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What is current practice and the expected level of use for outcome measures in neurological physiotherapy.

What is an outcome measure?

They are a tool used evaluate the success of physiotherapy interventions as well as providing a way of directly determining the effectiveness of a treatment (APTA, 2017).

Who was surveyed?

HCPC registered Physiotherapists practicing in the UK with experience of neurological physiotherapy.

- 103 eligible participants
- 55% educated to undergraduate level
- 43% qualified within the last 10 years
- 88% practice within the NHS
- 80% practice in England

How were they recruited?

Through the social media accounts of the student investigator and supervisor.

What is current practice for outcome measure use?

Three outcome measures were used by more than 75% of participants with a further seven used by more than 50% of participants.

Outcome Measure	Use	
	N	%
Berg Balance Test	94	91.3%
Timed Up & Go	79	76.7%
10 Meter Walk	78	75.7%
Visual Analogue Scale	73	70.9%
(Modified) Ashworth Scale	65	63.1%
9 hole peg test	60	58.3%
Goal Attainment Scale	59	57.3%
Romberg test	56	54.4%
Barthel index	53	51.5%
Tinetti	52	50.5%

Figure 1 use of outcome measures in practice

What is the expected level of use?

More than 75% of participants expected students to be able to use three outcome measures and a further five outcome measures to be used by band 5 physiotherapists in clinical practice.

Outcome Measure	Student		Band 5		Combined Frequency	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
10 Meter Walk	89	86.4%	7	6.8%	96	93.2%
Timed Up & Go	80	77.7%	12	11.7%	92	89.3%
Visual Analogue Scale	80	77.7%	8	7.8%	88	85.4%
6 Minute Walk	77	74.8%	13	12.6%	90	87.4%
5 time sit to stand	75	72.8%	12	11.7%	87	84.5%
Berg Balance Test	73	70.9%	19	18.4%	92	89.3%
9 hole peg test	64	62.1%	21	20.4%	85	82.5%
Tinetti	53	51.5%	26	25.2%	79	76.7%

Figure 2 level of experience required to administer outcome measures.

What was concluded?

The most common outcome measures in use are

1. The Berg Balance Test
2. The Timed Up and Go
3. The 10 Meter Walk

The majority of participants (>75%) believe students should be competent in using:

- The Berg Balance Test
- The Timed Up and Go
- The Visual Analogue Scale.

#neurology

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Future research recommendations:

- Do opinions vary within the four healthcare systems within the UK?
- Do opinions vary between NHS and Private practice?

References:

American Physical Therapy Association (2017) Outcome Measures in Patient Care. Available at: <http://www.apta.org/OutcomeMeasures/> (Accessed: 28th March 2018).