

A call for ACL injury diagnostic protocols

A benchmarking exercise to define current practice of the diagnostic pathways for suspected ACL injuries.

Summary:

I am a PhD student at Imperial College looking at innovative solutions to tackle the problems associated with delayed diagnosis in ACL injury. Firstly, we need to benchmark current practice so we can identify where we can innovate in the care pathway in a meaningful way. This means that we need to evaluate the current timeframes and pathways in the management of suspected ACL injuries within the UK's NHS services and private clinics. No specific Trust will be identified in the work we are simply compiling pathways to understand commonalities and differences so we can find way to improve the care pathway.

Background

ACL diagnoses are renowned to be tricky; the route to diagnosis can be long, and frequently missed on initial assessment. MRIs and diagnostic arthroscopic surgeries, although accurate, have long wait times, high costs and therefore are simply not readily available for every patient on initial presentation. Joint effusion and muscular compensation are some of the obstacles that can mask diagnosis. Late, or inaccurate diagnosis can lead to delayed management strategies, further damage to injured or neighbouring structures caused by abnormal loading and gait patterns and an increased likelihood of later developing knee OA. We are looking for novel ways to address this either through technology or other innovative approaches.

Aims:

- Collate a benchmark of NHS current best practice ACL injury pathways and protocols.
- Evaluate discrepancies between trusts.
- Identify common time frames and delays to reach diagnosis.
- Identify common themes within trusts.
- Justify a need for a pre-screening tool to speed up diagnostic process.
- Identify and develop innovative solutions to aid this process.

Needs:

We are asking for any NHS trusts or private clinics to supply us with their internally developed ACL injury diagnostic pathways and protocols; This includes appropriate referral or imaging pathways.

Who am I?

I am a Physiotherapist who is a newly started PhD student, having experience in the NHS, I have witnessed first-hand the troubles associated with poor and timely ACL tear diagnosis. My PhD project is investigating how IMU sensors can improve ACL injury diagnostics. I am studying under Professor Alison McGregor as part of the human performance group within the MSK lab at Imperial College London. As part of my project, this benchmark of current practice will help contribute to this by representing current practice today. Please see below for links.

- <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/people/a.mcgregor>

- <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/msk-lab>

Please contact the following if you are happy to participate with this project:
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