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**Title:** An initial investigation by electronic survey of current UK physiotherapy practice into the use and delivery of nebulised isotonic saline

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**Body:** Introduction: Physiotherapy is used widely to assist with airway clearance. Nebulised isotonic saline (0.9%) as a method of enhancing airway clearance has become a clinically accepted adjunct to physiotherapy in the treatment of many chronic lung conditions but it has little scientific evidence on which to base its use. Aim: To explore the current UK physiotherapy practice regarding the use and delivery of nebulised isotonic saline. Sample and Methods: This pilot study made use of a prospective mixed methods survey. A questionnaire was designed, validated and administered electronically to a convenience sample of UK respiratory physiotherapists who were of members of the Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Respiratory Care (ACPRC). Steps were taken to promote reliability and validity of findings and results were analysed using a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics. Results: The majority of participants (90.3%) agreed that nebulised isotonic saline aids sputum clearance, however no participants thought that there was a strong evidence base. It was noted that there were deviations from the manufacturers guidelines for the use of nebulisers. In addition, findings illuminated that large variations of flow rates for the driving gas used to operate the nebuliser ranging from 5l/min to 15l/min. Conclusions: Although a pilot, this study highlights the need for more training on the delivery and prescription of nebulised isotonic saline for respiratory physiotherapists. It also highlights the need for more research into the clinical applications of nebulised isotonic saline as an adjunct to physiotherapy treatment.