

Free argumentative essay about direct access to physical therapists

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A study done on direct access to physical therapy was done in the Netherlands. The study was done on patients who use direct access to physical therapist and referred patients. The data of 93 Dutch physical therapists were collected electronically randomly from the National Information Service of Allied Health Care. The data was to find out the number of patients who have used direct access and referrals in the 43 clinics. According to the research, about 28 percent of patients who were attended to by a physical therapist were through direct access. In addition, there were a non-specified number of patients who referred themselves to a therapist due to neck complaints, back problems, and highly educated patients who need check up. In the research, it was noted that, most of the young patients used direct access to seek treatment from a physical therapists. Nonetheless, the research had some limitation whereby, the data were biased because; it was only collected from physical therapists that practiced generally. However, many patients were reported to utilize direct access to physical therapists.

In the Netherlands, there are supporters and opponents of direct access to physical therapists. The proponents argue that, direct access to a physical therapist gives faster access to a therapist. In addition, through direct access, physicians are able to make independent decisions for their patients, since they will need no opinions from referees. Before, patients had to pass through a physician in order to be allowed to see a physical therapist, but with direct access, patients will only consult the physical therapists and therefore, there will be no extra costs for referrals.

On the other hand, there are opponents who argue that, direct access to a

physical therapist will alter the profession. In addition, they argue that, physical therapists in the Netherlands are not trained to provide diagnoses for conditions and therefore, direct access will alter this profession. It is evident that, even though direct access will make the profession a primary health provider, it also alters the physical therapy profession. However, it is vital that, before the legislation comes into force, both sides should be considered in order not to compromise the patients' health, yet opinions from other health care providers may be needed. The report in the study found out that, patients used direct access for the first year only, after which the number reduced.

The direct access to a physical therapist has been in force for a year now in the Netherlands. A good number of people were reported to use it for the first year, but afterwards, low numbers were recorded, since many patients were from referrals. Therefore, a further research is needed on this issue in order it determine whether it is okay to allow direct access to a physical therapists, or if allowed, it will alter the profession. An in depth study is needed for direct access to the opposition in order to determine what will be good for patients who are in need of the services of a physical therapist. Even though it was recorded that more patients have been using direct access to physical therapists, it is time to evaluate the whole issue and find out if it is suitable for all patients. Therefore, a future research should be done in order to make it affordable for all patients regardless of their financial status. Even though both sides have their own arguments to support their stand, a comprehensive future research on the advantages and

disadvantages of direct access to physical therapist should be done in order to make it affordable for all.

Reference

Leemrijse CJ, Swinkels IC, Veenhof C. Direct Access to Physical Therapy in the Netherlands:

Results from the First Year in Community-Based Physical Therapy. *Physical Therapy*. 2008; 88(8): 936-946