

CASE STUDY

Home Sweet Home: An In-home Physiotherapy success story



Once upon a time there was a happy family with a two-year son. They had a healthy child, good jobs and a promising future – they had it made! That is, until one fateful weekend when a truck hit them while driving on Highway 401. The accident caused multiple injuries to the entire family. The adults suffered fractured kneecaps and strained shoulders and the child had a fractured leg and arm.

The father had just made final preparations to start a new job in just two and a half months. He was extremely worried - he wondered how he would ever be ready to return to work when currently he could not even leave his home! Of course, he also worried about his family because both his wife and son needed treatment and support to heal from their injuries.

Fortunately, their insurer took the advice of the consulting Occupational Therapist and made a referral for *In-home Physiotherapy*. Within days, an appointment was set up with the family and a registered Physiotherapist. Through ongoing consultation with the Insurer and treating Occupational Therapist, the Physiotherapist began treatment focused on increasing each family member's mobility – getting them moving independently – and decreasing their pain. The main challenge - and goal - was to get the father strong enough to return to work in two and a half months.

The Physiotherapist visited the family's home two to three times each week to work on range of motion and strengthening exercises, while manually treating the fractured knee caps and injured shoulders through mobilizations, massage, and acupuncture.

There were numerous benefits to the in-home approach vs. a clinic setting for both the family and the insurer:

- *Time efficient:* The Physiotherapist was able to easily schedule appointments to work with each family member at every visit – saving everybody time and transportation costs.
- *Convenience & comfort:* The child was much more receptive to receiving treatment in the comfort of his own home with his own toys and family present.
- *Cost efficient:* The insurer saved transportation costs of the entire family getting to and from a clinic and the family saved time and the unnecessary strain.
- *One-to-one supervised attention:* Unlike in a clinic where the client-to-therapist ratio can be 5:1, the Physiotherapist was able to work directly with each family member on an individualized program.

The Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, Orthopaedic Surgeon and Insurer regularly consulted. The team was confident that they could get the father back to work on time... and they were successful! The father started his new job and continued to go to physiotherapy at an out-patient facility that accommodated his work schedule and provided the kind of active therapy he now needed. The mother was walking without any pain in her knees and shoulders, and her range of motion was only 10 degrees less than normal... and their son now had not a care in the world with no complaints!

Thanks to In-home Physiotherapy the family lived happily ever after! ...and the moral of the story is that In-home Physiotherapy might be just what your client needs!

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In-Home Physiotherapy: It might be just what your client needs!

When would a Physiotherapy referral be needed?

Clients that suffer from pain or impairments that they cannot manage on their own should be assessed by a physiotherapist to determine the need for therapy. When deciding if a physiotherapy referral is necessary ask the following questions:

- Is the client's mobility impaired?
- Does the client have any joints that are currently immobilized?
- Has the client recently had a cast or brace removed?
- Is there significant scarring affecting movement?
- Are pain levels unmanageable and could they be treated physically (i.e., pain that is in the joints or muscles can be treated by a physiotherapist, pain that is internal cannot)
- Does the client suffer from a decrease in endurance and strength? Will this affect their return to work or ADL's?

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Source: Canadian Physiotherapy Association (2000). *Description of Physiotherapy in Canada—2000 and beyond.*