

Dana Hunter - University of Calgary

Project: *Facilitators and barriers to medial collateral ligament bracing treatment: Moving towards improved patient outcomes*



Biography

Dana Hunter is a first year Masters student in the Faculty of Kinesiology at the University of Calgary. Dana first became involved in health care research during her undergraduate degree, earning a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Calgary. Within the context of patient-oriented research, her Masters project is focused on understanding the facilitators and barriers to MCL knee bracing treatment compliance, with the aim of improving patient outcomes.

Dana is also currently involved in clinical research at the Sport Medicine Centre in orthopedic and sport medicine science.

She is excited to build skills in patient-oriented research to supplement her future vocational goal of working as an occupational therapist.

On a personal note, Dana has been a competitive gymnast for 24 years, which has allowed her to travel the world and build a passion for sport and human kinetics!

Project Summary

The medial collateral ligament (MCL) is the most injured knee ligament. MCL injuries are treated with crutches and constant range of motion restrictive knee bracing. Consistent use of the brace is associated with a reduction of pain, improved healing and recovery. Complying to this 24 hour-a-day protocol is challenging for patients. This Patient-Oriented Research project is aimed to fully understand patient experiences and outcomes with this common condition.



Actively engage patients as partners to identify and understand facilitators and barriers to compliance with the bracing protocol. This project aims to triangulate this qualitative information with sequentially collected quantitative data from patient-reported outcomes and clinical findings.

A sample of 20-30 participants enrolled in an on-going randomized clinical trial (RCT) investigating bracing protocols will be consented. They will be invited to attend a semi-structured interview to provide the qualitative data. Interviews will focus on participant experience with the bracing protocols, clinician interactions, personal goals, and barriers and facilitators to treatment compliance. This data will be triangulated with the quantitative patient-reported outcomes and clinical data from the RCT. Two patient-partners will help define adherence, refine study objectives, interpret findings, and participate in the development of resources to help clinicians improve future care.

This project will yield an understanding of MCL bracing to provide strategies and recommendations for clinicians to collaborate with patients in addressing barriers and facilitators with bracing treatment. A greater understanding regarding the challenges associated with compliance will allow the health care system to encourage adherence to treatment instead.