

**Project Title:** Standardising OT Input for Lower Limb Vascular Amputees: Development and Evaluation of a New Pathway

**Background:**

A pre-audit identified inconsistent Occupational Therapy (OT) assessment, variable intervention delivery, and heavy reliance on discharge planning for vascular amputees. This fell short of NHS England's *Amputee Rehabilitation and Prosthetics Services for People of All Ages with Limb Loss* guidance, which recommends structured pathways, pre-operative assessment, and specialist OT input. To address this, a standardised OT amputee pathway was developed and piloted to improve consistency, confidence, and holistic, patient-centred rehabilitation.

**Methodology:**

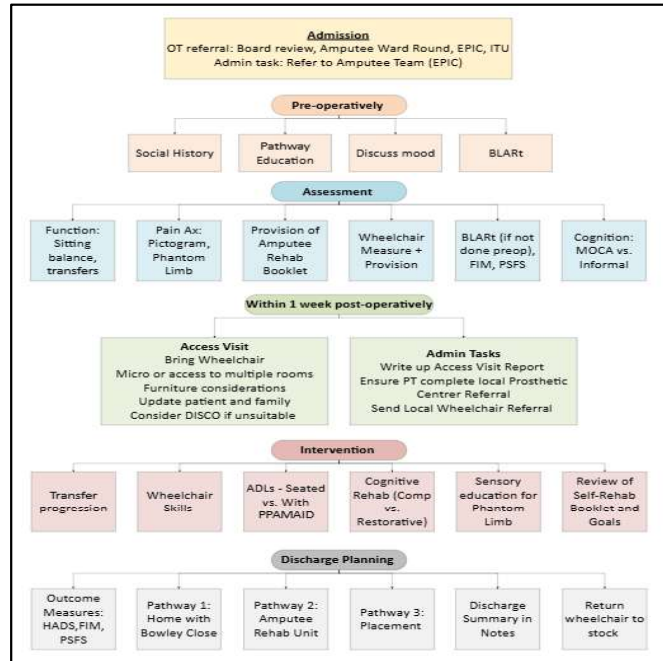
A quality-improvement process was used.

**Step 1:** National guidelines and relevant literature were reviewed to identify best-practice components for amputee rehabilitation.

**Step 2:** A baseline audit of 16 patients (July 2023–2024) captured current OT practice.

**Step 3:** A new vascular amputee OT pathway (Image 1) was drafted and piloted.

**Step 4:** A post-implementation audit was completed alongside multiple PDSA cycles, allowing iterative refinement of the pathway to meet service needs.



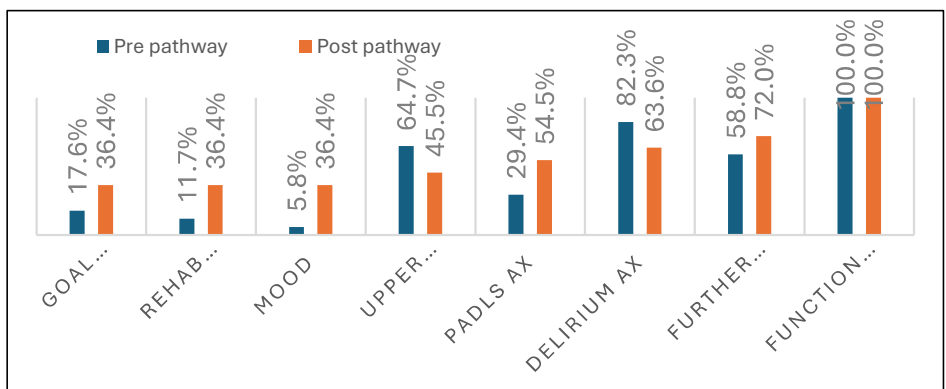
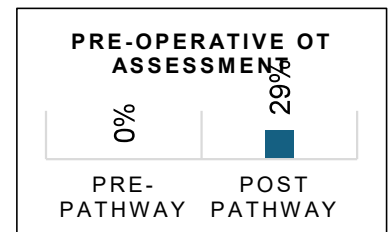
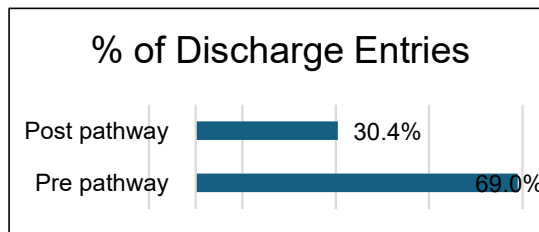
**Results:**

Key outcomes:

- LOS reduced: 56 → 41 days
- Increase in per-operative assessments
- OT input focused *only* on discharge planning decreased (graph 2)
- Increased intervention variety

Qualitative feedback:

Clinicians reported clearer expectations of their role, stronger decision-making, and greater confidence in supporting rehabilitation and discharge planning.



**Limitations:**

- Small sample size
- Staff turnover and rotational changes slowed full implementation
- Limited resources affected pathway adherence

**Key messages:**

- A standardised pathway reduces practice variation and strengthens clinical quality.
- Clear structure improves OT confidence, role clarity, and decision-making.
- Consistent interventions and planning support better patient flow and more coordinated rehabilitation.
- The pathway aligns local practice with NHS England's recommended structured amputee rehabilitation model.

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