

# Closing the Gap! Implementing Physiotherapy in an Interdisciplinary HIV Community-Based Care Setting - A Pilot Evaluation

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## 29th Annual Canadian Conference on HIV/AIDS Research, May 1-2, 2020

CONNAUGHT  
FUND



UNIVERSITY OF  
TORONTO



**Conflict of Interest:** Authors have no conflicts of interest.

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# Background, Purpose & Methods



## Background:

- Physiotherapy (PT) can address disability experienced by people living with HIV. **However, few people living with HIV in Canada access PT.** A new interdisciplinary and goal focused day health program (DHP) in Toronto offers **access to PT** for adults living with HIV and complex health issues.

**The purpose of this study was to pilot the evaluation of a novel physiotherapy program in a community day health program for people living with HIV.**

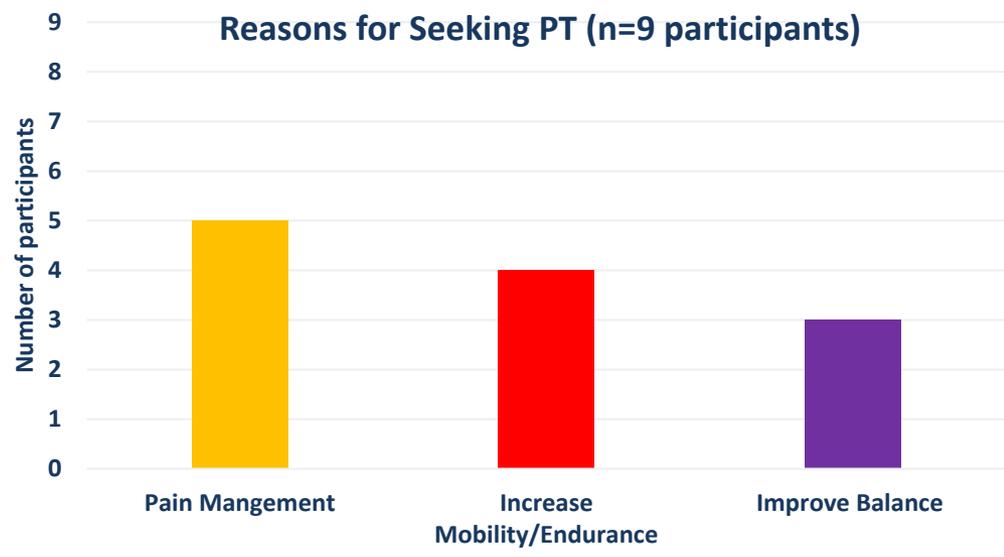
## Methods:

- We conducted a **retrospective PT chart review** to pilot our data collection tool and examine the process of PT among people living with HIV in the Day Health Program.
- We developed a **chart extraction form** to capture the **process of PT** including:
  - ✓ Characteristics of PLWH who accessed and were referred to PT
  - ✓ Length of time accessing PT
  - ✓ Reasons for referral to PT
  - ✓ Engagement in PT exercise program
  - ✓ Assessments and interventions
  - ✓ Use of patient-reported outcomes
- **Two reviewers extracted data** from the Casey House **electronic health records** into REDCap (secure web application for online databases).
- We analyzed data using **categorical** (frequencies; percent), **ratio** (median, interquartile range) and **textual** (content analysis) data analysis.

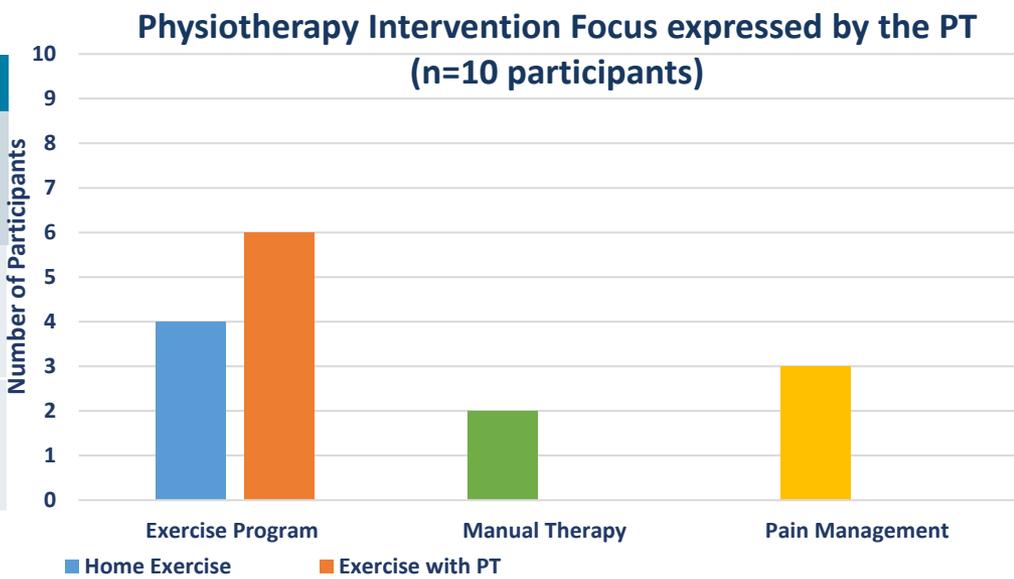
# Results: Participant & Physiotherapy Characteristics



