

ACPOHE

PHYSIOS**FOR**WORK**AND**HEALTH

**A project to support
First Contact
Practitioners (FCP's)
to be successful in
their assessment,
management, and
reporting of MSK
issues related to Work
and Health**

acpohe.org.uk



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1. Executive Summary

A 1-year project, funded by the CSP, was undertaken to help support and educate First Contact Practitioners (FCPs) and Advanced Physiotherapy Practitioners (APPs) in understanding the importance of work as a health outcome, having effective work conversations, assessing fitness for work, and completing the AHP Health and Work Report.

Engagement with this groups of physiotherapists was made via face-to-face meetings, webinars, and email contact. Two webinars were undertaken with a large audience of FCPs/APPs to help identify difficulties and training needs, introduce the working party for this project and to start the education process on work and health issues in Primary Care and how to complete the Fitnote.

A portfolio of resources has been developed and made freely available and advertised to FCPs/APPs.

A 3.5-hour interactive, online training workshop was undertaken to 12 separate groups of FCPs/APPs (which included 2 pilot workshops). Outside of the pilot workshops 160 individuals attended this workshop.

Feedback has been received for 9 out of the 10 workshops. No responses have been received for the workshop undertaken on the 13th of June 2022 at the time this report was written. The overall feedback response rate is 68%.

Feedback is detailed within the report, and is largely positive, with the workshops being considered appropriate, and applicable to the cohort.

Continued support to FCPs/APPs is available via the Free access to ACPOHEs learning and development hub. However, it is anticipated that further live workshops at both an introductory and advanced level is needed to cover FCPs/APPs to be fully competent and confident in having effect work conversations and completing the Fitnote. This is particularly pertinent since the announcement that Physiotherapists will be empowered to complete the Med3 Fitnote as of 1st July 2022.

Since completion of this project, ACPOHE have received several requests to continue the Work, Health, and Fitnote Workshops. Most FCPs are looking to their Primary Care Network Training Hubs to fund this training. At present it is uncertain if they will be successful or how long this may take. Input from the CSP to help secure funding will be useful to ensure all FCPs and APPs are suitably trained in this subject.

2. Introduction

ACPOHE successfully gained Professional Network Funding in May 2021 to undertake a project to:

‘Support and train FCP’s to understand the importance of Work and Health and to competently Assess Fitness for Work (AFFW) and the AHP Health and Work Report.’

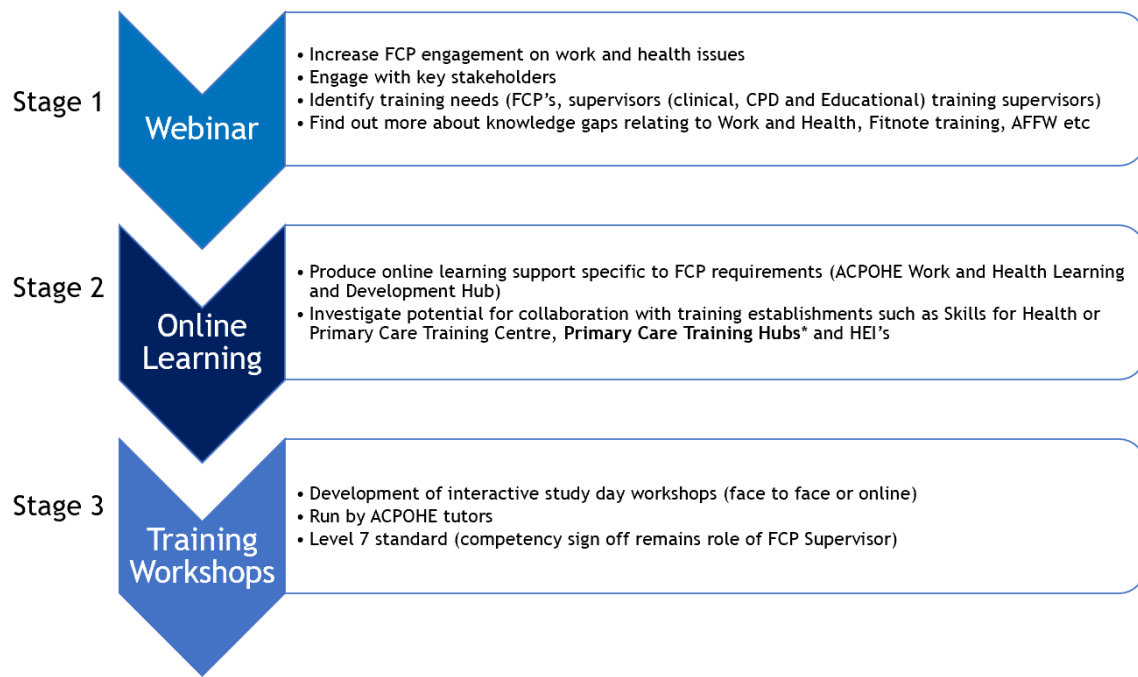
This work was undertaken by a working party consisting of Kathy Roberts (Lead), Paul Shawcross, Cameron Black and administrative support from Nik Bathe.

This project clearly supports the CSP Strategy 2020-2022 regarding its Aims and Outcomes, as identified below:

CSP Aims	CSP Outcomes relevant to this project
Build a thriving physiotherapy community	Organise our members so that collectively, they are in a stronger position to shape the profession and support each other
Champion physiotherapy	Ensure that other professionals and the public recognise the scope and potential of physio. Ensure the full roll-out of first contact physiotherapy in primary care.
Support members in their professional and working lives	Provide the advice that members need in their practice at work. Develop members’ leadership skills and help them into senior roles across health and care

3. Project Deliverables

This project proposal outlined the following deliverables, as shown in the illustration below:



How the project met these deliverables, and the project outputs is outlined in this section.

Stage 1: Outputs

Initial Engagement:

Initial engagement with FCP's was undertaken by meeting face to face with local FCPs within their clinic and observing their practice and discussing the topic of Work, Health and use of the AHP Health and Work Report.

Throughout the project, engagement with the iCSP First Contact Practitioner Group was made via posting links to resources.

