

Working in hydrotherapy pools during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Sarah is an Aquatic Therapy Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist with 24 years' experience working in and managing hydrotherapy pools. She is a member of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (CSP) and Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) in the UK. Sarah is the Co-Chair of the Aquatic Therapy Association for Chartered Physiotherapists (ATACP) and a committee member of the Pool Water Treatment Advisory Group (PWTAG). Sarah assisted in writing the Hydrotherapy Pools chapter in the PWTAG 'Swimming Pool Water' book 2017 and co-wrote the

ATACP 'Recommendations for safe aquatic physiotherapy practice in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic'.

Sarah has extensive experience tutoring aquatic therapy courses in the UK and abroad. She regularly speaks for the ATACP on study days and webinars. She has been an invited speaker at conferences and seminars, including 2014 and 2019 UK Aquatic Therapy Conferences, 2018 International Evidence Based Aquatic Therapy Conference Las Vegas, Spatex 2017, Royal Society of Public Health (RSPH) March and September 2017, and PWTAG Conference 2017

Presentation Abstract

In March 2020 most outpatient physiotherapy services, including the use of hydrotherapy pools, were stopped to redirect staff resources. Hydrotherapy pools, along with swimming pools, were in the main closed. As full lockdown restrictions were starting to be lifted from June there was considerable work to set guidance on working in hydrotherapy pools. The Aquatic Therapy Association of Chartered Physiotherapists (ATACP) worked closely with Pool Water Treatment Advisory Group (PWTAG), Public Health England (PHE) and the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) to provide their 'Recommendations for safe aquatic physiotherapy practice in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic' published 19th May reviewed 6th June.

As an aquatic physiotherapist who has spent the last 23 years working in hydrotherapy pools and co-wrote the ATACP recommendations for returning to work in hydrotherapy pools, I will summarise the changes that were required and discuss some of the problems implementing them and resulting from them. Were they, are they still, necessary? What is the potential long-term impact for hydrotherapy pools?