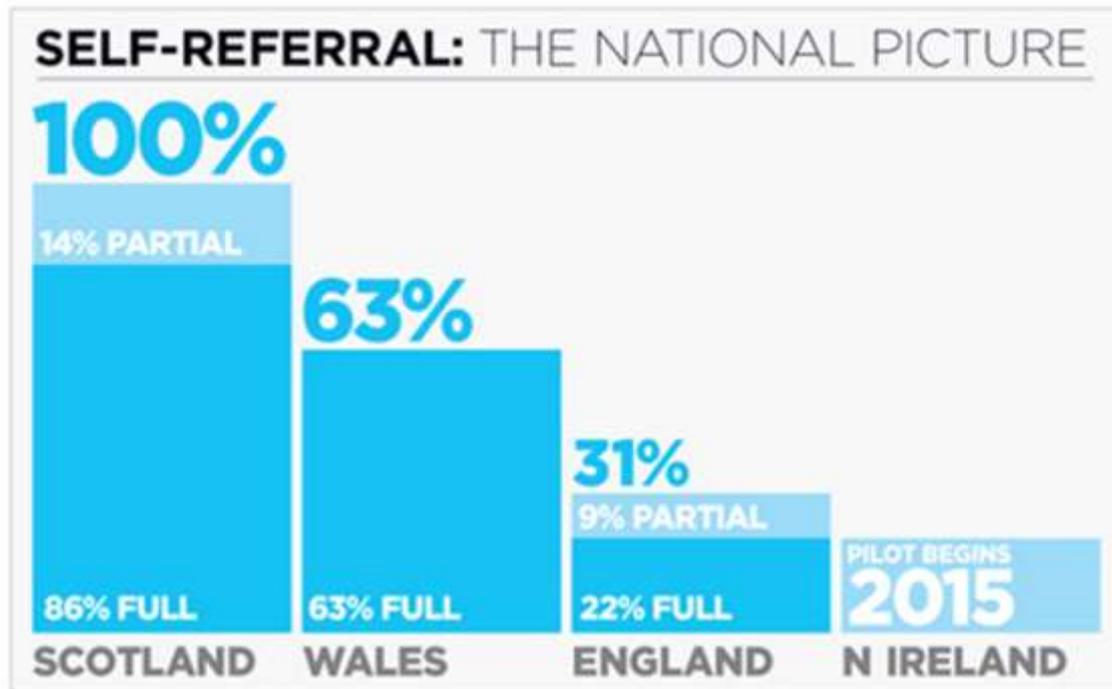
- *2014: NHS 24 pilot in Scotland (ongoing) is showing over **75%** of calls to the service have been dealt with by physiotherapists without need for onward referral to out of hours GP or emergency services. **Significant savings are anticipated.***
- *2015: Derbyshire Community Health Services NHS Trust provides a physiotherapy designed and led work-focussed fit for work service including biopsychosocial screening, functional capacity evaluation and written guidance to employee's managers. In **three years** it was estimated to save **£250,000** in sickness absence costs The Trust was awarded an NHS England Innovation Challenge Prize, together with **£75,000.***

# Self-referral

NHS QIPP  
endorsed  
pathway

Prevents ST  
escalating to LT

Right professional,  
right care, right  
time



Does NOT lead to  
an increase in  
demand

Reduces  
waiting times

Patient  
empowerment

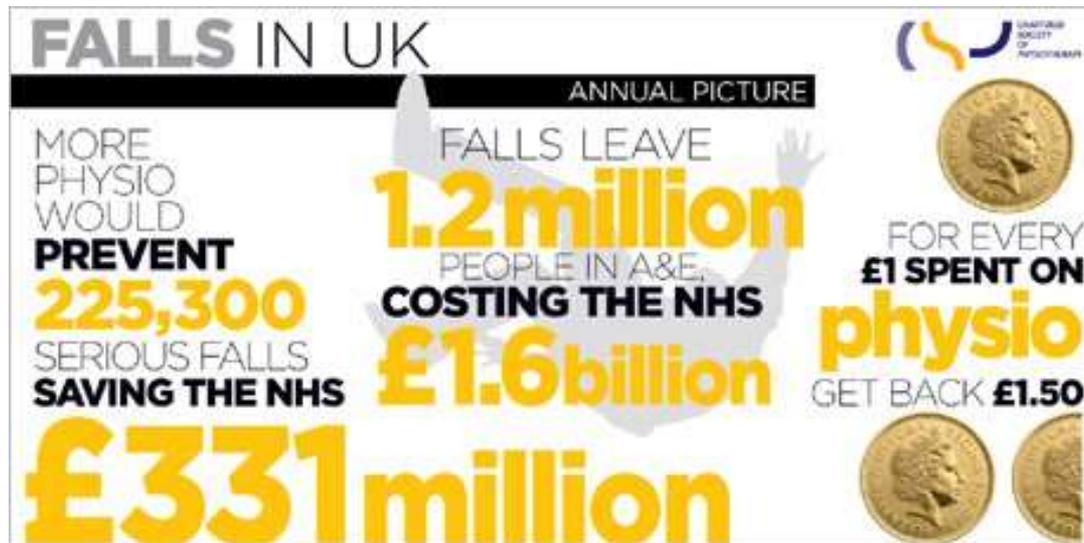
# Primary Care – First Contact Role

- To locate physiotherapists within primary care, provides a safe, effective and convenient source of professional expertise and support to patients.
- Allows an early source of intervention, helping to prevent short term problems becoming long term problems.
- Physiotherapists are autonomous, with the ability to diagnose, independently prescribe, request diagnostic imaging, and perform injection therapy.

## Case Example

- *An evaluation of first contact physiotherapy assessment and management of patients with MSK disorders in primary care found;*
- *85 per cent of those patients did not need to see a GP*
- *Patients reported higher confidence in the ability of the physiotherapist to assess their disorder and were more satisfied with the information they received about their disorder and how they could self-manage.*
- *All patients with serious pathologies (6 per cent) were identified by the physiotherapists and referred on to the GP.*

# Falls tool



- In Northern Ireland preventative physiotherapy for older people could lead to:
  - 5713 fewer falls
  - £8,224,542 cost savings

# Physical inactivity and obesity

- Key knowledge in exercise physiology and patho-physiology
- Experts in the treatment and management of those with multi-morbidity – common in those with weight problems

## Case example

**Welsh service example** - 32 week programme resulted in 229 patients being diverted from Orthopaedics and an average weight loss of 6.4 kg per patient. 70% were able to manage their symptoms following the programme.

**Activ8 Physiotherapy and Dietician led service for overweight and obese children.** Exercise and nutrition group for 10 weeks. Data for the service showed an impressive 70 per cent of children participating had a reduction in BMI, which was maintained at six-month follow-up and in the second year of the programme.

**Ashton, Wigan and Leigh Specialist Weight Management Service (Lose Weight, Feel Great).** Physiotherapy led weight management service has shown that 69.4% of people who complete 6 months are maintaining or losing weight. In addition 96.5% improve/maintain physical activity levels, and 88.2% improve/maintain, measuring quality of life / psychological health.

# Going forward

- Allied health professionals are an ‘untapped’ workforce – over 172,000 across the UK
- Over 4 million client contacts every week
- New and evolving roles
- Expertise across health and social care sectors