

# Continence and Pelvic Health Physiotherapy

## Information for patients

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### Why have I been referred to physiotherapy for my pelvic floor problem?

**Physiotherapy is well recognised as an effective treatment for pelvic problems.**

- Physiotherapy can help improve and resolve symptoms of urinary incontinence, increased urinary frequency, prolapse and painful intercourse.
- Leaking urine, rushing to the toilet, prolapse and painful intercourse are all common problems especially after having a baby or during or after the menopause, but you don't have to put up with these issues, physiotherapy can help.
- Physiotherapy treatment focuses on lifestyle modification and exercises.
- The pelvic floor muscles support your bladder and bowels within the pelvis and help to control when you open them or when you need to hold on. Research has shown that pelvic floor exercises done alongside lifestyle changes are the most effective way to help improve symptoms of incontinence.
- Your pelvic floor muscles should be strong enough to prevent leaks of urine, stool (faeces) and wind and support your pelvic organs (bladder, bowel and uterus/womb). The pelvic floor muscles also need to be able to relax to allow pain free intercourse, tampon use or examinations such as a smear test.
- Your physiotherapist can help guide you on how to improve your pelvic floor muscle function.

### What happens in a physiotherapy pelvic assessment?

Your initial appointment will likely be a face-to-face appointment but may be by telephone.

The physiotherapist will assess you in a private room and ask you questions about your problem. An internal vaginal examination may be needed, but this will only be done with your consent.

- If you wish to have a chaperone, you can ask to have one when making your appointment. A chaperone is another member of staff who can be with you during your assessment and provide you with reassurance and emotional support.
- **You will be asked to complete a bladder diary** which will be posted to you before your first appointment. Please ensure you complete this as it is extremely valuable in helping us understand your type of incontinence and how your bladder is functioning.
- Your physiotherapist will discuss your problem with you and give you advice on what you can do to help treat it.
- Any follow-up appointments will last approximately 30 minutes and can be either face to face or by telephone.

## What do I need to do?

1. If you still require physiotherapy, please phone to book a pelvic assessment:  
**131 1060** (Monday – Friday: 9 am – 3 pm, option 1)
2. At your first appointment please be prepared and have the enclosed bladder chart completed so it can be discussed with your therapist. Please be as specific as you can when measuring your urine (e.g. use a measuring jug). This is useful information even if you do not have a bladder problem.
3. Have a list of any tablets and medications you are taking to hand.

## Where can I go if attending a department?

You will be offered the earliest appointment available from our list of clinics below, if you choose to attend a particular clinic this may result in a longer wait. Your physiotherapy treatment will continue at the clinic you have chosen:

- **Leith Community Treatment Centre**, 12 Junction Place, EH6 5JA
- **Pennywell All Care Centre**, 1 MacMillan Crescent, EH4 4WL
- **Sighthill Health Centre**, 380 Calder Road, EH11 4AU

## Interpretation and Translation

Please let us know before your first appointment if you need an interpreter.

For more information and help on how to manage your condition visit our website or scan the QR code below:

[services.nhslothian.scot/ecps/continence-and-pelvic-health-physiotherapy-service](https://services.nhslothian.scot/ecps/continence-and-pelvic-health-physiotherapy-service)