Engagement with the Education Officers from the Specialist Network Advanced Physiotherapy Practitioner Network (APPN) Group was attempted but an open dialogue of communication was not successful.

Webinars:

2 webinars were undertaken to improve engagement, as outlined below:

1. **Work and Health for First Contact Practitioners PART 1 – An Introduction** – undertaken on the 27th of May 2022 by Ash James, Learning and Development Lead for Connect Healthcare and Kathy Roberts, ACPOHE Education Officer. Available to all via Free Guest Access on our Work and Health Learning and Development Hub
2. **Work and Health for First Contact Practitioners PART 2 – Practical Use of the AHP Health and Work Report by FCP's** – undertaken on the 26th of August 2021 by Cameron Black, Occupational Health Physiotherapist and PhD student in FCP Work and Health role, and Lara McColl, FCP, South Tyneside.

The initial engagement from Stage 1 with FCPs identified the following:

Issues identified from Stage 1 of Project	
1	Most FCPs are unaware of the AHP Health and Work Report.
2	Those that are aware of the report do not use it due to lack of confidence and understanding of how to use it, or due to logistical issues such as difficulty accessing it on EMIS or System 1.
3	A few FCP's do not feel it is their role to complete the AHP Health and Work Report.
4	Most FCPs do not feel encouraged to use the AHP Health and Work Report by their supervisors.
5	Many FCPs report that the GPs within their PCN are unaware of the AHP Health and Work Report and continue to issue Med3 Fitnotes and then refer patient to FCP.
6	There are pockets of best practice, where the FCP's are having successful work conversations and completing the Fitnote.

These issues were considered and shaped how the training and resource development were undertaken.

Stage 2: Outputs

ACPOHE's Learning and Management System known as the Work and Health Learning and Development Hub has been adapted to allow FREE Guest Access to part of this hub. This can be accessed via the link below:

<https://acpohelms.co.uk/login.php>

Click the yellow button 'FREE Guest Access' which will take you to the learning resources we have developed.

This includes:

1. Skills and Knowledge Hub:

- **E-Learning-** Recorded presentation of 'FCP Work/Health and completion of the Fitnote Workshop' and 'An Introduction to Occupational Health'
- **Video Library** - includes 'What skills does an OH Physio need? Video guidance on completion of the AHP Health and Work Report and A GP perspective of the role of the FCP regarding Work and Health
- **Webinar Library** - recording of webinars specific to FCP/Work and Health

2. Resources and Tool Hub:

This section contains ACPOHE Guidance Documents, A Recovering from Covid 19 Return to Work Toolkit and an abundance of reference documents and links within the resource library.

Stage 3: Outputs

The Project Working Party developed a 3.5-hour workshop for FCP's titled 'Work and Health and use of the AHP Health and Work Report in Primary Care.'

This was piloted twice; initially with the FCP Training Programme delegates at the University of Salford, and secondly with Swansea Bay University Health Board. Changes to the presentation were made following the feedback of these pilot sessions.

Initially mixed audience workshop size was limited to 25 participants. This was increased to 40 participants as the DNA rate for each mixed audience workshop was approximately 50%. Attendance numbers for the workshops arranged by a specific University or Trust were set by them.

Ten workshops were undertaken via Zoom or Teams. Details of these workshops, including attendance numbers and evaluation response rates, at each session is seen in Table 1.

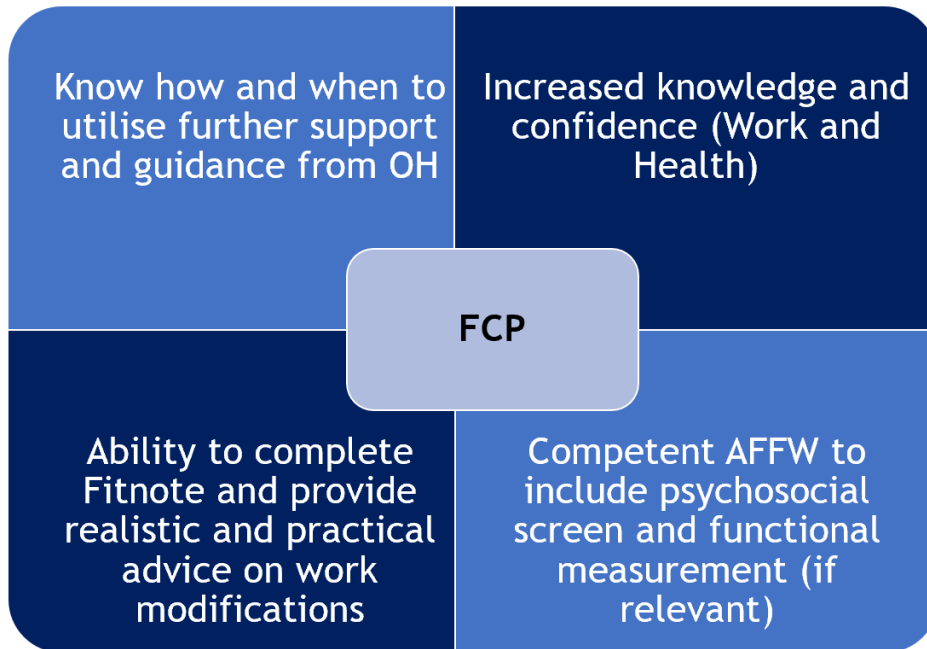
Table 1: Details of Training Workshops

Workshop Date	Tutors	Hours	Audience	Attendance Number	Evaluation Response rate (RR) (%)
05/01/22	KR PS	3.5	Mixed	16	100
07/02/22	KR CB	3.5	Mixed	15	60
10/02/22	KR CB	3.5	Mixed	16	63
28/02/2022	KR	2.5	Uni of Coventry	16	88
03/03/22	PS CB	2.5	Uni of Plymouth	14	57
09/03/22	KR PS	2.5	Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust	16	63
28/03/22	KR	3.5	Mixed	20	75
07/04/22	KR	2.5	Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust	16	44
23/05/22	KR CB	3.5	Mixed	18	61
13/06/22	KR PS	2.5	Uni of Coventry	13	absent
Kathy Roberts (KR) Paul Shawcross (PS) Cameron Black (CB)				Total: 160	Average evaluation RR For 9 workshops 68%

The mixed workshops consist of individual FCPs or APPs booking independently onto a workshop resulting in a mixed audience from widespread geographical regions across the UK and Northern Ireland. In contrast, some workshops were requested by Universities or NHS Trusts, where they also requested to reduce the time of training down to 2.5 hours. This impacted the time for some of the interactivity within the workshops.

