APP: Assessment of Physiotherapy Practice Instrument

Physiotherapy Clinical Educator Training
Learning objectives

By the end of this presentation you will:
• Understand the components of the APP
• Be able to use the APP instrument effectively in formative feedback and summative assessment
• Feel more comfortable in your role as assessor of students
APP development and use

• Currently used by all Australian Physiotherapy Programs for assessment of student performance on clinical placements
• All graduates must meet same competencies/standards outlined in Australian Standards for Physiotherapy
• Clinical educators dealing with multiple programs want one form that had evidence of validity and reliability
• APP developed and tested across 5 years with involvement of educators, managers, students and universities
The ‘Roles’ of Assessment – what does workplace based assessment do for students?
Role of assessment

• Directs students to knowledge skills & attitudes they are performing well & those requiring improvement (the ‘formative’ role of assessment)
• Forms basis for development of strategies to change performance
• Tells students if they are meeting the standards – grades, … (the ‘summative’ role of assessment)
The APP (Assessment of Physiotherapy Practice) Instrument
APP- Assessment Instrument

- Standardised instrument used nationally
- Valid and reliable instrument
- Identifies 7 domains of practice and lists 20 items considered fundamental to our profession
- Scores are determined by a rating scale used in conjunction with performance indicators
- APP is for use in ‘core’ clinical units where student is meant to carry their own caseload
APP – paper based & online

• APP is available in paper form or online
• www.APPLinkup.com is the link to the online interactive assessment system
• You can use either format, the guidelines are the same
### Assessment of Physiotherapy Practice

#### 7 domains of practice

- Professional Behaviour
- Communication
- Assessment
- Analysis & Planning
- Intervention
- Evidence-based Practice
- Risk Management

#### 20 items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Rating Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Demonstrates understanding of patient/client rights and consent</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Demonstrates commitment to learning</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Demonstrates ethical, legal &amp; culturally sensitive practice</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Demonstrates teamwork</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Communicates effectively and appropriately - Verbal/non-verbal</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Demonstrates clear and accurate documentation</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Conducts an appropriate patient/client interview</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Selects and measures relevant health indicators and outcomes</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Performs appropriate physical assessment procedures</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Appropriately interprets assessment findings</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Identifies and prioritises patient/client's problems</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Sets realistic short and long term goals with the patient/client</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Selects appropriate intervention in collaboration with patient/client</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Performs interventions appropriately</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Is an effective educator</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Monitors the effect of intervention</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Progresses intervention appropriately</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Undertakes discharge planning</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Applies evidence-based practice in patient care</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Identifies adverse events/near misses and minimises risk</td>
<td>0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
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#### Global rating scale

In your opinion as a clinical educator, the overall performance of this student in the clinical unit was:

- Not adequate
- Adequate
- Good
- Excellent

#### Scoring rules

- Circle not assessed only if the student has not had an opportunity to demonstrate the behaviour.
- If an item is not assessed, it is not scored and the total APP score is adjusted for the missed item.
- Circle only one number for each item.
- If a score falls between numbers on the scale, the higher number will be used to calculate a total.
- Evaluate the student's performance against the minimum competency level expected for a beginning/entry level physiotherapist.
7 domains of practice

20 items

5 point rating scale to rate each item

Performance indicators in drop down menu
Performance Indicators

For each item

- List of observable and concrete behaviours
- Can guide feedback and grading for each item
- Examples of evidence of competence (or lack of)
- Designed to guide both students and educators
- Are not an exhaustive list of possible behaviours nor are they to be used as a checklist when assessing a student’s performance
1. **Demonstrates an understanding of patient/client rights and consent**
   - understands when formal client consent is required
   - informed consent is obtained and recorded according to protocol
   - understands and respects patients’/clients’ rights
   - allows sufficient time to discuss the risks and benefits of the proposed treatment with patients/clients and carers
   - engages patients/client in discussion of the effects of treatments or no treatment
   - records patient’s/client’s refusal of treatment and advises supervisor
   - refers patients/clients to a more senior staff member for consent when appropriate
   - advises supervisor or other appropriate person if a patient/client might be at risk
   - works collaboratively and respectfully with support staff

