

Developing an e-learning package to support physiotherapy management of people with Long COVID

Background

Long COVID is defined by the signs and symptoms that develop usually 3 months after an acute infection consistent with COVID-19, with symptoms lasting at least 2 months and are not explained by an alternative diagnosis.

It is important for physiotherapists to understand how to best assess and treat patients who have Long COVID, but there are limited clinical training programs available.

Aims

- 1 Identify clinical education needs of physiotherapist clinicians and students relating to the assessment and management of Long COVID.
- 2 Develop an e-learning package, informed by the education needs identified, to support optimal physiotherapy management of patients presenting with impairments associated with Long COVID.

Methods

DESIGN



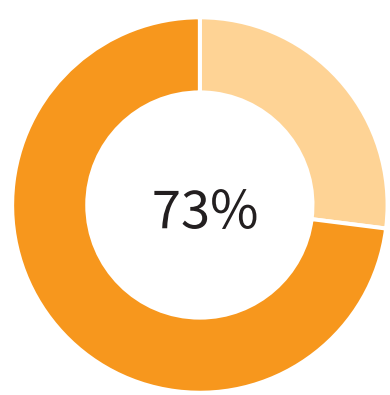
Australian physiotherapy clinicians and students provided responses to a 10 minute online survey. Data included respondents' experience and confidence to assess and manage patients with Long COVID, and related previous training and education needs.

DELIVERY

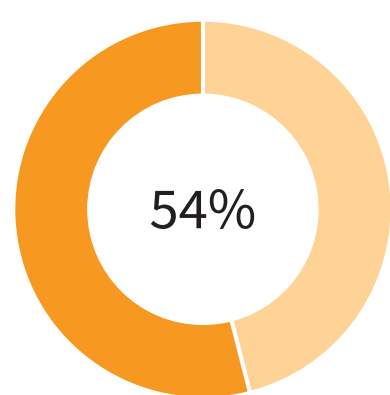
The survey was distributed from June to December 2022 via: Australian Physiotherapy Association e-newsletter, Winter Breakfast Event (Long COVID focused), Physiotherapy clinical educator and manager networks across the Victorian health sector.

