

Screen time. Physiotherapist-led Orthopaedic Lower Limb Screening Clinic

David O’Keeffe¹, Ali Gibbs², Scott Anderson³, Ton Tran⁴, Jane Carlin⁵

1 Monash Health, 135 David St Dandenong, Vic, 3175, david.okeeffe@monashhealth.org

2 Monash Health, 135 David St Dandenong, Vic, 3175, alison.gibbs@monashhealth.org

3 Monash Health, 135 David St Dandenong, Vic, 3175, scott.anderson@monashhealth.org

4 Monash Health, 135 David St Dandenong, Vic, 3175, ton.tran@monashhealth.org

5 Monash Health, 135 David St Dandenong, Vic, 3175, jane.carlin@monashhealth.org

Background: After the orthopaedic waiting list for patients with lower limb conditions became unsustainably high and referral numbers exceeded clinic capacity, Monash Health implemented a trial of a Physiotherapist-led Screening clinic. Many patients referred to the Monash Health lower limb orthopaedic service do not require surgery and can be effectively assessed and managed independently by a Physiotherapist. The objective of the Physiotherapist-led Orthopaedic Lower Limb (OLL) Screening Clinic was to and improve accessibility of Orthopaedic services at Monash Health through assessing patients on the OLL waiting list. This was done following agreed criteria for patients who may benefit from non-surgical management.

Method: The OLL waiting list was reviewed to identify suitable patients. Patients with referrals from more than 6 months prior were mailed to request an updated referral.

Results:

- Following the waiting list review of 404 patients, 82 patients were determined to no longer require orthopaedic assessment and were discharged.
- 158 patients did not reply to request for a new referral and were discharged.
- In the four months since service commenced, 59 patients have been seen in the Screening Clinic. 71% (42) have been discharged from orthopaedics to undergo conservative management.
- To date, 282 patients have been discharged or removed from the OLL waiting list resulting in increased accessibility and timely care.

Discussion: Consultations in the Screening Clinic combined with the waiting list review have resulted in 282 patients being either removed from or not placed onto the OLL waiting list. It is expected that continuation of the Screening Clinic will facilitate effective and timely assessment and management for patients with lower limb conditions referred to Monash Health Orthopaedics. The implementation of the Physiotherapist Led OLL Screening Clinic has been shown as an effective method to manage the OLL waiting list in a time-effective and sustainable way.