1.0 Policy Statement ........................................................................................................ 2
2.0 Purpose ........................................................................................................................... 2
3.0 Scope ................................................................................................................................. 2
4.0 Health & Safety .................................................................................................................. 2
5.0 Responsibilities ................................................................................................................... 2
6.0 Definitions and Abbreviations .......................................................................................... 2
7.0 Guideline ............................................................................................................................. 3
   7.1 Pre-Operative .................................................................................................................. 3
   7.2 Post-Operative .................................................................................................................. 3
      7.2.1 Day 1 ....................................................................................................................... 3
      7.2.2 Day 2 ....................................................................................................................... 3
      7.2.3 Day 3 onwards ......................................................................................................... 3
      7.2.4 10-14 Weeks .......................................................................................................... 3
      7.2.5 6 Weeks ................................................................................................................ 4
8.0 Related Documents ............................................................................................................ 4
9.0 Appendices ........................................................................................................................ 4
10.0 References ......................................................................................................................... 4
1.0 Policy Statement

1.1 It is the policy of Cappagh National Orthopaedic Hospital to provide a patient focused physiotherapy service delivered by chartered physiotherapists and support staff working in a well-equipped environment.

1.2 It is the policy of Cappagh National Orthopaedic Hospital to provide health professionals and the public with the necessary advice and guidance on physiotherapy rehabilitation.

2.0 Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this guideline is to advise health professionals and patients on the physiotherapy rehabilitation of a person undergoing a Total Ankle Replacement.

3.0 Scope

3.1 This guideline applies to all staff involved in the care of a person undergoing a Total Ankle Replacement, community staff involved in the pre and post-operative care of the patient, the patient and their family.

4.0 Health & Safety

4.1 There are health and safety risks involved in patient care, namely risk of physical injury to patient and staff, risk of infection.

4.2 Physiotherapists have the necessary qualifications and clinical experience to carry out this guideline and to supervise unqualified support staff.

4.3 They must be eligible for membership of their professional body, the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists (ISCP).

4.4 They undertake mandatory manual handling, basic life support training, fire safety, infection prevention and control and risk management.

4.5 They complete a minimum of 100 hours continuing professional development every three years as required by the ISCP.

5.0 Responsibilities

5.1 It is the responsibility of physiotherapists to implement this guideline.

6.0 Definitions and Abbreviations

ISCP Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists
TAR Total Ankle Replacement

Total Ankle Replacement Surgery involving the excision of damaged bone and insertion of implants within the ankle joint
7.0 Guideline

7.1 Pre-Operative

7.1.1 Assess as appropriate

7.1.2 Measure available dorsi and plantar flexion.

7.1.3 Teach mobility NON WEIGHT BEARING with crutches.

7.1.4 Plan discharge details e.g. mobility status required for access to home.

7.2 Post-Operative

7.2.1 Day 1

7.2.1.1 Immobilised in Short leg POP.

7.2.1.2 Check circulation.

7.2.1.3 Advise re elevation and bed exercises.

7.2.1.4 Stand out of bed with frame if able (epidural may be in situ). Return to bed.

7.2.1.5 Partial weight bearing as comfortable (may be non-weight bearing for first week).

7.2.2 Day 2

7.2.2.1 Mobilise short distance with Zimmer frame.

7.2.2.2 Sit for short periods with foot elevated - educated patient regarding elevation of affected limb to minimise swelling.

7.2.3 Day 3 onwards

7.2.3.1 Progress to crutches as able.

7.2.3.2 Maintain joint range and muscle strength of arms, unaffected leg and hip and knee of affected leg.

7.2.3.3 Stairs/step practise.

7.2.3.4 Discharge home when the team are satisfied and the patient is safe and independently mobile or convalescence is arranged.

7.2.4 10-14 Weeks

7.2.4.1 X-ray review.

7.2.4.2 Removal of stitches.

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7.2.5 6 Weeks
7.2.5.1 Removal of POP.
7.2.5.2 Doctor’s review.
7.2.5.3 Follow-up physiotherapy on request of team if required.
7.2.5.4 Emphasis on functional dorsi and plantar flexion ROM and gait re-education.
7.2.5.5 Realistic goals required - in particular to keep activity low impact.

8.0 Related Documents
Individual Physio tools exercise sheets

9.0 Appendices
N/A

10.0 References
N/A