

## Criteria for booking appointments with First Contact Physiotherapists

The role of First Contact Physiotherapists (FCPs) in Primary Care is to assess Musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions. They provide advice and exercise programs, and decide on the most appropriate management pathway, which may include investigations, onward referral for physiotherapy treatment or orthopaedic appointments.

FCPs are physiotherapists with expertise in the assessment and management of Musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions. If you are unsure where to direct a patient, please discuss with your FCP and they will be happy to advise you.

### Inclusion Criteria

- All soft tissue injuries, sprains, strains, sports injuries.
- Arthritis – any joint
- Problems with muscles, ligaments, tendons or bone, lower back pain, mid-back pain and neck pain.
- Spine related pain affecting arms or legs, including nerve symptoms such as pins and needles and numbness.

### Exclusion Criteria

- Acutely Unwell
- Children under 18
- Medical management of rheumatoid conditions
- Women's health, antenatal and postnatal problems
- House bound patients
- Medication reviews
- Neurological and respiratory conditions
- Headaches
- Acute mental health crisis
- Patients who do not want to see a FCP

## Decision making guide when making FCP appointments (for patients 18+ )

**Do you have a problem that affects your neck, back , bones, joints or muscles?**

**NO** - Book an appointment with GP

**YES** - Book an appointment with FCP

**Are you already under the care of your GP for this problem?**

**NO** - Book an appointment with FCP

**YES** - Book an appointment with GP

**Are you feeling unwell at the moment?**

**NO** - Book an appointment with FCP

**YES** - Book an appointment with GP