

A winning image of physical therapy in practice



An image of a Korean physical therapist treating a baby with cerebral palsy and leukomalacia is the winner of WCPT's first worldwide photography competition. The picture was taken by Muhammad Irfan during a Bobath course in Indonesia.

The winning picture was chosen for its technical accomplishment and, in the words of one member of the judging panel, "for so clearly demonstrating the complete engagement of the physical therapist at work".

WCPT invited amateur and professional photographers around the world to take part in its photographic contest, calling for outstanding images representing the work of the profession, across practice, education and research.

The 15 winning photographs were selected from the 120 received. They are being showcased on WCPT's new website as images representing the contribution of the profession worldwide.

Marilyn Moffat, WCPT's President, commented: "the photographs demonstrate how this profession interacts with and improves patients' lives, operating in a variety of settings and across the life span".

"We are delighted with the response we have received to this photography competition. The images have visibly shown the importance of physical therapy worldwide," said Brenda Myers, WCPT's Secretary General.

All 15 winning photographs will be included in a new photo gallery to be added to the WCPT website next month.

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WCPT takes a leap forward in corporate communication



WCPT President Marilyn Moffat presses the button to launch the new WCPT website at a reception during the Executive Committee meeting in London. With her are Rachel Moore (sitting) and Dan Moore (right) who have produced the website.

April has been a big month for WCPT's corporate image, with various initiatives ensuring that the confederation communicates in a coordinated and effective way.

At a reception held at WCPT's headquarters in London during the Executive Committee's meeting, President Marilyn Moffat launched the confederation's new website, now neatly split into eight sections and including for the first time a fully web-based version of WCPT News. She applauded the website for its clarity, and the ease with which information can now be shared.

With the confederation's website and WCPT News re-launched, the Executive Committee also approved a new policy on the WCPT brand. This sets out the need for consistency in the way the logo and visual identity are used, in order to maintain a strong visual and cultural image of the confederation.

It states that the logo must never be changed by those using it, and encourages the use of approved fonts and layouts in all materials produced representing WCPT. It encourages the use of WCPT's vision statement "WCPT moving physical therapy forward", and also emphasises that the closely defined corporate image of the confederation is closely linked with:

- the mission and objectives of the confederation as set out in its articles of association
- the positive outcome of its work through its member organisations and its impact on the physical therapy profession and global health
- the future aspirations of the confederation.

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As part of its determination to project a strong and consistent brand image for the confederation, WCPT has produced a new set of logos that allow member organisations to brand themselves as members of WCPT. This will enable them to promote WCPT from their websites, and also allow them to clearly associate themselves with the global body for physical therapists and its values.

Logos and corporate guidelines on the use of WCPT artwork will shortly be available to member organisations on the WCPT website. For more information, contact mlockner@wcpt.org



WCPT joins forces for policy summit on scope of practice

WCPT is joining with the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) and the Canadian Physiotherapy Association (CPA) to hold an international summit examining direct access and the scope of practice of physical therapists, how it is being extended, and what is driving changes to it.

The policy summit, entitled Direct Access and Advanced Scope of Practice in Physical Therapy will be held in Washington DC, USA on 22-24 October 2009. It will be especially relevant to those involved in policy, service development and negotiations with governments, as well as those implementing new service models and working in advanced practice domains.

The summit will provide an opportunity to share international experiences in developing and implementing policy in the areas of advanced scope of practice and direct access. A combination of high profile presenters, posters and discussion sessions will help to address key issues, such as how to develop, influence and implement policy changes, and how to advance scope of practice globally. A working group will also be formed to take forwards the outcomes from the summit.

“WCPT's Declaration of Principle on Autonomy clearly states that patients/clients should have direct access to physical therapist services,” says WCPT's Professional Policy Consultant, Tracy Bury. “However, that reality is not universal.” Member organisations in many countries or states have had to work strategically with national governments to introduce the policy following lengthy discussions and amendments to legislation.

Equally, it is up to each member organisation to determine with regulatory and legislative bodies what constitutes scope of physical therapy practice within that country.

“Many lessons have been learnt by WCPT's member organisations and professional leaders as they have strived to implement direct access and advance the scope of practice,” says Tracy Bury. “These can be shared with others needing to work strategically at a professional and political level to bring about change for the benefit of service users and the profession.”

WCPT hopes that the meeting will eventually result in a range of resources being developed to help member organisations negotiate and implement changes in both areas, and to inform policy development internationally.