4. Intended Outcomes

The intended outcomes of this project can be seen below.



Feedback was gained via polls undertaken at the beginning of the workshops and then again at the end of the session and via electronic evaluation forms sent immediately after the workshop.

Unfortunately, the information gained from the polls was not saved, so cannot be shown in this report. However, the main change seen from these polls was that confidence to complete the Fitnote increased dramatically after attendance at the workshop. In addition, the small number of FCPs /APPs who did not feel it was their role to complete the Fitnote, did not report this at the end of the workshop, indicating that the workshop successfully highlighted how the work conversations and use of the Fitnote is part of the FCP role.

It became clear at the outset that training this cohort on specific psychosocial screening and functional measurement tests was beyond the scope of this project and therefore removed as an intended outcome.

Evaluation Forms:

Electronic evaluation forms were sent to each participant at the end of the workshop. This linked to their Certificate of Attendance to help increase the uptake of responses.

Full quantitative and qualitative results can be seen in **Appendix 1 and 2.**

A summary of the combined qualitative results from all the workshops is found below:

Q1 - How was the course organised and administered?

Very good	Good	Average	Poor
75 %	25%	0%	0%

Q2 - How would you rate the standard of the tutoring on the course?

Very good	Good	Average	Poor
81%	16%	3%	0%

Q3 - To what extent was the programme able to meet your personal objectives?

More than	Yes	Mostly	Not at all
41%	50%	9%	0%

Q4 - Were the learning exercises appropriate with sufficient group participation?

More than	Yes	Mostly	Not at all
33%	52%	15%	0%

Q5 - Would you recommend the course to any of your colleagues?

Yes	Maybe	No
96%	4%	0%

Overall, the workshops were very well received with 85% of participants stating their objectives either being fully met or exceeded and 96% stating they would recommend the workshop to their colleagues.

Qualitative Data:

Overall, the qualitative data returned positive comments regarding the workshop training. Most felt it was applicable and relevant to their practice and reported being more confident to have work conversations and use the Fitnote.

Regarding future support or learning needs a common comment was for further support in undertaking to undertake practical case studies, a desire for further advanced training once they put this learning into practice and for support and guidance with educating both supervisors and GPs into AHPs using the Fitnote.

5. Project Limitations

1. It is unknown if this project has led to actual changes in practice regarding participants having effective work conversations and using the Fitnote. Whilst feedback was positive regarding improved understanding and confidence, further evaluation in the future of actual change in practice is desirable but was outside of the scope of this project.
2. Whilst 170 FCPs/APPs attended training, that is a small number of the total FCPs and APPs practicing across the United Kingdom. Free access to a recorded workshop, plus other resources is available, but this is unlikely to be as effective as attending a live, interactive workshop.
3. We are currently waiting on statistics regarding use of the online resources through the Free access portal of the Work and Health, Learning and Development Hub. This will provide us with useful information regarding the utilisation of this resource.

6. Conclusion

Overall, this project met its intended outputs and deliverables, except for including specific psychosocial and functional measurement tests within Assessment of Fitness for Work, as this proved beyond the scope of this project.

The immediate feedback from participants of the workshops was largely positive and supportive of improved knowledge and confidence regarding work and health, ability to undertake assessment of fitness for work in a Primary Care Setting, complete the Fitnote and refer on for more specialist support when necessary.

The longer-term outputs of this project upon the working practices and behaviour of FCPs and APPs in Primary Care is unknown.

Further education and training to FCPs and APPs on Work, Health and use of the Fitnote is required. Consideration should be given to funding sources for this continued support.

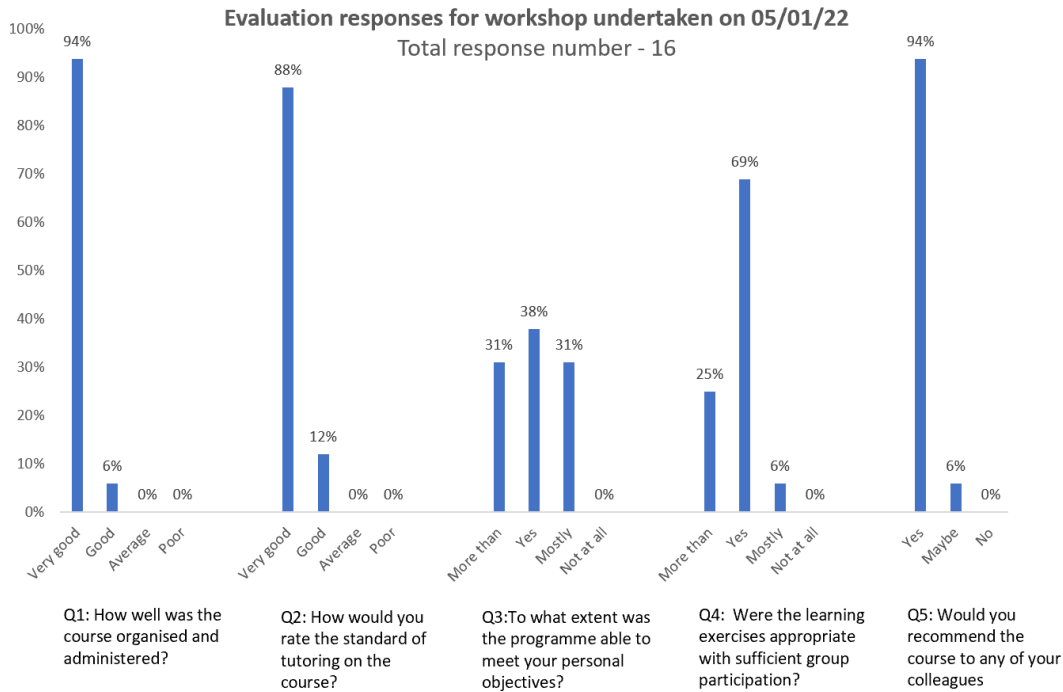
7. Acknowledgments

This project was funded by the Professional Network Fund of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy. A big thank you to the CSP and to all individuals that were involved.