2. **Demonstrates commitment to learning**
   - responds in a positive manner to questions, suggestions &/or constructive feedback
   - develops and implements a plan of action in response to feedback
   - seeks information/assistance as required
   - demonstrates self-evaluation, reflects on progress and implements appropriate changes based on reflection
   - reviews and prepares appropriate material before and during the placement
   - takes responsibility for learning and seeks opportunities to meet learning needs

3. **Demonstrates practice that is ethical and in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements**
   - follows policies & procedures of the facility
   - advises appropriate staff of circumstances that may affect adequate work performance
   - observes infection control, and workplace health and safety policies
   - maintains patient/client confidentiality
   - arrives fit to work

4. **Demonstrates teamwork**
   - demonstrates understanding of team processes
   - contributes appropriately in team meetings
   - acknowledges expertise and role of other team members and refers/liaises as appropriate to access relevant services
   - advocates for the patient/client when dealing with other services
   - collaborates with the patient/client and the health care team to achieve optimal patient/client outcomes
   - cooperates with other workers who are treating and caring for patients/clients

5. **Communicates effectively and appropriately – Verbal/non-verbal**
   - greets others appropriately
   - questions effectively to gain appropriate information
   - listens carefully and is sensitive to patient/client and carer views
   - respects cultural and personal differences of others

6. **Communicates effectively and appropriately – Written**
   - writes legibly
   - completes relevant documentation (record keeping including documentation of all physiotherapy assessments and interventions, statistical information as required by the organization, referral letters, written communications with appropriate patient/client consent, case notes, handover notes) accurately and consistently
   - maintains records compliant with legislative medico-legal requirements
   - complies with organisational protocols and legislation for communication
   - adapts written material for a range of audiences (e.g. provides translated material for non-English speaking people, considers reading ability)

7. **Conducts an appropriate patient/client interview (subjective assessment)**
   - positions person safely and comfortably for interview
   - structures a systematic, purposeful interview seeking qualitative and quantitative details
   - asks relevant and comprehensive questions
   - politely controls the interview to obtain relevant information
   - responds appropriately to important patient/client cues
   - identifies patient’s/clients goals and expectations
   - conducts appropriate assessment with consideration of biopsychosocial factors that influence health.
   - seeks appropriate supplementary information, accessing other information, records, test results as appropriate and with patient’s/client’s consent
   - generates diagnostic hypotheses, identifying the priorities and urgency of further assessment and intervention
   - completes assessment in acceptable time

8. **Selects appropriate methods for measurement of relevant health indicators**
   - selects important, functional and meaningful outcomes relevant to treatment goals, including those to identify potential problems
   - chooses appropriate methods/instruments to measure identified outcomes across relevant assessment domains e.g. impairment, activity limitations, participation restriction, well-being and satisfaction with care

9. **Performs appropriate assessment procedures (physical assessment)**
   - considers patient/client comfort and safety
   - respects patient’s/clients need for privacy and modesty (eg provides draping or gown)
   - structures systematic, safe and goal oriented assessment process accommodating any limitations imposed by patient’s/client’s health status
   - Plans assessment structure and reasoning process using information from patient/client history and supportive information
   - demonstrates sensitive and appropriate handling during the assessment process
Global Rating Scale (GRS)

In your opinion as a clinical educator, the overall performance of this student in the clinical unit was:
- Not adequate
- Adequate
- Good
- Excellent

• Complete only at summative assessment (Final)
• Complete after rating all 20 items
• Typically, this student demonstrates most items at an ........level
Global rating scale

• Captures complexity of expert performance
• Most reliable measure of clinical skill that is also sensitive to increasing levels of expertise.
• Better measure of complex interactions such as communication, rapport etc.
• Assists identification of borderline students
• There is evidence that a combination of global scores and items are complimentary methods
How to complete the APP: using the rating scale
Scoring the APP

• Scoring is based on direct observation and interpretation of student performance.
• Circle the rating from 0 – 4 that best represents your judgement of the student’s level of performance at the end of the unit.
Scoring the APP

• Use Not Assessed **only** if student has not had an opportunity to demonstrate the behaviour

• Circle only one number for each item

• Complete the global rating scale at the end of unit
• In the APP the final rating for each item quantifies the level of performance achieved relative to that of beginning practitioner standards of practice

0 1 2 3 4 N/A

• This is the passing standard
APP – scoring

- 0 & 1 = not achieving the minimum acceptable entry level standard of performance
- 2 = minimum acceptable standard
- 3 & 4 = indicating good and excellent performance
- N/A: not assessed
Why choose entry level/minimally competent as passing standard?