Results

Physiotherapy experience and area of practice of 104 respondents



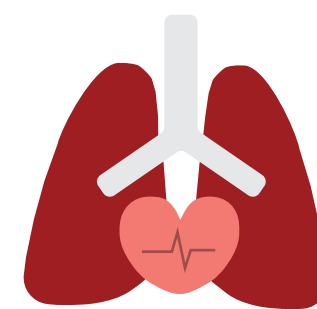
> 5 years since qualified



Postgraduate qualifications



73%
Work in public hospitals

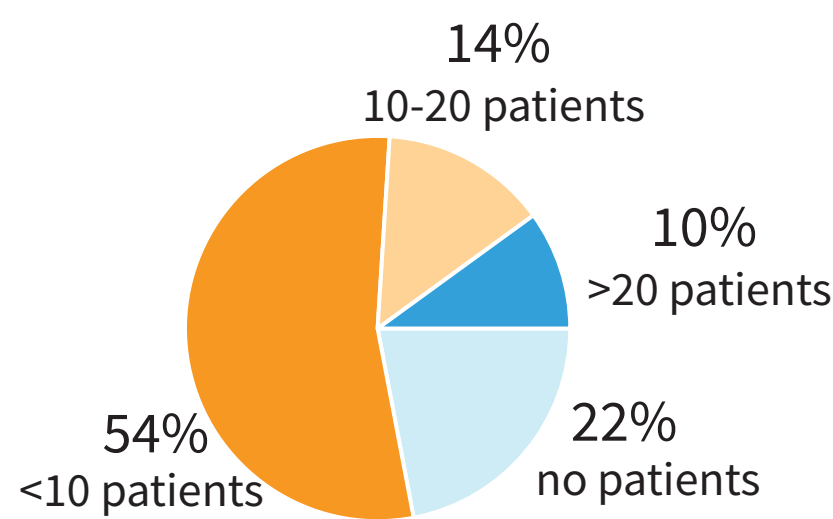


20%
Cardiorespiratory

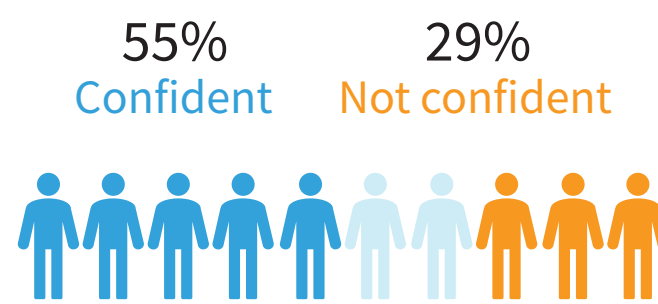


18%
Rehabilitation

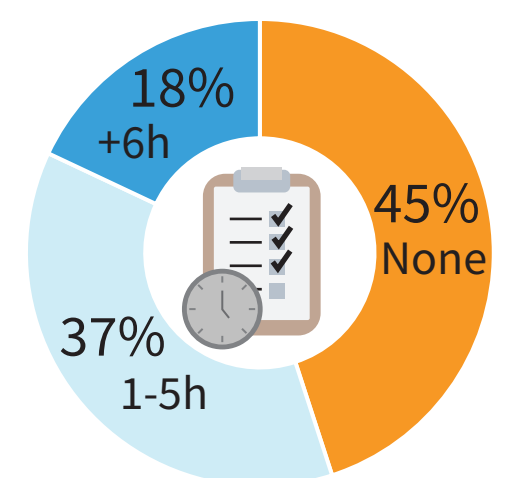
Experience managing patients with Long COVID



Number of patients with Long COVID treated

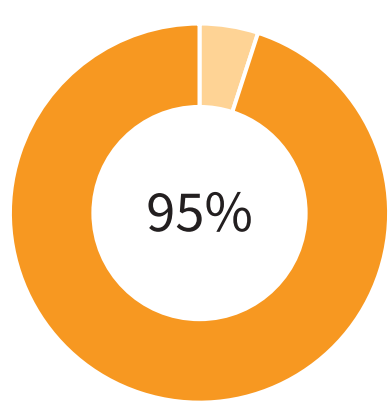


Clinical confidence to perform physiotherapy assessment for patients with Long COVID

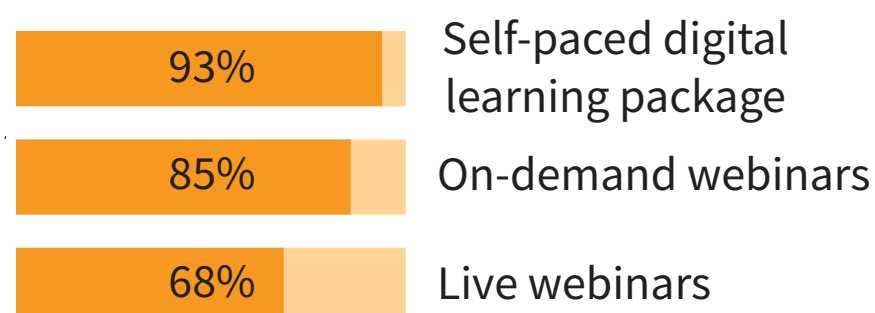


Long COVID professional development training

E-learning package to support management of Long COVID



Supported the need for a learning resource



Preferences for delivery of the learning package

Suggested topics for inclusion

- Identifying patients with Long COVID who may benefit from physiotherapy management.
- Physical assessment of patients with Long COVID.
- Helping patients manage Long COVID symptoms.
- Exercise-based rehabilitation for Long COVID.
- Self-management for Long COVID.
- Evaluating physiotherapy treatment outcomes for Long COVID.
- Specific assessment tools for Long COVID.

Next steps

Survey results have informed the content of an e-learning package entitled: 'Improving the participation gap: Physiotherapy for people experiencing Long COVID.' The package forms a chapter in an online open ended resource called 'Enabling and optimising recovery from COVID-19: A handbook for health professionals and other caregivers of people with Long COVID'.

The book, including the e-learning package, is freely available online via Press Books. Please contact the authors for further information.

Authors and Affiliations

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Ethical approval was obtained through Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (Project ID: 32451).