

Developing a multidisciplinary rehabilitation package following hip fracture and testing in a randomised feasibility study: Fracture in the Elderly Multidisciplinary Rehabilitation (FEMuR)

Nefyn H Williams,^{1,2*} Jessica L Roberts,¹
Nafees Ud Din,¹ Joanna M Charles,¹ Nicola Totton,¹
Michelle Williams,¹ Kevin Mawdesley,¹
Claire A Hawkes,³ Val Morrison,⁴ Andrew Lemmey,⁵
Rhiannon T Edwards,¹ Zoe Hoare,¹
Aaron W Pritchard,¹ Robert T Woods,¹
Swapna Alexander,² Catherine Sackley,⁶ Pip Logan,⁷
Clare Wilkinson¹ and Jo Rycroft-Malone¹

¹School of Healthcare Sciences, Bangor University, Bangor, UK

²Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, St Asaph, UK

³Warwick Clinical Trials Unit, University of Warwick, Coventry, UK

⁴School of Psychology, Bangor University, Bangor, UK

⁵School of Sports, Health and Exercise Science, Bangor University, Bangor, UK

⁶School of Health and Social Care Research, King's College London, London, UK

⁷School of Medicine, University of Nottingham, Nottingham, UK

*Corresponding author nefyn.williams@bangor.ac.uk

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Plain English summary

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Broken hips are a major health problem in the frail elderly. Rehabilitation has the potential to improve recovery and preserve independence, but more evidence is needed. We reviewed what is already known about hip fracture rehabilitation, surveyed rehabilitation professionals and spoke to groups of patients, carers and health-care teams in order to develop a new rehabilitation programme (called the intervention). The new intervention was designed to enhance usual care by improving patients' self-belief and increasing the amount and quality of patients' practice of physical exercise and activities of daily living. It consisted of a workbook and goal-setting diary held by the patient and six additional therapy sessions available to patients once they returned home. We tested this by dividing patients at random into two groups. One group received usual care and the other group received the new intervention plus usual care. We measured outcomes immediately after fracture and after 3 months. In total, 45% of patients screened were eligible for the study, 23% of those who were eligible took part and 79% of participants completed the study. We found that there was a large variation in what was provided as usual care. We found that, in the intervention group, there was a medium-sized improvement in the ability to perform activities of daily living, although because of the small number of participants in the study there was some uncertainty over the results. The additional cost of delivering the new intervention was £231 per patient. The feasibility study allowed us to choose which outcome measures would be the most useful for a future trial.

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