8. Appendix 1

- 3.5-hour workshops with mixed audience
- 2.5-hour workshops arranged for specific University or Trust

Quantitative Evaluation of Workshops:



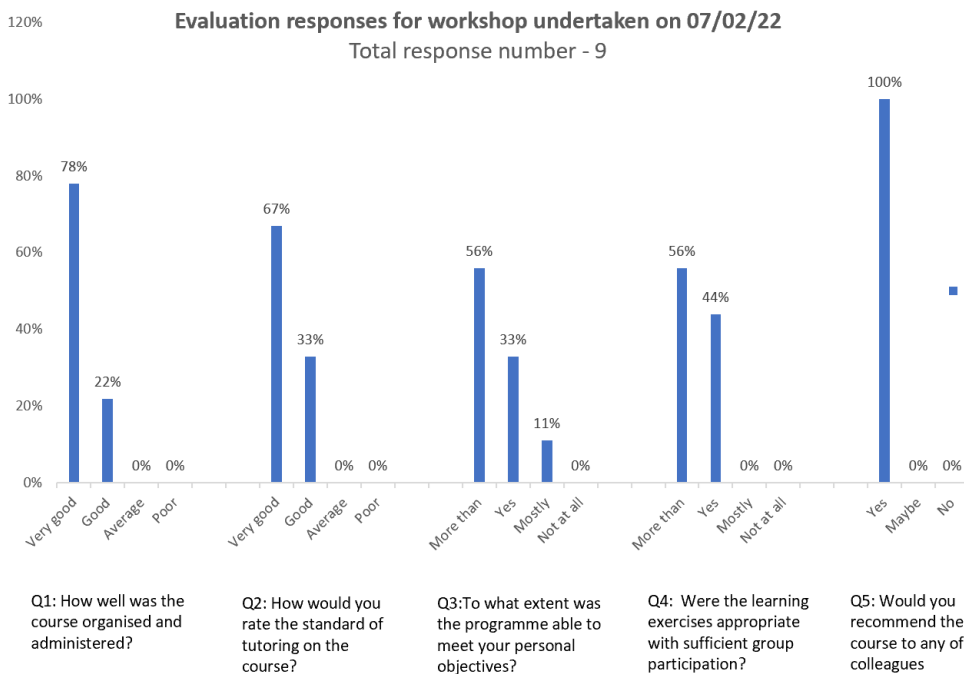
Q1: How well was the course organised and administered?

Q2: How would you rate the standard of tutoring on the course?

Q3: To what extent was the programme able to meet your personal objectives?

Q4: Were the learning exercises appropriate with sufficient group participation?

Q5: Would you recommend the course to any of your colleagues



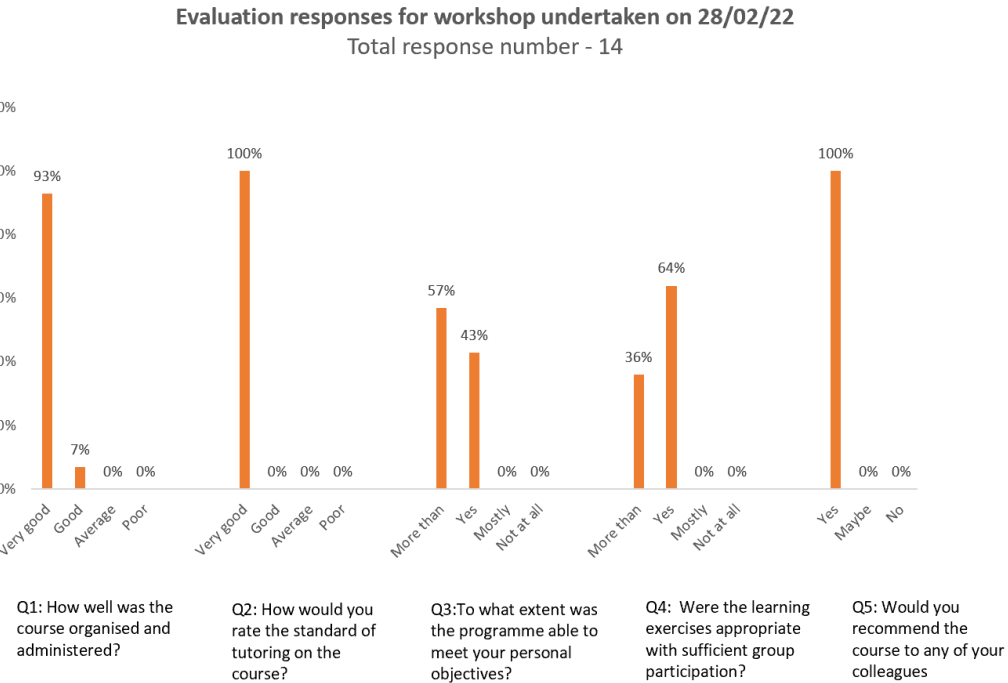
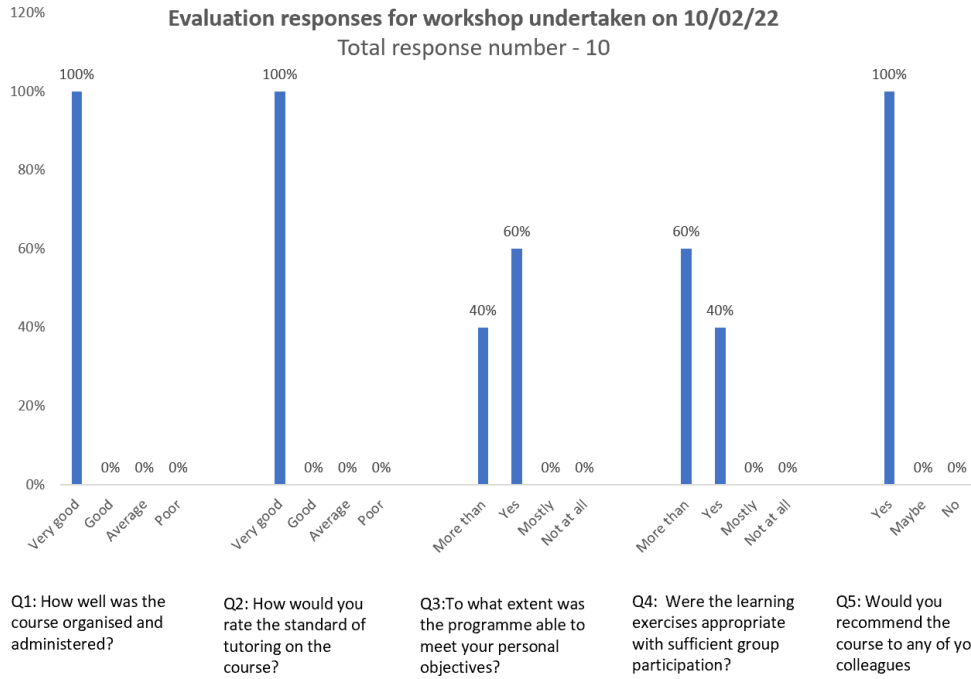
Q1: How well was the course organised and administered?