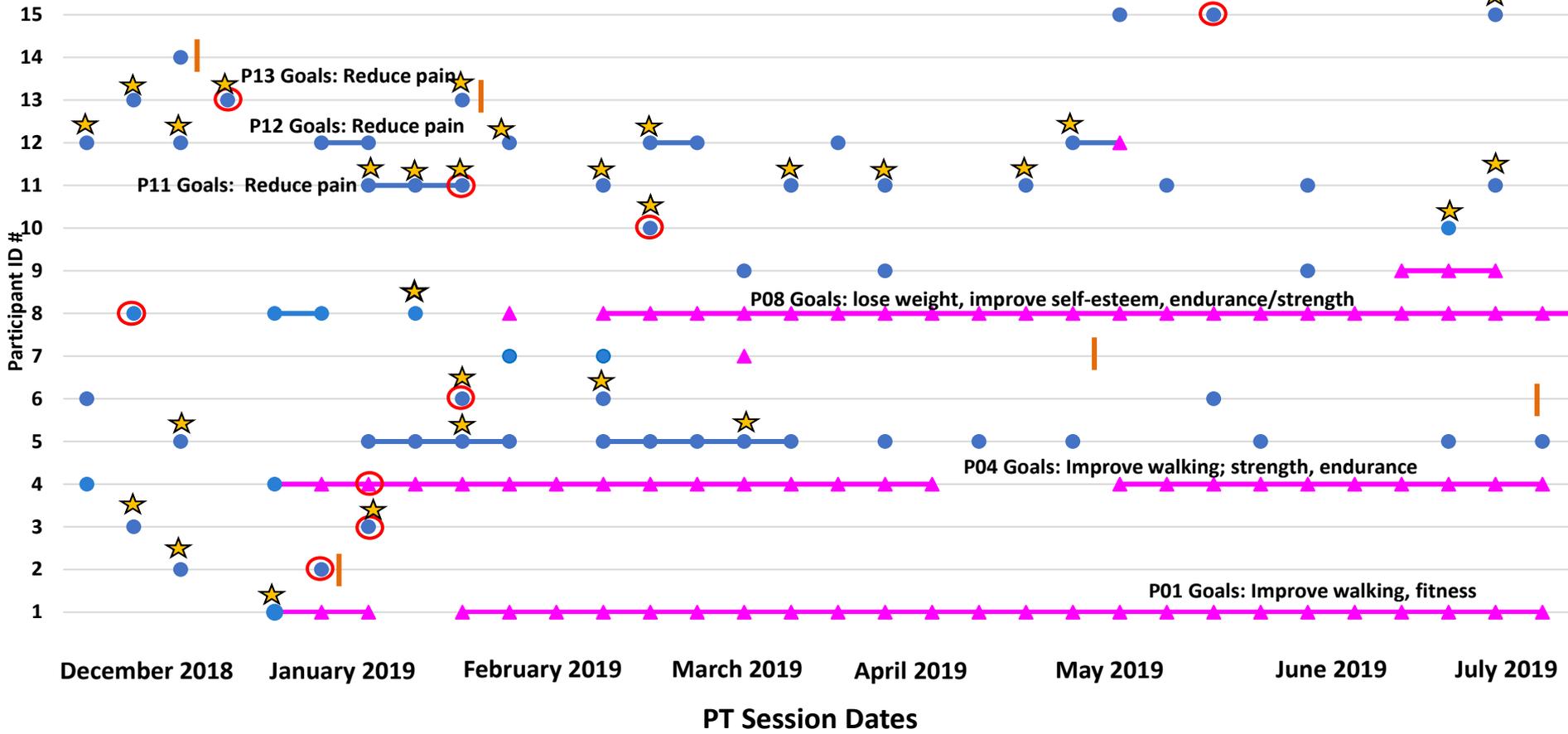
Participant Characteristics	Participants (n=15)
Median Age (years) (IQR)	57 years (55,64)
Men	8 (53%)
Women	6 (40%)
Preferred not to answer	1 (7%)
Median number of comorbidities (IQR)	7 (3,12)
Common Comorbidities included:	
Bone/joint/muscle disorder or pain	11 (73%)
Mental Health (e.g. depression, anxiety)	10 (67%)
Addiction	3 (20%)
Viral load undetectable	13 (87%) missing=1



Physiotherapy Characteristics	Participants (n=15)
Physiotherapy status (as of July 2019)	
Active in PT	10 (67%)
Discharged from PT	5 (33%)
Attended ( $\geq 1$ ) PT Exercise Class	6 (40%)
Number of Exercise Sessions Attended (Median, IQR)	17 (2,42)
Commonly Administered PT Assessments	
Brief Pain Inventory	12 (80%)
HIV Disability Questionnaire (HDQ)	11 (73%)



# Timeline Trajectory of Physiotherapy Participant Visits



- PT treatment
- Consecutive weeks
- HDQ
- ▲ Exercise class
- ★ Brief Pain Inventory
- | Discharge

Physiotherapy Characteristics	
Length of PT engagement (Median, IQR)	5 months (2,12)
Number of PT Sessions Attended (Median, IQR)	4 (3,14)
Number of PT Sessions Missed (Median, IQR)	1 (0,5)

## DISCUSSION

- The new PT service initiated in July 2017 but due to staffing changes resulted in intermittent PT service.
- All n=15 Participants resumed PT care after in Phase 2
- PT sessions types, assessments types and length of service were tailored to participants, based on reasons for referral and goals (e.g. participants with pain were administered the Brief Pain Inventory).
- The primary reason for seeking PT was pain management.
- The primary PT intervention was exercise (reflective of a new group-based PT-led twice weekly exercise program implemented in January 2019).

## Conclusion

- This is the first known HIV-specific physiotherapy service in Canada.
- During this formative phase, the physiotherapy service adapted to pauses in service and changes in staff, and evolved to meet the needs of adults living with HIV, reflected in the variability of data available in the health records.
- Results from this pilot will inform the full evaluation in the future.

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:** We would like to thank those who volunteered to participate in this research.