

SETTING Community Health Centre

PATIENT You are a middle-aged salesperson and had a mild stroke three weeks ago. It has left you with some weakness, a feeling of heaviness and limited movement in the right arm and shoulder but, apart from this, everything is working normally. You have been referred for physiotherapy but are not sure why, as you feel ready to return to work.

- TASK**
- When asked, say that you feel fine and don't really think you need physio, in fact, you feel ready to go back to work.
 - Say that your job does not require a lot of physical exercise, but you do need to do a lot of driving. Insist that you are ready to return to work.
 - Reluctantly agree that perhaps you do need to wait until your shoulder is better. Ask how long it will take to recover.
 - Ask what the physiotherapy will involve.
 - Agree to work with the physiotherapist on an exercise program.

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PHYSIO You see a middle-aged patient who had a mild left cerebrovascular accident (stroke) three weeks ago, resulting in lack of function of the right shoulder and scapula. There are no other deficits and the patient is medically stable. The patient has been referred for physiotherapy but is unsure why, as he/she feels ready to return to work as a salesperson.

- TASK**
- Confirm the reason for the patient's referral (physio following a mild stroke). Find out how the patient has been since the stroke.
 - Outline the benefits of physiotherapy for stroke patients (gradually build up strength, aid recovery, etc.). Find out about the patient's job (e.g., physical demands, any driving, etc.).
 - Resist the idea that the patient is ready to return to work (may delay recovery, unsafe to drive, need medical clearance from doctor, etc.).
 - Give information about recovery (e.g., dependent on amount of damage to brain/therapeutic stimulation of muscles, fatigue, commitment, etc.).
 - Give information about the physio program (e.g., goal-based, aim of returning to work, etc.) and describe possible exercises (e.g., strengthening, stretching, etc.). Establish the patient's willingness to start exercises.