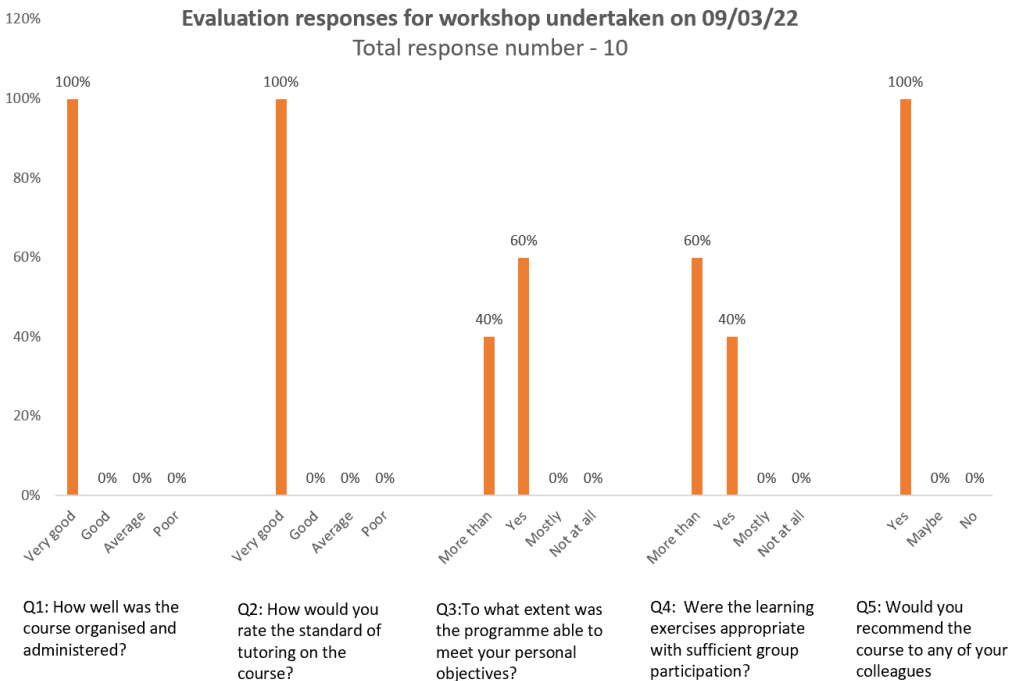
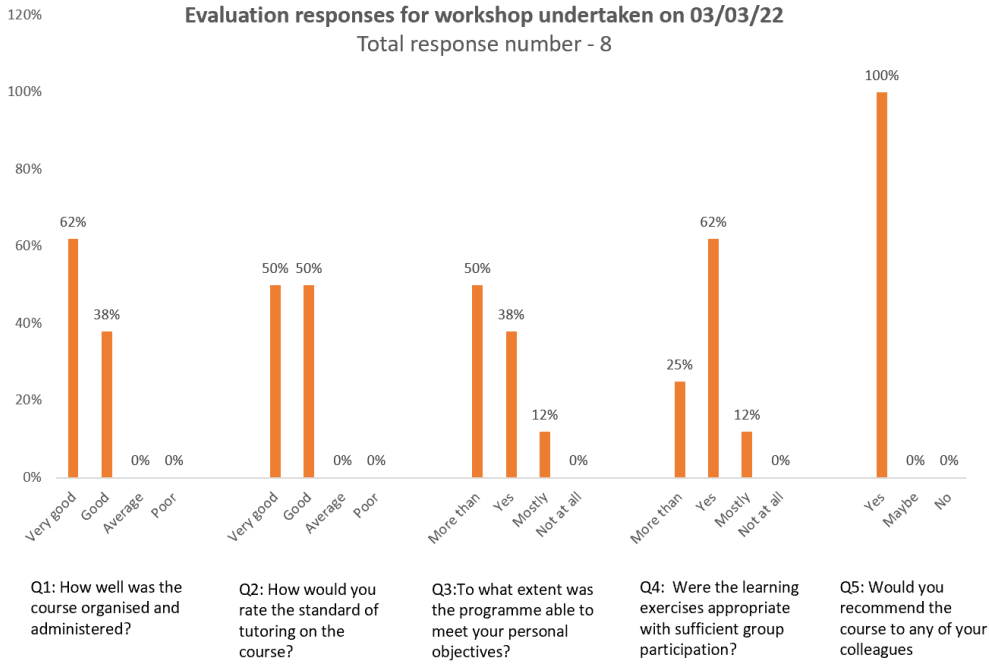
Q2: How would you rate the standard of tutoring on the course?

Q3: To what extent was the programme able to meet your personal objectives?

Q4: Were the learning exercises appropriate with sufficient group participation?

