**EFFECTS OF A PHYSICAL THERAPY REFERENCE FOR NEUROLOGISTS TREATING MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS**

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**Background:** The *Education and Scholarship Track in Multiple Sclerosis (MS)* is a collaboration between the University of North Carolina (UNC), Division of Physical Therapy (PT) and the Eastern North Carolina Chapter of the National MS Society. This collaboration includes a number of opportunities for PT scholars to observe neurologists’ clinical assessment and intervention of patients with MS. The evidence suggests that physical therapy intervention for individuals with MS results in decreased falls and increased ability to manage symptoms. Increased awareness of the benefits of PT may enhance future referral rates in hopes of achieving positive patient outcomes including reduction in falls and improved functional independence. **Objectives:** The goal of this initiative was to enhance the knowledge and awareness among NC neurologists regarding PT interventions for fall prevention and symptom management in patients with MS. The desired outcome is to increase neurologist referral of patients with MS to PT. **Methods:** Evidence-based handouts were created to provide information to neurologists regarding positive outcomes of PT intervention for individuals with MS. Handouts will be piloted through distribution to local neurologists in attendance at the NC Neurological Society annual meeting. One handout focuses on outcomes of PT interventions for management of MS symptoms. The second handout focuses on outcomes of PT interventions addressing fall prevention in this population. Neurologists will be asked to complete a survey before and after reading the handouts in order to assess influence of the information. The survey includes questions regarding percentage of caseload related to MS, PT referral rates, and basis for referral or lack of referral. **Results:** A booth has been secured at the NC Neurological Society annual meeting on February 17-18, 2012 for distribution of handouts; results will be evaluated after surveys are reviewed. The survey addresses potential changes in referral rates as a result of handout information and identification of other barriers to PT referral. **Conclusion:** It is our goal that this handout will increase referral rates among neurologists and serve as a guide for appropriate referral to PT among the MS population.

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