



EUROPEAN REGION

World Confederation
for Physical Therapy

Report of the Professional Issues Working Group of the ER-WCPT for the years 2006 – 2008 to the General Meeting 2008

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REPORT OF THE PROFESSIONAL ISSUES WORKING GROUP OF THE ER-WCPT FOR THE YEARS 2006-2008 TO THE GENERAL MEETING 2008

European Region of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) Professional Issues WG

Introduction

The main objectives of the Professional Issues Working Group are:

- Consider issues relating to Extended Scope of Practice for the Physiotherapy Profession
- Review of Evidence Based Practice in Europe and consider proposals.

Members

The terms of office for the working group members ended after a two year term. After the General Meeting in May 2004 the members of the group were newly appointed in June 2006 by the Executive Committee. **Members of the group are now:**

- Dagmar Pavlů, Second Vice Chairman of the European Region of WCPT as chairman of the Working Group
- Dieter Hollerwoeger, Austria
- Philip van der Wees, The Netherlands
- Malene Haneborg, Norway
- Miriam Barcia, Spain
- Natalie Beswetherick, UK

Terms of Reference and activities

The Professional Issues Working Group recommended the following actions for the period 2006 – 2008 that were approved by the General Meeting 2006.

1. Further work to develop the Network on health promotion and healthy life styles
 - Involvement with WHO activities on this matter
2. Reviewing the European Core Standards and Service Standards
3. Keeping updated the data base on Clinical Guidelines and Multidisciplinary Guidelines
4. Promoting the development of Clinical Guidelines in the ER-WCPT (Priority)

- Guide to develop clinical guidelines (mapping the activities of the Member Organisations on this matter)

- 5. Explore core competencies of the Physiotherapy Profession in the ER-WCPT taking account of the Physiotherapy Benchmark Statement and the work to identify similarities and differences as part of the Common Platform agenda

- 6. Gather information on Continuous Professional Development activities within the Member Organisations in collaboration with the Education Matters Working Group (Priority)

- 7. Monitor the developments in re-registration, re-certification in all the ER-WCPT countries in collaboration with the Education Matters Working Group

- 8. Promotion of the field of the physiotherapist activities, also dealing with political issues related to it.

Meetings

In the years 2006 - 2008, the Working Group had four regular meetings:

- 29 September – 1 October 2006 in Oslo, Norway
- 9 - 11 February 2007 in Madrid, Spain
- 5 – 7 October 2007 in Cheltenham, UK
- 25 – 27 January 2008 in Brussel, Belgium

Activities

The priority activities and the distribution of the predominant responsibility are as follows:

- Further work to develop the Network on health promotion and healthy life styles: Miriam Barcia
- Reviewing the European Core Standards and Service Standards: Natalie Beswetherick
- Keeping updated the data base on Clinical Guidelines and Multidisciplinary Guidelines: Philip van der Wees
- (Priority) Promoting the development of Clinical Guidelines in the ER-WCPT: Philip van der Wees

- Explore core competencies of the Physiotherapy Profession in the ER-WCPT taking account of the Physiotherapy Benchmark Statement and the work to identify similarities and differences as part of the Common Platform agenda: Dagmar Pavlu and Natalie Beswetherick
- (Priority) Gather information on Continuous Professional Development activities within the Member Organisations in collaboration with the Education Matters Working Group: – Malene Haneborg
- Monitor the developments in re-registration, re-certification in all the ER-WCPT countries in collaboration with the Education Matters Working Group Malene Haneborg,
- Promotion of the field of the physiotherapist activities, also dealing with political issues related to it. Dieter Hollerwoeger

1. A network on prevention and promotion of healthy lifestyles and Involvement with the World Health Organisation

1.1. A network on prevention and promotion of healthy lifestyles

The Professional Issues Working Group (PIWG) worked in the period 2006-2008 on three objectives in relation to the Network on Prevention and Promotion of the Healthy Life Styles:

- To continue further work on the development of the Network on Prevention and Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles
- To continue gathering and updating information from the Member Organisations
- To use the database of the Network sharing the information of the projects.

The Member Organisations had also been asked in the January 2007 ER-WCPT Newsletter to review their information projects and contact person for each posted on the ER-WCPT database. No answers have been received from the Member Organisations.

The Professional Issues WG had also noted that many of the Member Organisations are involved in similar items and they should contact each other to solve possible problems or to establish further cooperation on those projects.

1.2. Involvement with the World Health Organisation

The Professional Issues WG has also taken actions to develop the network regarding the WHO actions on this matter as follows.

There is a WHO Europe subgroup named Health Evidence Network (HEN), working on prevention and promotion of healthy life styles. The WG has prepared an article about the subgroup which was published in the January 2007 ER-WCPT Newsletter to inform the Member Organisations.