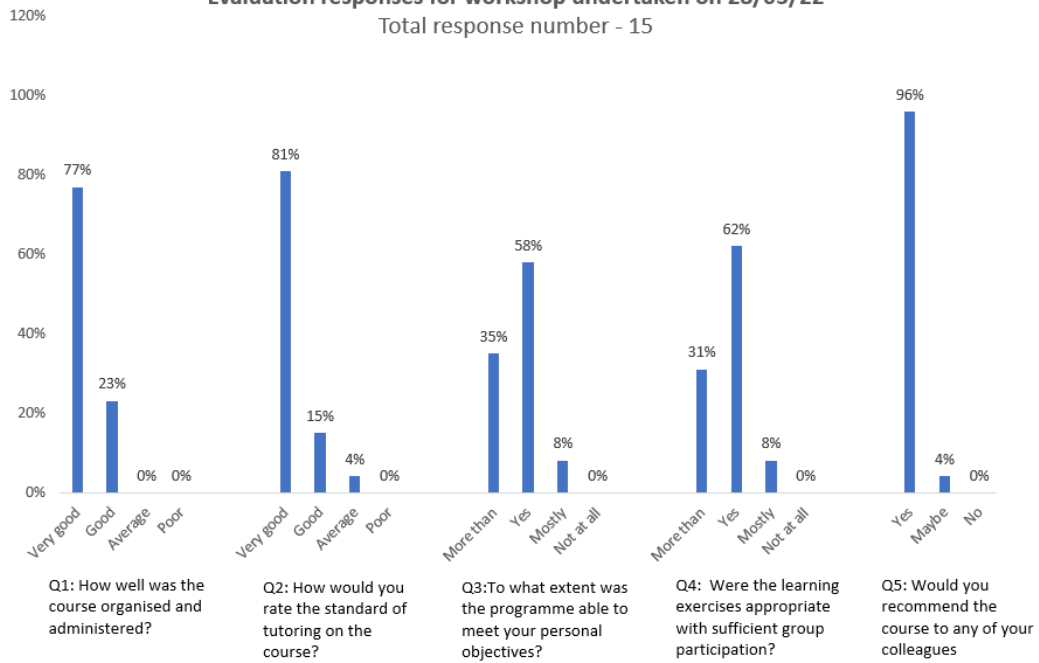
Q5: Would you recommend the course to any of your colleagues





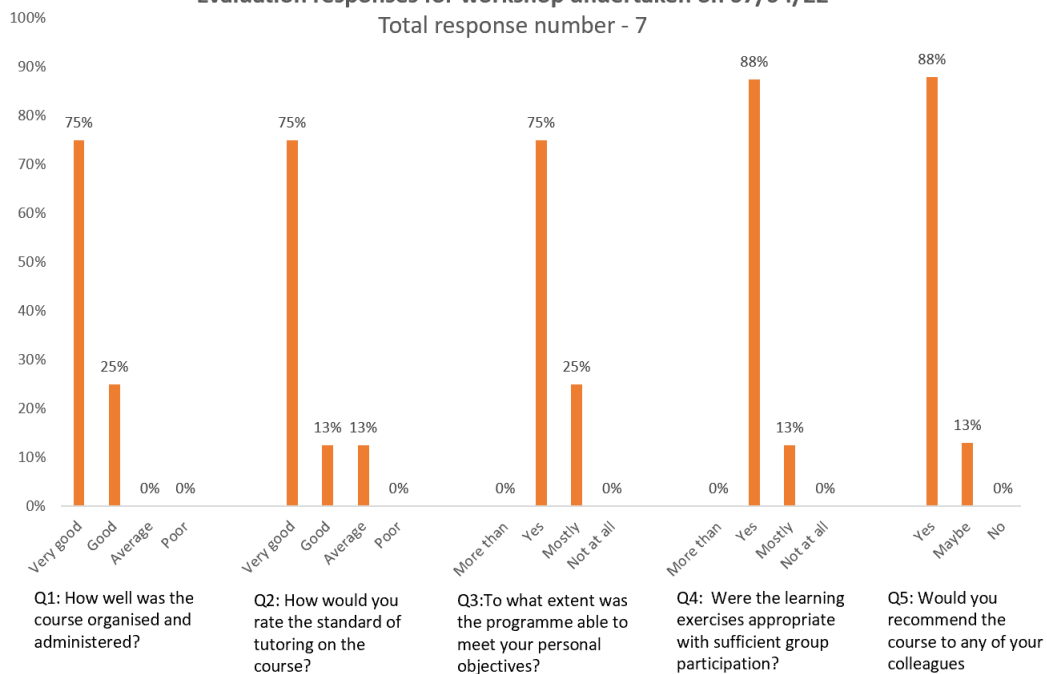
Evaluation responses for workshop undertaken on 28/03/22

Total response number - 15

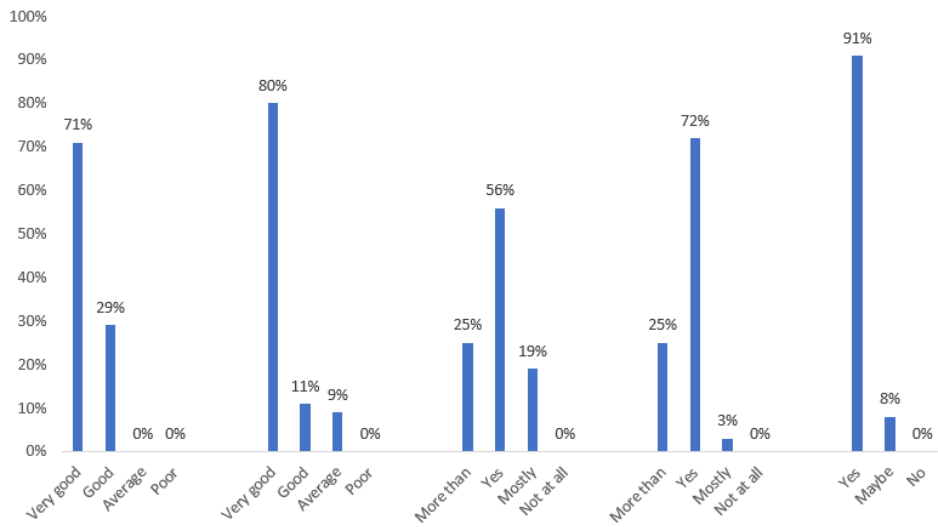


Evaluation responses for workshop undertaken on 07/04/22

Total response number - 7



Evaluation responses for workshop undertaken on 23/05/22
Total response number - 11



Q1: How well was the course organised and administered?

