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DO YOU KNOW WHO IS PROVIDING THE PHYSICAL THERAPY CARE YOU PRESCRIBE AS PHYSICIANS?

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Over the last two decades one can see a proliferation of different types of professionals in a physical therapy or rehabilitation clinic- physi-

cal therapy aids, physical therapist assistants, and athletic trainers to name a few. Even though employing aids, assistants and trainers is often helpful to an institutions bottom line, the question that should be asked is if having an athletic trainer or physical therapist assistant providing your patient's care is in the best interest of your patient? The outcomes data that is now being collected by many forward thinking clinics is shedding light on this question in regards to low back pain.

The importance of understanding and properly treating low back pain has significant quality of life and economic implications. With the condition affecting more than 65 million Americans (16 million of whom will go on to suffer chroni-

cally) and total costs mounting to \$12 billion annually, the case has been made. It represents the number one condition for which patients seek outpatient physical therapy services, comprising 25% of all patients. How do we do with treating this condition? Do certain facilities produce better outcomes than others? Who is able to achieve maximum function in the least amount of visits, keeping both our patients and our health care system healthy?

A recent study analyzing 114 outpatient physical therapy clinics sought to answer these questions. Based upon a clinic's effectiveness in assessing low back pain and the number of visits to achieve desired goals, they were grouped by overall performance in to Best Overall, Middle and Worst Overall. Here's what they found out.

Clinics that were lower utilizers of physical therapist assistant were 6.6 times more likely to be categorized in the highly effective group, 6.7 times

more likely to be found in the low utilization group, and 12.4 times more likely to be a best performance clinic.

When you recommend patients to New Life Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine, you can have the confidence that your patient will be seen by a physical therapist every visit. Our clinic was designed around the principles that this article brings to light. At every appointment, your patients are being re-evaluated and treatment is modified accordingly because protocol driven therapy is not as effective as quality, individualized care that only a licensed physical therapist is trained to provide.

Resnik, L et al. Predictors of Physical Therapy Clinic Performance in the Treatment of Patients With Low Back Pain Syndromes. *Phys Ther.* 2008; 88(9):989-1004.

New Life Physical Therapy & Sports Medicine Facility Comparative Outcomes

Outcomes	New Life PT YTD	Independent Practices YTD	National Providers YTD
Functional Improvement	55.94%	44.06%	53.64%
Decrease in Pain	71.48%	48.99%	61.80%
Perceived Improvement	81.55%	63.98%	73.84%
Number of Visits	10.61	10.93	10.83
Work Days Lost	9.03	21.17	11.44

Outcomes For Low Back

Outcomes	New Life PT YTD	Independent Practices YTD	National Providers YTD
Number of Patients	62	419	18569
Functional Improvement	54.69%	40.26%	48.21%
Decrease in Pain	66.79%	47.47%	59.55%
Perceived Improvement	77.56%	59.06%	71.60%
Number of Visits	10.29	10.25	9.54
Work Days Lost	7.33	30.84	9.98