More information is available at the summit's dedicated website:

<http://directaccesssummit.com>.

Reports from the WCPT Executive Committee meeting



Pictured during the WCPT Executive Committee meeting in London (from left): Mabel Yvonne Espinel Gonzalez, Sylvia Kambalamestore and Sandra Thornhill.

Among subjects discussed at April's WCPT's Executive Committee meeting in London were tools to help member organisations in their attempts to achieve regulation, new guidelines for accrediting education programmes, and the forthcoming WCPT Awards.

New support for regulation efforts

This July, member organisations will receive a draft of a model practice act for physical therapists. This is one of the tools WCPT has designed to help member organisations in their efforts to implement a system of professional regulation in their country.

The draft template act was considered by the WCPT Executive Committee at its meeting and will be revised further. It will then be circulated to member organisations for review in the next few months. A final document will go before the WCPT general meeting in 2011 for approval.

Guidelines for accreditation on the way

How do you set about evaluating physical therapy education programmes in your country? How do you know if they are meeting standards?

A new document is being prepared by the WCPT Executive Committee that sets out a process and guidelines for reviewing and accrediting education programmes. It includes guidance on how to set up a review process.

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The guidelines complement the curriculum guidelines that WCPT has already published in an attempt to support attempts to maintain and raise standards of physical therapy education globally. The accreditation document will be ready to send out for consultation to member organisations in the coming months, and after amendment will go to the WCPT general meeting in 2011 for final approval.

Awards committee discussed

The WCPT Executive Committee identified nominees for the awards committee, which will decide on who should win awards to be presented at the WCPT General Meeting in Amsterdam in 2011.

The appointments are now being confirmed, and the awards will be publicised in July. Member organisations will then be invited to put forward names for people who have made a major contribution to the profession.

New focus on role of physical therapy in palliative care

The relief of symptoms in terminally ill patients through physiotherapy is an important but often overlooked aspect of multi-professional palliative care. Now the subject is to be addressed at a special meeting of the European Association for Palliative Care.

The meeting on physical therapy in palliative care will be held on 7th May, before the 11th Congress of the European Association for Palliative Care at the Austria Centre, Vienna. It gives the opportunity to share knowledge, discuss issues with colleagues from different countries and focus on the future development of the profession in this field.

Issues to be covered include:

- symptom control using physiotherapy (breathlessness, fear, pain, oedema)
- autonomy and independence
- physical training
- education and training
- the right time for physiotherapy interventions.

For more information go to the official congress homepage www.eapcnet.org/Vienna2009/index.html or contact Rainer Simader palliativecare@physioaustria.at

Career peak in the Himalayas



Photo courtesy Nepal Tourism Board

A new position has been created for a physical therapy teacher in Nepal, who will make a lasting contribution to the development of the profession in the country.

Seconded by the United Mission to Nepal (UMN) to Kathmandu University School of Medical Sciences in Dhulikhel, the physical therapist filling the unpaid position will work with Nepali teaching staff to lead the implementation of the four and a half year Bachelor course in physiotherapy.

Mary Martin, physiotherapy advisor to the Kathmandu University School of Medical Sciences, said they were looking for someone with recent experience in teaching physical therapy, with a knowledge of curriculum design, excellent communication skills, and experience in a cross cultural setting.

More information on the United Mission to Nepal is available at www.umn.org.np

For more information about the job, please contact: Anne Penn anne.penn@umn.org.np or Mary Martin mary.martin@umn.org.np

New WCPT continuing education project takes off online

WCPT is embarking on a new collaborative venture offering continuing education opportunities worldwide. WCPT Secretary General Brenda Myers and Educata founder Marilyn Pink explain its importance.

In February, WCPT began offering a global continuing education platform for physical therapists in collaboration with Educata, a company offering web-based courses for physical therapists. The courses currently cover subjects including orthopaedics, cardiovascular/pulmonary, geriatrics and oncology, taught by educators and clinicians using visuals, audio and video, and other interactive technology.

With input from physical therapists around the world, more courses will be offered in the future, tailored to meet the needs of the profession internationally. The goal is to offer a global faculty to address the diverse educational needs of physical therapists around the world – and WCPT member organisations are being invited to become involved and make suggestions for courses that would benefit their members.

"We believe that there is a tremendous need for physical therapists around the world to stay current on the latest advances and have convenient access to educational opportunities for ongoing professional improvement," said WCPT President Marilyn Moffat at the launch. "In many countries, costs and distance barriers make it very difficult for therapists to get access to ongoing training and education."

