SUMMARY OF TJAOM FOCUS GROUP FINDINGS

One of the goals of the Total Joint Arthroplasty Outcome Measurement (TJAOM) project is to provide resources and guidelines to ensure best practice in the rehabilitation of the total joint arthroplasty patient. The aim of the focus group study was to identify the barriers to and facilitators that influence using outcome measurement (OM) to guide clinical decision-making in the TJA patient.

The primary findings of the focus group discussion are summarized in point-form below under two main themes:

1) The right measure at the right time for the right patient.

- Limitations of standardized outcome measures in reflecting the quality of movement in a patient’s performance were discussed
  - Quality of movement, muscle recruitment, and performance of functional tasks using proper movement strategies were deemed important to the physiotherapists working with this population
- Concerns regarding the emphasis placed on OM and not on the quality of patient performance were discussed
  - The limited sensitivity of standardized measures, e.g. Oxford hip and knee scales, was considered a barrier to use, as the measures do not reflect the cause of non-performance in patients
  - Similarly, high scores in the gait speed or sit to stand tests indicate speed and not quality of movement (some therapists put limited value on that information)
- There was considerable discussion on the need for the standardized measures to be combined with objective clinical measures (range of motion (ROM), muscle strength, pain levels), in order to establish a complete clinical picture
  - The problem of mismatch when the two types of measures do not correlate was raised

2) Clinical usage for communication and clinical decision-making.

- There was consensus among group members that they consistently use the information from OM for goal setting and to give feedback to patients
- Therapists within this group recognized the importance of OM’s and use them, but still lack confidence to select tools that would facilitate their use as an integral part of daily clinical practice
- One received primary barrier was that standardized OM’s do not reflect quality of movement
  - This demonstrates the need for guidance in the selection and interpretation of outcome measures, and that therapists need to be involved in selecting measures that are relevant to them and their patients, and then be shown how the information can enhance their objective clinical data and decision-making
- The value of having normative data and using consistent measures was evident in the discussions on both patient goal setting and interprofessional communication
- One limitation of the focus group was that participants were a group of therapists who currently use OM’s with many of their patients
  - The barriers in a less experienced group of users might be quite different and would need to be explored


A Physical Therapy Knowledge Broker project supported by: UBC Department of Physical Therapy, Physiotherapy Association of BC, Vancouver Coastal Research Institute and Providence Healthcare Research Institute.