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# Purpose

**Hydrotherapy is widely used to aid the rehabilitation of injuries in conjunction with other treatments. There are a growing number of pain clinics being developed across Australia which are ran by physiotherapists who use hydrotherapy as part of their treatment program.**

**There is a growing body of research that supports hydrotherapy to help treat chronic pain. A literature review was conducted by Jenny Getenbeek (2002) which involved 17 RCTs, 2 case studies, 12 cohort studies and 2 case reports. The methodologies of these were scored from high to moderate for the quality of evidence for the effectiveness of hydrotherapy. This review supported the use of hydrotherapy for improving outcomes of pain, function self-efficacy and affect, joint mobility strength and balance particularly amongst older adults, subjects with rheumatic conditions and chronic low back pain. Published in the Physiotherapy Journal 2002 Vol. 88 issue 9.**

**The aim is to use Hydrotherapy within the physiotherapy department to help clients whose main complaint is pain. Should hydrotherapy be required to strengthen a client’s joints then they should be referred to the Exercise Physiology Department.**

# Scope

**This procedure shall apply to clients attending Hydrotherapy which is carried out by a REDIMED physiotherapist. All physiotherapists shall identify and be familiar with this document.**

# Reference Documents

# Definitions

**Hydrotherapy –** The use of exercises in a pool as part of treatment for conditions or relief of symptoms such as pain.

# Flowcharts (Other Images)

# Procedures

1. If you have assessed a client and deemed them to have pain as their main limitation and feel that hydrotherapy is clinically relevant to their needs, then firstly discuss this as an option with your client to ensure they would like to proceed with hydrotherapy treatment.
2. Ascertain which hydrotherapy pool would be the most convenient to the client, where possible use a proper heated hydrotherapy pool.
3. Send a letter to the insurance company using the letter template in Genie which requests an approval for an initial assessment for hydrotherapy, cc clients injury rep into the email request so they are aware of the treatment being offered.
4. Ensure that when you fill out the Treatment Management Plan, you tick the hydrotherapy box under the headline ‘Treatment Requested’.
5. Ask the client to fill out the Hydrotherapy Consent Form template saved in I: Drive – Physiotherapy – Resources – Projects – 14 Hydrotherapy and keep this is the client’s file.
6. Check that the clients does not have any contraindications to hydrotherapy.
7. Send a follow up email to insurance company if you haven’t had approval approximately one week post email for request to do the initial assessment.
8. Call the hydrotherapy pool to find out the cost of using the pool.
9. Estimate your travel time to the hydrotherapy pool.
10. Fill out the cost template saved in I:Drive – Physiotherapy – Resources – Projects – 14 Hydrotherapy – Cost Plan Template.doc
11. Perform the initial assessment taking clinical measures such as; (but not limited to) pain profile, ROM, strength, functional tasks, patient questionnaires, outcome measure testing, neural testing etc.
12. Transfer the information collected from the initial assessment into the Initial Assessment Report template which is saved under I:\Physiotherapy\Resources\Projects\14 Hydrotherapy
13. Save a copy of the report and email the report and cost plan to the insurer and CC in the client’s injury manager.
14. Forward the sent email of the report and cost plan to reception so it can be linked into the patients file in genie.
15. Await communication from insurer stating that approval has been granted. Send a follow up email to the insurance company if you haven’t had approval approximately one week post sending the initial report.
16. Once approval has been granted, complete the gym membership template which is saved in I:\Physiotherapy\Resources\Projects\14 Hydrotherapy. Email this through to the pool center manager.
17. Contact patient to let them know of approval and book travel time pre and post as well as a 45 minute hydrotherapy session.
18. Keep a record of the number of one on one sessions and patients progress in the physiotherapy notes in the patients file.
19. Ensure the patient has a copy of the hydrotherapy program which will be completed independently outside of the one on one sessions. Ensure there is a copy on file.
20. At the end of the 6 sessions perform either a final or progress assessment whichever the physiotherapist deems relevant. A progress assessment is to be used if more one on one sessions are needed. A final assessments signals the end of the hydrotherapy program and the patient is either ready for in room clinic treatment or the injury has resolved or a final certificate is required by the treating doctor.
21. Complete the progress or final assessment template which is saved in I:\Physiotherapy\Resources\Projects\14 Hydrotherapy. If more one on one sessions are required state this in the progress report.
22. Send a copy of the progress or final assessment report to the insurer and CC in injury manager.
23. Send a copy of the progress or final report to the treating doctor.
24. If more one on one sessions are required complete the cost plan template saved in I: \Physiotherapy\Resources\Projects\14 Hydrotherapy and email to insurer.
25. Await approval (steps 14,15,16,17).
26. If the patient had a final assessment for hydrotherapy book the patient an appointment based on the recommendation stated in your report.

# Appendices

**Assessment forms**

**Supervision forms**

**Treatment plan templates**

**Patient Questionnaires**

**Appointment booking templates**

**Belmont PO templates**