Educata was co-founded by American physical therapist Marilyn Pink, who has over 20 years of experience in healthcare and sports medicine as a clinician, educator, scientist and businesswoman. She has published and presented over 150 peer-reviewed articles and international lectures on managerial, clinical and scientific topics.

According to WCPT Secretary General Brenda Myers, the venture is important for WCPT because it is consistent with WCPT's objective of sharing information and encouraging high standards of physical therapy education, practice and research around the world. At the same time it meets a requirement for the confederation to identify new sources of revenue, so that it can continue to meet its objectives effectively. WCPT shares course revenue with Educata if physical therapists sign up through the WCPT website.

"WCPT wants to provide online continuing education opportunities to physical therapists, and equally Educata can see they can reach more people through WCPT and are prepared to work with us to see that we benefit from the collaboration," said Brenda Myers. "There are many ways that education can be delivered and these courses complement other forms of delivery such as in-person courses and WCPT Congresses. Online education is another tool in our box."

"In many rural and remote areas, a physical therapist may be the only person with an interest in a particular subject, and find it impossible to access

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continuing education locally. Their needs can be met more easily online. Studies can be completed in your own time, and there are no additional transport and accommodation costs on top of the course fee.”

Some of their most popular courses offered by Educata include “The Dizzy and Imbalanced Patient”, “Exercise for the Aging Adult”, “Differential Diagnosis”, and “Financial Management Made Easy for the Healthcare Professional”.

Marilyn Pink, who was Director of Physical Therapy at the Olympic Games in Los Angeles in 1984, is enthusiastic about collaborating with WCPT. She said that 92% of people who complete Educata courses say they exceed expectations, and the rest say they meet them.

She added that Educata courses are designed with the scientific, investigative approach of physical therapists in mind. “Physical therapists don’t just want to listen. We studied how people really think, listen and learn. People are engaged more if they have to discover, rather than being told the answer.”

“This venture is very much co-operative,” she said, “aimed at increasing the knowledge base of physical therapists around the world.”

See <http://www.wcpt.org/educata>

A new call to arms on landmines



Children in Sudan playing with submunitions in a cluster bomb container. Picture courtesy Peter Moszynski, ICBL

WCPT is building on its long-standing concerns about the devastating effects of landmines by developing a policy statement calling for a ban on their production, sale and use.

Covering the consequences of armed conflict, landmines and other weapons of war, the statement will aim to raise awareness about the issues surrounding weapons of war, how they crucially affect physical therapists, and the stance that the profession takes on their manufacture and use.

“WCPT member organisations have an important role to play in giving voice to the issues, and working towards national legislation to support a ban on landmines and cluster munitions and action to clear them,” says WCPT Secretary General Brenda Myers. The new statement will provide them with a tool to put their case to governments and other national bodies.

WCPT has taken a stance against landmines, and their devastating effects on civilians and those involved in conflict, since passing a motion at the 14th General Meeting in 1999. This stated that WCPT would encourage all member organisations to call on their governments to ban and clear landmines.

The consequences of armed conflicts, landmines, and other weapons of war such as cluster munitions presents important global health and development issues. Worldwide, an estimated 10,000 people, mostly civilians, lose their lives every year as a result of landmines, and many more thousands are left with disabilities. Another 55% of the victims may die before receiving assistance, and those who survive require on average 2.6 surgical operations each as well as long-term rehabilitation.

Landmines are having a particularly devastating effect on civilians in Cambodia, Angola, Bosnia Herzegovina, Croatia, Mozambique, Laos, Vietnam, Colombia, Iraq and Afghanistan. Angola records the highest number of amputees in the world, due to mine problems. In Colombia, there is a new landmine victim every nine hours, one in three a child.

In societies where the welfare system is poor, there is a massive socio-economic burden for people with disabilities resulting from weapons of war. In mostly agrarian countries such as Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia and Mozambique the loss of even one limb makes it difficult to carry out normal daily economic activities. In addition, psychologically these victims are perceived, or perceive themselves, as being a burden on their families and communities, and often resort to begging to survive.

With at least 8,000 new cases of physical disability occurring annually, rehabilitation poses a major challenge. As well as physical disability and psychological effects, indirect disabilities may also result from landmines – for example, if their presence prevents nutritious food being accessed, iodine deficiency disease, malnutrition and water-borne diseases can result.