Health-Enhancing Physical Activity (HEPA) Europe, the European Network for the promotion of Health-Enhancing Physical Activity is working closely with the WHO Regional Office for Europe, as well establishing projects with the EU Commission and Agita Mundo. The WG had prepared an article about the HEPA's activities which was published in the in the April 2007 ER-WCPT Newsletter

2. Reviewing the European Core Standards and Service Standards

The ER-WCPT European Core Standards for Physiotherapy was approved at the 2002 General Meeting, and an Audit Tool for use with European Core Standards of Physiotherapy Practice and a Physiotherapy Service Standards document were approved in Barcelona in 2003. After a few years and following the recommendation approved at the 2006 GM on this matter, the Professional Issues WG started to work to review both documents.

The Core and Service Standards were reviewed using the CSP revision and it was not found major changes to be done in the ER-WCPT documents and its Audit tool. For that reason were done only some changes for clarification, updating the guidance and English grammar used to facilitate the translation into the languages of the Member Organisations.

The revised European Region Core Standards and its Audit tool would be presented at the 2008 General Meeting for adoption.

3. Keeping updated the data base on Clinical Guidelines and Multidisciplinary Guidelines

Evidence based practice and clinical guidelines are essential components of the policy of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT).

One of the goals of the European Region of WCPT is to create an up to date overview of guideline programs in physiotherapy within the European Region. To accomplish that goal, the working group Professional Issues of the European Region is currently collecting data on existing physiotherapy-specific and multi-disciplinary guideline programs in the European Region.

The network of contacts within the European Region were used to create the overview. A first outline was created by the working group Professional issues based on available information via websites and sent to contacts which are known for their involvement in physiotherapy-specific guideline development.

In addition to physiotherapy-specific guideline programs, the involvement of Member Organisations in multi-professional guideline development was explored. The contact persons were asked to provide information. The results shows that three countries actually have physiotherapy-specific evidence-based guidelines in an own program and/or in collaboration with other guideline developers. Two countries have consensus-based national guidelines. The Nordic countries have plans to establish a guideline program and are collaborating in establishing this program. Multi-disciplinary guidelines are common in many countries within the European Region. To create a complete overview, more collection of data is necessary.

Detailed results will be presented to the GM in the special report of the Professional Issues Working Group as well as the recommendation for future activity in this area.

4. (Priority) Promoting the development of Clinical Guidelines in the ER-WCPT Guide to develop clinical guidelines (mapping the activities of the Member Organisations on this matter)

Based on the strategic plan of ER-WCPT the Professional Issues Working Group worked in the period 2006-2008 on three objectives in relation to the development and implementation of clinical guidelines:

4.1. To promote further development and implementation of clinical guidelines

On 10 and 11 November 2006 ER-WCPT organised an invitational conference about clinical guidelines in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The conference was held during the annual congress of the Royal Dutch Society for Physical Therapy (KNGF). One of the results of the invitational conference was the recommendation to become a member of the Guidelines International Network (G-I-N).

In 2007 ER-WCPT became a full member of G-I-N and presented itself at the General Meeting and Congress of G-I-N in Toronto, Canada in August 2007. One of the topics discussed at the G-I-N conference was the adaptation of existing guidelines. The ADAPTE Collaboration has developed a systematic approach for the adaptation of guidelines produced for use in one cultural and organizational context to be used in a different cultural and organizational context.

Detailed results of the conference are included in the special report of the Professional Issues Working Group.

4.2. Database of clinical guideline development

The first version of the database of clinical guideline development was presented at the General Meeting in 2006 in Sibenik, Croatia. The database has been updated based on information from the contact persons within the network of clinical guideline developers. It must be noticed that the database is a 'living' document which will be updated continuously.

4.3. Tools for the implementation of clinical guidelines

Provided revision of publications about the development and implementation of clinical guidelines demonstrated, that no reviews have been published to specifically review the effects of guideline implementation strategies in physiotherapy. Currently, a review of the effectiveness of clinical guideline development in physical therapy is under construction.

Detailed results to this point will be presented to the GM in the special report of the Professional Issues Working Group.

5. Explore core competencies of the Physiotherapy Profession in the ER-WCPT taking account of the Physiotherapy Benchmark Statement and the work to identify similarities and differences as part of the Common Platforms agenda

The Working Group had analysed the ENPHE document on the Competence Chart of the European Network of Physiotherapy in Higher Education and had agreed that this was well written, clear and helpful with a clear description of competencies, knowledge, skills and aptitudes of physiotherapists in the EU. However, the Working Group had agreed that it would not assist to the WG in the task to explore core competencies of Physiotherapy Profession in the ER WCPT and/or to develop a tool how to measure the similarities and differences between practicing physiotherapists in the EU.

To realize this very high-volume task the Professional Issues Working Group started to collaborated with the Common Platform Task Force and action plan was agreed, which will presented at the 2008 GM for approval.

6. (Priority) Gather information on Continuous Professional Development activities within the Member Organisations in collaboration with the Education Matters Working Group

7. Monitor the developments in re-registration, re-certification in all the ER-WCPT countries in collaboration with the Education Matters Working Group

Based on the recommendations for further activity for the ER-WCPT, adopted at the General Meeting May 2006 in Sibenik, Croatia, the working groups for Professional Issues and Education have written up a questionnaire with questions concerning CPD activities and the development of re-registration within the Member organisations (MO). In the questionnaire, it was recommended that the member organisations refer to the Informative Paper with recommendations on Continued Professional Development, in particular sections on Procedures for Formal and Informal Learning in CPD and Final Recommendations to the Member organisations.