Q2: How would you rate the standard of tutoring on the course?

Q3: To what extent was the programme able to meet your personal objectives?

Q4: Were the learning exercises appropriate with sufficient group participation?

Q5: Would you recommend the course to any of your colleagues?

Qualitative Results from Evaluation of Workshops

<p>Date: 05/01/22 Course tutor: Kathy Roberts and Paul Shawcross Duration 3.5 hrs</p>
<p>General Comments The case examples were a great way to get people thinking about the use of the fit note. Very useful, very interactive. I learnt a lot. I feel it covered what it was meant to. Thank you so much for arranging this course. The course worked well on Zoom, but I think there were some stilted moments and its harder to concentrate for four hours on TEAMS, I think a few shorter breaks maybe helpful. Thank you. I didn't receive the initial zoom invite so missed 45 mins trying to access the course. What additional subjects or changes to the course would you like to see? Could discuss their reasoning for time given. More focus on actively filling out the AHP form. More experience in filling in the forms and then platform to ask questions if anything arises. Possibly, ethical issues referring a patient from PCN to hospital would be beneficial to learn about it. Would have liked more time and bias placed upon example scenarios and what to write on the form.</p>
<p>Date: 07/02/22 Course tutor: Kathy Roberts and Cameron Black Duration 3.5 hrs</p>
<p>General Comments The interactive questions and answers were useful. Many thanks. The training was very helpful and has raised my awareness of ensuring work is readily discussed in FCP assessments. The examples were useful especially in terms of how to use the fit for work document. Thanks again really interesting and will benefit my practice. Thank you. There was plenty of time to discuss queries and well lead group. Really very useful to get understanding of do's and don'ts when completing return to work note. The session had practical elements and small groups allowed for good discussion. Thanks for arranging this intro session.</p> <p>What additional subjects or changes to the course would you like to see? Perhaps a little more discussion around the less commonly known flags may have been helpful (orange, pink particularly). It may also have been useful to provide an example of a completed AHP work and health report relative to a given case study, prior to the small groups completing the forms themselves. Would have been good to have a copy of the fit note in word format and look at how this can be used directly within S1. Some guidance/ background on legality for fit note and employment laws would be useful to help broaden understanding of Voc rehab pathways that community services are looking to develop, as a result of post covid rehab.</p>
<p>Date: 10/02/22 Course tutor: Kathy Roberts and Cameron Black Duration 3.5 hrs</p>
<p>General Comments Found the session helpful in giving me the skills for completing the report confidently. Thank you both.</p>

It was a very helpful course.
Overall, well explained and presented course,
Practical use of how to access fit notes in templates in S1
Very interactive.
Great Course.
Informative and well-structured day.
Having cases to review and discuss made the session.
Katherine and Cameron were excellent, I really enjoyed the session and feel I've gained new skills.
Really useful training session thank you; I now feel much more confident to use the form!
Thank you very much.
I thought the course was very good. It enabled me to get a good overview and I got more information about how to complete the AHP fit note which was my main aim.
Overall, I thought the course was well organised and had good information to hold my attention even though it's not my specialist area.
Thanks for organising a good course.
Looking forward to receiving a copy of the slides and the Web links that were mentioned in the presentation.

What additional subjects or changes to the course would you like to see?

Would have liked more case studies to work through if there was time.
A follow-up workshop would be nice to be able to discuss challenges encountered once we have started using the Fit Note & share experiences of how these were addressed.
Perhaps an example of how it integrates with clinical systems.
No really, perhaps a bit more about the legalities of the fit note, if there are plans to change the med 3 etc, perhaps more information about liaising with employers and problems that might arise.

Date: 28/02/22 **Course tutor:** Kathy Roberts **Duration** 2.5 hours

Really useful especially with regards to issuing of FIT notes and making recommendations to employers and using work as rehab.
Very thorough and useful lecture.
Really helpful session on using the AHP fit note as have been aware of but not fully understood its place within GP Practice.
Will definitely look to use this in FCP clinic now I understand how to use it.
Thank you again, ready to some of the challenge and uncertainty
very informative, big thank you.
Really useful.

Date: 03/03/22 **Course tutor:** Kathy Roberts and Cameron Black **Duration** 3.5 hrs

General Comments

Really informative workshop and well presented - thank you.
Looking forward to implementing and changing my practice.
Very helpful - really appreciated.
Thank you.
Will be in touch to see if this could be organised as a team Inservice, really good thanks.
Great insight into the time off work statistic- especially if off work for 2 years- statistically more likely to die!
I think doing the fit note to the detail that your presented will be very difficult in the context of a 20 minute FCP appointment, so I question it's practicality and I would probably have to do it only half as detailed to be able to stick to my clinic time limitations.
My other concern would be whether GPs end up using the service as more of a 'fit note' service- therefore taking away from skilled assessments and well known signposting.

What additional subjects or changes to the course would you like to see?

Would have been nice to have longer to do all the case studies as a group. Would have been good to spend more time around guidance on phased return to work e.g., what % min to resume, how long is reasonable to phase back to work over.
I'd like to get this type of training arranged for my other FCP colleagues working in RD&E, please!
Support to help GPs to understand these changes.

Date: 09/03/22 **Course tutor:** Kathy Roberts and Paul Shawcross **Duration** 2.5 hours

General Comments

I found the workshop very relevant to my clinical practice.
Very well structured, course tutors were very knowledgeable. It was useful to go through case studies and apply learning.
All materials and group discussion were all useful.
I have particularly liked the survey questions in between the slides.
I really enjoyed the session - thank you.
I think the training was so helpful and presented a valuable message for us working in an FCP role and I agree we can make a more informed decision about whether someone is fit or not fit to work compared to a GP and makes a lot more sense for us to be making this decision with the patient.
I found it very useful going Through the form and then doing case studies... It took away the mystery of it all!
Considering we had to abridge the course due to time-constraints our end, I thought Kathy & Paul did an excellent of keeping the course still very detailed and engaging. Particularly liked the interactive elements. On a virtual platform, that can be a challenge, but it wasn't in this case. Well done both!
Thanks again for the lovely presentation Kathy & Paul, really appreciate it.
Good approach to implementing the use of the report.
Still going to struggle to fit into the 20mins available, the physio part definitely is out of the FCP model.