• Enables ranking of students relative to a common standard.

• May be the only time student experiences a particular clinical area

• Better standardisation between assessors

• Time based passing standard (where student is at in their program) is unpredictable, unacceptable & not transparent

• Allows more targeted discussion, training

• More effective in driving learning in students
So what does a student who is performing at a minimally competent, passing standard look like?
Entry Level Description – Passing standard

Take a few minutes and write down phrases to complete this sentence

• A student is performing at the entry level/minimally competent standard when they ..........
Passing Standard/Entry Level Description

• Adequate assessment
• Adequately communicate, patient understands
• Formulate treatment plan
• Safe, to independently manage a patient
• Ability to think and reflect, self evaluate
• Willingness to learn and take on feedback
• teachable, safe, responsive, adequate, appropriate
Passing Standard/Entry Level Description

• Employable
• Able to carry a case load of basic patients with some supervision
• Measure their own outcomes
• Maintain safety
• Write notes legibly, accurately
• work independently and with a team
• Ask questions know their limitations
Entry Level – typically a student would demonstrate an understanding of patient centered physiotherapy practice and are able to manage a variety of patients such that the major problems are identified, goals established and intervention is completed safely, professionally, effectively within in a reasonable time frame. While achieving this, the student is aware of their limitations and where to seek assistance.
Entry Level

Remember entry-level is the minimum demonstrated behaviour required for entry to the physiotherapy profession.

..........not a measure of capacity to undertake specific workplace duties without any assistance/support.
Higher level standard

Remember a number of students achieve better than minimum standard………

……this does not mean we should elevate our concept of entry level
When to use the APP
When to use the APP instrument?

• Begin early
  – Day 1 of the unit; end of week 1 (set expectations and learning objectives with student using APP)
  – Mid-placement (formative feedback – use performance indicators to give evidence of strengths and weaknesses)
  – End of placement (summative assessment of items and global rating scale)
Mid unit – formative feedback

What will you do?
Mid unit formative feedback

• Use the APP items & performance indicators to discuss with student areas of strength and for improvement

• Student and educator both input into mid unit assessment

• Score the APP items only if you have enough evidence

• Provide specific examples of behaviour

• If you have items not assessed, need to view these before the end of unit
Mid unit formative feedback

• A score of 0 would be a matter of immediate importance
• Notify the university
• A score of 1 for any item – warrants feedback and strategies to assist student to achieve a passing standard for the item
The feedback cycle – enhancing student understanding of criteria and feedback

1. Explicit criteria and standards
2. Active engagement with criteria and standards
3a. Self-assessment
3b. Educator and peer feedback
4. Active engagement with feedback

Begin early

Student & CE

Student

Mid unit feedback using the APP
End of unit – summative assessment

What will you do?
Summative Assessment

Process

• Refer to APP Clinical Educator Resource manual for detailed explanation on use of instrument.
• Read the performance indicators within each aspect of practice
• Determine the appropriate score using the rating scale for each item
• Record the score (0-4) against each item
• Complete the global rating scale
• Refer to scoring rules
Summative Assessment

• After completing the APP
  – identify trends (strengths/ weaknesses)
  – Considers strategies for the student to progress in next unit
• Complete any additional pages of assessment documents (feedback, summaries etc)
• If any item is scored <2 in (final assessment) contact Uni to discuss prior to meeting with student.
• A student can still pass with a 2-3 items rated as a 1 but if more than this then really consider failing the student as they most likely need more time.
• Prepare for formal feedback session with student and discuss the outcome with them
• Sign documents and return to University
Summary: advantages of APP

• Reliable and valid instrument
• Led to reduction in burden on clinical educators
• Standardisation of assessment processes between universities
• Improved training of educators, reduction in duplication
• Opportunities to continue evaluation and refinement of APP and assessment approaches