

Darlington Musculoskeletal Service

A guide for patients

**Are you suffering
from muscular or joint
pains?**

Our service brings together specialist musculoskeletal (MSK) clinicians to assess, diagnose and manage your condition at health centres and GP surgeries in your local community. We treat MSK conditions involving bones, soft tissues, muscles, joints and ligaments.

Our services:

Darlington Musculoskeletal (MSK) Service is for people, registered with a GP with musculoskeletal conditions. Our team includes specialist musculoskeletal clinicians who can provide comprehensive assessments and a range of treatments and management plans.

How do I make an appointment?

There are two referral options


Self-Referral

Simply call **01325 728 988** to speak to one of our Patient Care Advisors, who will be happy to help.

GP Referral

Make an appointment to see your GP and your GP will refer you into the service.

Once the referral is complete, you will be contacted by our Referral Management Centre to arrange your first appointment



Other services

**Direct Access in GP
Surgeries**

Group Exercise

What should I expect?

Your initial appointment will most likely involve a telephone assessment by a physiotherapist.

They will ask questions about your condition and your general health in order to make a provisional diagnosis, provide instant treatment advice and reassurance and plan your care accordingly.

Please note: the telephone assessment is a scheduled appointment and our clinicians will call within the hour of that appointment time from a withheld/private number.

Please therefore be prepared for the call-in order to get the most out of this appointment.

Following the telephone assessment, the clinician will advise on the best course of action for you and your condition including:

- Detailed self-management advice and exercises,
- A further appointment face to face in a physiotherapy clinic for further assessment,
- Our groups and/or educational seminars and gyms
- A referral of your care to a better placed service in the local community.

All of this will be discussed and planned with you.

What to wear:

During your assessment you might be required to carry out a number of movements to determine the cause of your pain. Therefore, we recommend you wear suitable loose fitting clothing, such as t-shirt, shorts, jogging bottoms and underwear that you are comfortable being assessed in.

Where will I be seen?

The clinics are located in local health centres, clinics, gyms and some GP practices within the community.

You will be offered the earliest appointment available, but you will also be given a choice of venues, so you can choose a location which is best for you.



Important information:

- **Patients under 16 years-old:**
This service is only available to patients aged 16 years or older.
- **Patients with additional needs:**
If the Patient is vulnerable, or has a disability, or mobility problems, then please advise us when you book their appointment.
- **Translation Support:**
If you require a translator, please advise us which language when you book your appointment.
- **Keep us informed:**
If you need to change or cancel your appointment, please call the service **at least 48 hours prior to your appointment**, so it can be offered to someone else.
- **Don't be a DNA:**
If you **Do Not Attend (DNA)** or you are late to your appointment without notifying us, you may be discharged from this service.
- **Diagnostic Tests:**
After your assessment, your clinician may feel that you warrant further investigations, or tests. **Diagnostic tests may take up to 8 weeks** and we monitor your progress throughout the diagnostic process, so there is no need to call us earlier than this.

Our support team is here to help you, if you have any queries or questions regarding your care, please get in touch

01325 728 988

Lines are open Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 5.00pm.

Data protection and patient confidentiality

Patients and Clinicians can be assured that the protection of privacy and confidentiality are given the highest priority, with all personal information being collected, held and used in strict compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018.

Comments, complaints and suggestions

Darlington MSK Service encourages feedback from its patients on their experiences with the services they have received.

If you wish to make a suggestion, compliment or a complaint about any part of the service, then please call the Referral Management Centre on **01325 728 988** and they will direct your call, or access further information on how to do so via our website:

www.connecthealth.co.uk/contact