

Covid-19 Physiotherapy post Intensive Care follow up class delivered remotely

As we start to see our Covid ICU patients discharged home our focus has changed to how we can continue our post ICU class for these patients. Previously all of our post ICU patients upon discharge home would be followed up by telephone and invited back to our low level exercise class in our Physiotherapy Dept. The class is circuit based and consists of 10 exercises working both upper limb and lower limb and adjusting any exercises slightly to tailor them to individual needs/hobbies/interests (this would have been assessed/discussed during their initial 1:1 assessment with a qualified therapist where individual goals previously set in hospital would be reviewed and new ones set). Each exercise would be 1min (10 min in total for one circuit) and the patient would be working up to completing 2 circuits. We used the BORG scale to assess their level of working after each circuit and encouraged patients depending upon their level on BORG to either continue with number of repetitions/increase/decrease.

The class was designed so the patient could continue this throughout the week at home and was encouraged to perform this 3x further at least in the week and record their activity. So when it came to thinking about continuing this class for our patients in the light of the pandemic we felt this could be something we could offer our patients with the help of our community Physiotherapy teams.

On discharge from ICU:

- All patients will leave with a rehabilitation exercise programme to continue on the ward
- Handover to ward Therapist for review and continuation
- Band 4 to review regularly to review goals/set new goals
- When ready for discharge home they are given information with regards to them receiving a telephone call in few days' time for progression of exercises etc plus the contact details for Physiotherapy Dept if they require any information before they receive our phone call
- We will then refer to our community services for an urgent Physiotherapy assessment within 5days

Once the patient is home:

- Telephone call from Therapist/Band 4 within a week of discharge to establish their fatigue levels, exercise tolerance, exercise progression, functional abilities. Review goals and set new ones. We will advise them of the rehabilitation booklet we will be sending them in the post and reiterate that a member of the community team will be following them up if they have not already made contact
- Rehabilitation post ICU booklet which contains information on
 - Breathlessness management,
 - Advise on fatigue management,
 - Why exercise is important,
 - When to stop exercising
 - BORG scale advise
 - Contact details
- exercise sheets (appropriate to level and advise on how to progress – each exercise has around 4 different levels to enable progression) will then be sent out in the post
- We will also ask for an email so electronic link for videos for exercise can be sent (each exercise has its own video to accompany the exercise sheet so the patient can see the exercise being performed)

- We will then review within a set period of time/and re-call to review, progress exercises
- The patient will have access to our therapist mobile number/Dept number so they can contact for advice (8.30-4.30pm 7 days a week, a message can be left out of those hours)

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