It’s never too late

A 24-hour approach to Postural Care

**Background**

It is sometimes believed that body shape changes are synonymous with individuals with movement disorders. *Raising Our Sights,* (Mansell 2016), identified poor Postural Care (PC) as a key contributing factor in premature death in adults with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities. However, clinical experience suggests that a 24-hour approach can prevent and improve body shape changes, promote health and wellbeing and that it is never too late to start postural care for anyone who is at risk.

**What is Postural Care?**

PC is a gentle approach using knowledge and understanding in order to look after an individual at risk of body shape changes. The main aim is to provide PC over a 24 hr period with a variety of supported and symmetrical positioning (see Clock). This will enable an individual to be comfortable at rest and participate in activities where ever they may be.

**Our Aims**

- Empower children and families to understand the impact of body shape changes physically, psychologically and on the family’s wider world
- Empower families to become resilient with the tools to recognise changes in postures, how to promote positive postures and when to contact specialist services for review/advice
- Increased awareness of 24-hour approach will allow children with movement difficulties to live longer healthier lives, decreasing the cost for NHS services

**Our Journey So Far**

Initial attempts to engage with families who care for children and young people with PC needs:
- 250 flyers sent out
- Response rate 2

Re-evaluated how to engage with families

Attended three Additional Support for Learning - school parent evenings to evaluate awareness of postural care and if interested in learning more and sharing their experience

Supported by PAMIS postural care champions (Mum’s of children / YP with postural care needs)

20 Families who were interested in being involved in a learning and sharing event

Development of training workshop aimed at promoting PC as the foundation for a child’s care:
- Interactive presentation supported by information posters
- An environment where families were comfortable to share their experiences

First event held 28th September 2017

Evaluation via parental feedback

**Outcomes**

Family feedback and self-evaluation from the learning and sharing event highlighted the benefits of families learning from families, facilitated by professional’s anatomical and physiological knowledge in promoting a proactive approach to prevention of body shape changes.

100% of participants responded saying the session will change their approach to PC

100% of participants responded saying they will recommend the session to friends with children with PC needs

100% of participants were very satisfied with the session and felt it was pitched at the right level

We have observed families appearing comfortable, able and willing to enquire about and discuss their child’s PC within the ASL school environment following this event.

**Moving Forward**

The results from our initial workshop give us hope that this consistent, multi-agency approach to PC, centred around the child and their family results in better quality of life for that child and family with a more effective and cost efficient use of physiotherapy services.

Having recently received NES funding to continue this project we plan to host another 6 events across GGC over the next year, increasing PC awareness within schools, acute services and developing further resources to support this.

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