The questionnaire was sent to 35 Member organisations. 26 questionnaires were returned
The questions concern four areas:

- Member Organisations' involvement in CPD
- Learning environment for structured CPD within the workplace.
- Registration
- Re-registration/ re-certification

The analysis of the answers and the following comments in questionnaires demonstrated, that 26 of 35 (74%) Member Organisations have responded to the survey and the high response rate indicates a great interest in the subject. The study shows that 23 countries have set a CPD agenda, 10 have developed a system and 13 have considered developing a system. This moves the European Region towards ER-WCPT's 6 goals for the work with CPD. Member Organisations play an important role in the stimulation of CPD. In those countries which have developed a system, the MO has set up a framework with several elements which introduces CPD. All countries with the exception of 3, have a system of registration for practicing as a physiotherapist. Only 7 require re-registration and the provision of evidence of their CPD. However it is interesting that 16 Member Organisations foresee a system for re-registration.

Detailed results will be presented to the GM in the special report of the Professional Issues Working Group as well as the recommendation for future activity in this area.

8. Promotion of the field of the physiotherapist activities, also dealing with political issues related to it.

8.1. Promoting the field of physiotherapist's activities

In order to promote the field of physiotherapist activities, the following activities had been undertaken by the Professional Issues WG.

The Professional Issues WG has collected examples of good projects from the following countries of the WG members: Norway and the U.K. The examples have been published on the ER-WCPT Newsletter encouraging the Member Organisations to send their experiences to the secretariat to be also published in the newsletter, but no more examples was from MO's send.

Within the article, the Member Organisations were also informed about the availability of the Professional Issues Working Group to support them in problems related with this matter and were also requested to send to the secretariat good examples of promotion to share them with the ER-WCPT Member Organisations.

8.2. Related political issues

In January 2007 was published in the Journal of Rehabilitation Medicine paper, which is titled White book on Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine in Europe, where a restrictive definition of rehabilitation against other health specialists not being medical doctors was proposed.

The Professional Issues Working Group agreed, that the definition of physiotherapy was one of a technician rather than autonomous professional. For the major of this document, the Secretary General of the WCPT would contact some of the Authors of the Book to discuss its content and to inform them about the position of the WCPT.

9. Physiotherapy Service Standards and CEN – European Committee for Standardisation

During the Professional Issues Working Group meeting in January 2007, the Professional Issues WG members had a meeting with the European Committee for Standardisation, in Brussels, to discuss the possibilities of transpose the ER-WCPT Physiotherapy Service Standards into formal European Standards or CEN Workshop Agreement, under the CEN Umbrella.

The Professional Issues WG analysed the information received from CEN and taking into consideration that CEN was involved with DG Sanco and the EU Commission, acting in the new Health Service Directive and the fact of being the first health professional group invited to develop a profession standards or workshop agreement, the Professional Issues Working Group recommend to the EC ask to the 2008 GM for mandate to transpose the ER-WCPT Physiotherapy Service Standards into a CEN Workshop Agreement. This should be done for the reasons mentioned above and because it would also give visibility to the Region, facilitate lobby and would give support to our Member Organisations.

10. EU Project

The Professional Issues Working Group is involved in the EU Commission Project, which started in May 2007 and would last two years (2007 – 2009). The Professional Issues Working Group was appointed by the Executive Committee of ER WCPT to develop Part B “Staying clean: Guide exercises programme to support smokers / ex-smokers in giving up”. Besides the load sequent on responsibilities on actions of the Professional Issues Working Group, the members of the Professional Issues Working Group assumed the responsibility in mentioned part of the project. The PIWG acts as the steering group for this project and distribution of responsibilities is as follows:

Project Leader: Philip van der Wees and the Netherlands Association

Reviewers: Natalie Beswetherick and CSP plus Miriam Barcia and the Spanish Association

Assistants: Malene Haneborg and the Norwegian Association, plus Dieter Hollerwoeger and the Austrian Association.

The Professional Issues Working Group held from February 2007 until January 2008 with the Project Coordinator three meetings, every time close to the Professional Issues Working Group meeting.

Closing remarks

The Professional Issues Working Group has during the two- year period 2006-2008 done all needed activities in accordance to the assignments and instruction, which it has obtained from the GM 2006.

Members of the Professional Issues Working Group have been involved not only in the activities obtained from GM 2006 but they were involved in the EU Project – part B Staying Clean as well as in the Common Platform Task Force.

Many of the activities of the Professional Working Group are ongoing and will be recommended to be continued for the next two years period.

As chairman I would like to express my sincere thanks to the working group members, as well as to Secretary General David Gorria for their active participation and support.

February 2008

Dagmar Pavlů

Chairman of the Professional Issues Working Group of the European Region of the WCPT