



## FAQs - Persistent Pain Program

### 1. ***Will you diagnose the cause of my pain?***

Your family doctor provides us with a diagnosis and relevant diagnostic assessments. Should we require further clarification of your pain, the nurse practitioner and/or the physical therapist will conduct a physical assessment to better understand the nature of your pain. This sometimes involve more diagnostic tests such as blood work or a referral to a specialist such as a neurologist, a radiologist or a rheumatologist.

### 2. ***Who will prescribe my medications while I'm in the program?***

Please continue to see your family doctor for acute and chronic conditions not related to pain such as an infection, a new injury, asthma, hypertension or diabetes. Only after you are seen by one of our prescribers for an initial assessment (and if your family physician asks us) do we assume management of the pain medications. Depending on what medications you need and the circumstances surrounding their use, the prescriber may be a nurse practitioner or a physician.

### 3. ***Do I have to pay for anything while I'm in the program?***

In our program, there are no out-of-pocket charges for service that you receive or service provider that you see. Your tax dollars pay for these. However, we do not pay for medications, massage devices, or Botox

### 3. ***Should I cancel my appointment with my specialist?***

No. Specialists are a vital part of your health care team and usually require a long wait. Please attend all appointments made with any medical doctor even while you are enrolled in our program.

### 4. ***What if I can't make day-time appointments due to work?***

We do our best to fit your availability to our office hours. For example, some group sessions are offered in the evening. We do have limited availability with certain providers for outside of normal clinic hours.

### 5. ***How long will I be in the program?***

That will depend on you. Most patients spend an average of three to six months in our program. Factors that influence how much time you need to complete the program include: your availability, your level of involvement, your progress, and your medical needs.

# **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

## **PHYSICAL THERAPY AT PRIMARY CARE NETWORK, GRANDE PRAIRIE**

### **1. What is Physical therapy?**

Physical therapy is a client focused health profession anchored in movement science. It is dedicated to improve quality of life by:

- Improving and maintaining optimal functional independence and physical performance,
- Managing activity limitation and participation restrictions,
- Educating and planning support programs to prevent functional decline.

### **2. Who can provide Physical Therapy?**

Physical Therapy is provided by a Registered Physical Therapist who is university educated and possesses a license issued by the regulatory body in Alberta.

### **3. Why should I visit a Physical Therapist at the Primary Care Network?**

Physical Therapists play a critical role in assisting people to live with persistent pain. They focus on empowering people to manage their conditions. Physical Therapists help identify the fear avoidance of movements or abnormal patterns due to over and under activity.

Physical Therapists incorporate graded exposure of exercises for functional training and use Manual therapy, Mirror therapy, Graded motor imagery, and Desensitization techniques to achieve the best possible quality of life. “Your participation is key to a successful treatment plan”, as our treatment require active involvement from you.

### **4. What is Manual Therapy?**

Manual Therapy is a specialized form of Physical Therapy that requires high levels of training and is a hands-on approach to the assessment and treatment of the body. Manual Therapy includes specific techniques such as joint mobilization and soft tissue release.

**5. What is Mirror Therapy?**

Mirror Therapy utilizes the visual image of movement without the experience of pain. It helps to establish harmony with the sensory input of movement and the motor output.

**6. What is Graded Motor Imagery?**

Graded Motor Imagery is focused on training the brain to re-connect to the body part affected by pain. It uses the techniques like laterality training, imagined movements, and mirrored movements.

**7. What should I bring for my treatment?**

You should bring comfortable clothing which will give easy access to the body part being assessed. If needed, gowns and shorts are provided. Please bring your health care card, your current contact information, and any medical information or reports.

**8. How long is the initial assessment session?**

Your initial assessment and treatment session will be approximately 60 minutes.

**9. How long does the follow up sessions take?**

Subsequent visits after initial assessment, typically last for 45 minutes.

**10. What can I expect in the first treatment?**

During your first appointment, the Physical Therapist will review your medical history, conduct a thorough assessment and discuss your goals and a proposed treatment plan. The Physical Therapist will educate you on your condition and also provide personalized treatment based on your assessment.

**11. Will the treatment cause pain and discomfort?**

Persistent pain conditions often result in very tight muscles and joints that need to be mobilized. The release of these tight areas may be temporarily painful (post-treatment soreness) but you will be well informed of any techniques that will be used that may cause discomfort. The release of

these chronically tight areas will allow for increased range of motion and improved function.

**12. How many visits will I need?**

Following your assessment, the Physical Therapist will discuss your problem and a treatment plan with you. Persistent problems may need treatment less frequently but over a longer time frame.

**13. Do I always see the same therapist?**

Yes, unless your Physical Therapist is ill or on vacation.

**14. Do the therapists run on time?**

Yes, it's our goal to stay on time so that we can deliver treatment in the time slot assigned for you.

**15. What will I do after completing Physical Therapy?**

Some patients will need to continue with home exercises. Some may choose to continue with a gym exercise program. Others will complete their rehabilitation and return to normal daily activities. Most importantly though, you need to keep moving to maintain and improve your function.