What additional subjects or changes to the course would you like to see?

Nil comments

Date: 28/03/22 **Course tutor:** Kathy Roberts **Duration** 3.5 hours

General Comments

Pls can you send me your email details. I would like to liaise in relation to organising training for my colleagues. Thanks.
Really useful especially with regards to issuing of FIT notes and making recommendations to employers and using work as rehab.
Well-structured session.
Very thorough and useful lecture, very good content.
Long day with a lot of information. Very informative, big thank you. Really helpful session on using the AHP fit note as have been aware of but not fully understood its place within GP Practice.
Will look to use this in FCP clinic now I understand how to use it. Really useful.

What additional subjects or changes to the course would you like to see?

Maybe spaced out a bit more to focus on case studies in more detail.

Date: 07/04/22 **Course tutor:** Kathy Roberts **Duration** 2.5 hours

General Comments

Really good session (despite the technical difficulties) so thank you!
Continue with breakout room group work as really helpful.
Good briefing on using the tool - worked examples at the end most useful.

Thanks - this was a really useful session covering the forms that I had very little knowledge about. The background info regarding work was really interesting and well-presented and the breakout groups worked really well.

I appreciate it is normally run as a longer course so there was a lot to fit in - talking about the reality of using the forms would be good. And the practicalities - are they being used a lot by FCP's? How do they have time for them?! How do they cope with needing to see the patients again but not being able to book into the future or having available slots?

A really good session - the technology blips were coped with extremely well! Thanks very much.

A very well run and structured course has certainly made me less hesitant in the provision of fit-notes and I will endeavour to integrate this into my clinical practice.

What additional subjects or changes to the course would you like to see?

Could have done with slightly larger groups for the discussions? 2-3 people seemed a bit small - maybe 3-4 would be better?

Date: 23/05/22 **Course tutor:** Kathy Roberts and Cameron Black **Duration** 3.5 hrs

General Comments

Useful to get more knowledge about using form, and clinical scenarios created good group discussion.

Good to have targeted FCP training from CSP, thanks.

Really useful and information I needed.

Thank you for an excellent, useful and informative course which was well presented and friendly, to encourage participation.

Very well put together and delivered.

This course addresses many of the issues that came up on the initial survey - half the people didn't even know that AHP's could and should be doing fit notes.

I have done a few already and came on the course because I feel low in confidence. This course has helped. It's not a magic wand, but I have a better understanding of what is helpful for employers and therefore what I should be putting on the form.

Liked the interactive nature including the poll at the beginning and using our phones for our answers re the flags was great!!!

Really grateful it was a free course, thank you!!!

Fantastic few hours extremely useful, thank you!!!

Found the group sessions really useful, was good to bring ideas together.

Very happy left with the information that I was looking for.

Very good course.

Thank you for providing insight into the role of FCP in work assessment. If I was to suggest any improvements to the programme, it would only be to collaborate with an FCP to deliver the session from a lived experience, as the perspective of the FCP may differ from that of the OH focused practitioners. Overall, I would say it was very helpful though. Many thanks
The course was provided in a very professional manner.

Thank you 😊

Great course - has really increased my confidence in filling in the form and when the patient needs to be sent for a med3 form instead.

Brilliant.

Really good resource. Will be starting a new role as FCP was very glad to find this training on ACPOHE.

Thank you.

Great session and 3.5 hours actually flew by, good mix of presentation and interaction.

Feeling empowered not to present this to rest of my FCP colleagues, and also MSK out-patients as they don't use this during their rehab! And of course, address our local NHS policies so we can be involved in health and work reports for our NHSG staff, so thank you I'm on a mission now :)

It was a very helpful CPD learning opportunity.

Thank you.

The case studies were very helpful.

I have worked in Occupational Health previously and having done this course I feel happy to use the health and work report once our GPs are happy/ informed (currently none of them seem to know it exists after doing a survey with them).

I am going to do a training session for our other FCPs but think they will feel less confident due to lack of previous experience giving return to work advice but I am optimistic that we can change things with the right support.

It's very valuable course for FCP's working in the surgery.

Some technology difficulties initially. Was hard accessing some of the polls on phone initially. Great to have it as online to avoid travelling etc with tight time schedules.

Very interactive, enjoyed both the large group learning and the rooms to speak in more detail with other members.

Great information and learnt a lot, thank you.

Excellent Kathy. Thanks. I learnt today that I need to be more specific in my recommendations.

Have fed back to my team. They may not have capacity to attend 3.5 hours, so I have sign posted to video on CSP website.

well-structured and good case studies for easy understanding.

clear explanation on what can we do within scope of practice.

great explanation on role of physio in Primary care in terms of sickness and fit notes

What additional subjects or changes to the course would you like to see?

Not sure, haven't tried using form yet so need to see how it goes first.

Nothing as felt it was great.

Maybe a bit more on dealing with difficult employment situations where you suspect the reason they are asking for a sick note is because of blue flags. Or what to do if you believe there are black flags. Maybe something for a different course entirely, or even better an advanced fit note course for those that have been doing them for a year.

Possibly more time filling in form with more wording suggestions.

To spend more time practising filling out the AHP Health & Work document and talking through the case studies - all got a bit rushed at the end, but I think that's partly because a lot of people had questions!

Discussion on signposting organisations e.g., acas where employers can access funding for any adjustments they can't meet etc or if any other relevant signposting that could be suggested when they might need a bit more support that isn't their occupational health. Can't think of any. It covered what I needed to know myself.

More on how to access the form on emis.

Discussions on how to prioritise time for this in 20 min appt (alongside initial ax/subjective/objective/advice/analgesia etc).

Just to make sure we have key points and references to take away and come back to.

Tech support in background may be helpful for key speaker.