

Wellbeing Writing with Genevieve Tawiah

Genevieve is a performance specialist physiotherapist based in London. She dances herself and works with dancers from a range of backgrounds and styles. She strives to help patients learn more about their body; improve their confidence and optimise their performance. She has varied treatment styles -inclusive of manual therapy strategies – sports massage, medical acupuncture, dry cupping, supportive taping; and varied exercise strategies specific to the needs of her patients. She is a One Dance UK member featured on our [Healthcare Practitioners Directory](#).



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Tell us what you do?
I treat a range of musculoskeletal presentations (jaw and vocal included). Treatment methods: Education, Medical Acupuncture, Cupping Therapy, Massage, Joint Manipulation, Taping, Exercise Training and Shockwave therapy.

Who do you help?
I treat people across a range of ages, dance styles and professional backgrounds. I love variety – if you're in need of physio- get in touch!

What is your passion statement?
“ I strive to help my patients learn more about their body and how it drives their movement – to improve their confidence and optimize their performance. ”

Genevieve Tawiah
Performance Physiotherapist

IF YOU COULD STAR IN ANY OF THE SHOWS YOU HAVE WORKED ON, WHICH ONE WOULD YOU CHOOSE AND WHAT ROLE WOULD YOU PLAY?

There are so many shows I'd love to have a go at being in, but without a doubt it would have to be **Strictly Come Dancing**. I'm always really inspired by the level of work the celebs put into their training and their level of progression week to week. The professional dancers are so incredible at what they do – an opportunity like that would no doubt be really rewarding on a personal level and professionally for the physical understanding of what they put their body through.

WE WOULD LOVE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES OF PROVIDING PHYSIOTHERAPY FOR PERFORMERS ON THE WEST END. HOW DID YOU SUPPORT THOSE PROFESSIONALS?

I've been fortunate to have worked with a variety of different shows over the years with quite different approaches dependant on the show needs. Some of the shows I have worked on in the West End include: *Charlie and The Chocolate Factory*; *Wicked*; *The Drifters Girl*; *Harry Potters Cursed Child* and more.

The make up of the show and the time I have with the team largely dictates the structure of physiotherapy support given. When I worked on *Cursed Child*, it was one of the first shows in town allowing more time with physiotherapy onsite, which allowed me to set up a more injury risk reduction approach. This meant learning the show as best as I could, assessing injury risks for each track; implementing movement and exercise awareness workshops and trying to format exercise programmes to support certain roles.

It was a really good challenge for me at the time and the outcome was ultimately a reduction in injury rates. I even got opportunity to liaise with the *Cursed Child* team abroad to give insight on my findings. Naturally, there unfortunately are injuries that cannot be avoided and happen – but I do believe this approach gets you ahead and creates an environment where people are ultimately more aware of their show demands and more confident in regard to managing their bodies.

CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT VOCAL PHYSIOTHERAPY, AND HOW THIS MIGHT BENEFIT DANCERS?

The voice is not something physiotherapists are typically taught about during their undergraduate studies. Myself and other colleagues have been fortunate enough to be taught vocal treatment strategies by experienced clinicians, and via the ability to collaborate with others in the vocal health field. We are continuing to develop our approach to it by working as part of a multiprofessional team for the benefit of the performer.

As a summary, vocal physiotherapy looks at how physiotherapists manual therapy skills; knowledge of the body; movement and function, can contribute to improving efficient use of the voice, thereby reducing the risk of functional voice disorders and helping to contribute to the recovery from them.

Manual treatment strategies might often be targeted towards the neck, jaw and larynx, but also potentially elsewhere on the body due to external influences on the voice. As our body is a chain it is important to consider the body as a whole, and often, things further away from the larynx itself can affect the voice.

Vocal physiotherapy can be beneficial for anyone who places high demand on their voice – in the same way we might go to a physiotherapist to learn more about how to train in a way that reduces injury risk. You can take a similar approach to looking after the voice.

In particular, for dancers who also sing – their physical demands are very different to a static singer who – for example – plays an instrument – hence the physical care of their body and voice will differ.

CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT THE USE OF SUPPORTIVE TAPING AS A TOOL FOR INJURY PREVENTION AND REHABILITATION IN DANCE?

Supportive taping can be useful in a number of ways - for instance, as a visible cue to notify others of an injury or vulnerable region of the body.

Taping can also help by providing sensory feedback to the muscles, and by supporting or offloading a region of discomfort. For instance – taping can allow a dancer to better recognise a particular muscle that they are trying to train, or a position they are aiming for when activating a muscle. Using a firmer tape to hold a region in a set position is a way to physically offload an injured structure.

Taping can be useful in influencing reduced pain and irritability of an injury in the early stages, giving the area more room to recover, and potentially more ease with starting a new programme.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO INJURED DANCERS WHO MIGHT BE NEW TO NAVIGATING PRIVATE HEALTHCARE SERVICES?

A lot of people can have the same professional title but have different approaches to treatment dependant on their experience.

I think what's really important is the following:

Directories on websites such as One Dance UK and [BAPAM \(British Association of Performing Arts Medicine\)](#) have trusted clinicians with experience working in the dance field. These listed clinicians are more likely to understand the demands of your training and performance, and hence more appropriately tailor your treatment plans.

Word of mouth is helpful! Particularly if you have a friend or colleague that's had a positive treatment experience before. Their recommended professional will more than likely know other trusted people in the field too.

Don't be afraid to do a little digging. People usually post a history of their professional practice or training on websites or socials, so it can give you an idea of how they work or what's included in their private practice.

If in doubt – just ask. Most people will have no issue with you popping general questions their way before booking an appointment, especially if it's about what to expect from a session with them. Specific questions about your problem however will require an initial review.

IN WHAT WAYS ARE YOU ABLE TO FACILITATE ACCESS NEEDS FOR THE DANCE SECTOR, AS A PART OF YOUR PRACTICE?

I have experience working with people with a range of different access needs. I understand that visiting a new location can be difficult, and I am happy to provide advice around locating my practice in advance of appointments, and offer guidance around treatment.

I have a couple of clinic bases that I work from and if stairs are a difficulty I can potentially source a treatment room that has lift access or step-free entry.

I also offer mobile appointments meaning that I can offer treatment from wherever the client is most comfortable – whether that be at their home, place of study or work, or performance venue, subject to my schedule.

I am mindful of neurodivergent individuals and have various strategies to support. For instance, using more visual examples when explaining; providing demonstrations; offering notes; and providing online home exercise programmes for reference to assist understanding.

All sessions are catered to my patient's needs – so I always advise patients to let me know of any accessibility or learning needs, and I will see what I can do to help!

You can learn more about Genevieve's work via the links below:

[Genevieve Tawiah's One Dance UK Healthcare Practitioners Directory profile](#)

Website - <https://www.tawiahphysio.co.uk/about-me>

LinkedIn - [Genevieve Tawiah](#)

Instagram - [@tawiahphysio](#)

