

## How does a patient get referred to the program?

Any physician or other health care professional involved with the care of a patient with lymphedema can refer to this program.

The physician or health care professional must complete the Out-patient Referral Form for Physical Medicine Department at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and send it to:

Physiotherapy  
Queen Elizabeth Hospital  
PO Box 6600  
Charlottetown, PE  
C1A 8T5

## What happens once a patient has been referred to the program?

Once the Physiotherapy Department has received the referral, staff will contact the patient to schedule the initial appointment for assessment and to determine the treatment plan. Additional appointments will be scheduled as determined by the treatment plan.



## How frequent are appointments?

The treatment plan is different for each patient and is based on their specific needs.

Some patients may require a few appointments while others may require intensive therapy (i.e. daily appointments for two to four weeks). After treatment has been completed the patient will continue to be monitored.

All appointments are one on one with the physiotherapist.



## Contact Us

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact:

Lymphedema Management Program  
(902) 894-2062

**Health PEI**  
One Island Health System

## Lymphedema Management Program QEHI Physical Medicine



QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL



PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

## What is Lymphedema?

**Lymphedema** is an abnormal accumulation of protein-rich fluid, commonly known as swelling, in a body part due to damage of the lymph system or removal of lymph nodes.

## Why treat Lymphedema?

If left untreated, lymphedema may produce pain, numbness, limitation of movement and cosmetic changes. The high protein fluid that is being retained increases the risk of infection, such as cellulitis (a skin infection caused by bacteria).

Also, the functional, emotional, social and psychological behavioural changes that come from having a deformed and awkward limb can lead to depression and social difficulty. There is no cure for lymphedema, but there is effective treatment available.



## What is the Lymphedema Management Program?

The Lymphedema Management Program provides assessment, treatment, and follow-up for patients with primary and secondary lymphedema.

Treatment can include:

- Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT) consisting of manual lymph drainage (light massage) and compression bandaging;
- Education on self management;
- Advice and assistance with choosing compression garments;
- Exercise program;
- Scar massage; and/or
- Other individual treatments as required to assist with improving physical function by decreasing swelling.

## Who is part of the care team?

The Lymphedema Management Program is offered by a specially trained physiotherapist who has been educated in the areas of lymphedema treatment and Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT).

The physiotherapist will carry out the initial assessment, and using a self-management philosophy, collaborate with the patient to develop an individualized treatment plan.

## What are the goals of the program?

Through various treatment options, the Lymphedema Management Program will help control swelling and other problems caused by lymphedema, helping patients to continue activities of daily living by:

- Reducing swelling;
- Decreasing pain;
- Improving mobility and use of the limb with lymphedema;
- Teaching patients how to self-manage swelling;
- Educating patients and others about ways to prevent and care for lymphedema; and
- Improving general awareness of lymphedema so that persons affected can receive more timely diagnosis and treatment.