No More Landmines: <http://www.landmines.org.uk/>

International Campaign to Ban Landmines: www.icbl.org/

International Council of Nurses (2006) Position statement: Towards Elimination of Weapons of War and Conflict:
www.icn.ch/PS_E14_Towards%20Elimination%20Weapons.pdf

Mumbai hosts AWP Congress



Traditional Indian dancers perform during the WCPT Asia Western Pacific Congress.

More than 1,000 delegates attended the WCPT Asia Western Pacific Congress, hosted by the Indian Association of Physiotherapists (IAP) in Mumbai in January.

At the opening of the congress, Ali Irani, the IAP President, promised delegates that they would be pleased by the richness, colour and liveliness of Mumbai. "This was true both of Mumbai and of the congress itself and it was fantastic to see so much involvement by students, both at conference sessions and in their traditional dancing," said Margot Skinner, the WCPT Executive Committee member for the region.

The congress theme, "In service of global health and disease", addressed the fact that many countries in the region are grappling with the health issues associated with non-communicable diseases.

The AWP Regional Meeting was held in conjunction with the congress.

Confusion surrounding title "physical therapist" in Ireland

Irish physiotherapists are warning that people who call themselves "physical therapists" are not always members of the profession.

Since its establishment, WCPT has always asserted that the titles physical therapist or physiotherapist, and abbreviations and translations of these, are the sole preserve of persons who hold recognised qualifications approved by national professional associations which are members of WCPT.

But in many countries, either the name physiotherapist or physical therapist (or both) is not protected by law, meaning that others can legally use the terms to describe what they do. This is the case in Ireland, where although the name physiotherapist is protected, physical therapist is not.

"In the Republic of Ireland the titles of physiotherapist and physical therapist cannot be used interchangeably because a group calling themselves 'physical therapists' are not physical therapists/physiotherapists as defined by WCPT," says Karen Gunn, President of the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists. "These physical therapists are not eligible for membership of the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists and are not permitted to work in the National Public Health Service in the Republic of Ireland."

There are several hundred people in Ireland called physical therapists having completed a 16-weekend a year diploma course over three years. Their training focuses on the manual treatment of the soft tissues. The Irish association is concerned that there may be confusion if these people apply for jobs outside Ireland, in countries where the words "physical therapist" are understood differently.

Karen Gunn advised WCPT member organisations: "In the interests of protecting the public in your countries from potential confusion over titles I would ask you to bring this matter to the immediate attention of the relevant people/committee in your organisation who deal with foreign applications."

WCPT has a clear policy on protection of title, calling on the governments of member organisations to enact legislation, where it does not already exist, to protect the public by limiting the use of these titles to appropriately qualified persons.

"The current situation in Ireland is inconsistent with the rest of the world. This can lead to public confusion, and we want to make sure that people see the service provider they are expecting," said Brenda Myers, WCPT Secretary General.

In a declaration of principle drawn up in 1995, WCPT calls on the governments of member organisations to refrain from developing generic classifications that deny the specificity of physical therapy.

In Ireland, there are new hopes that the situation may be rectified. The Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists has been lobbying parliament for the past year and a half to get the regulations changed, and according to Ruaidhri O'Connor, Chief Executive, there's hope that when a new physiotherapy registration board is established in Ireland later this year, both

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titles will become protected.

If you know of any problems or confusion surrounding the titles of “physiotherapist” or “physical therapist” in your country, please contact WCPT News at news@wcpt.org

ICF takes centre stage in Taiwan



Pictured (from left): Hua-Fang Liao, Associate Professor at the School and Graduate Institute of Physical Therapy; Suh-Fang Jeng, Professor and Chair at the School and Graduate Institute of Physical Therapy; Catherine Sykes, Professional Policy Consultant, WCPT; Kwan-Hua Lin, Director Department of Physiotherapy, National Taiwan University Hospital

WCPT policy consultant Catherine Sykes was invited to present a paper at the first conference on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) held in Taiwan in March.

The impetus for the event was the development of a new national disability eligibility assessment process in Taiwan, using the ICF as its basis. This will be implemented in 2011. The conference presented an opportunity for a WCPT representative to meet with members of the Physical Therapy Association of Taiwan (Republic of China).

“Physical therapists seem well placed to engage in the development and implementation of the new disability eligibility process” says Catherine Sykes, WCPT’s Professional Policy Consultant. She presented papers on disability data in Australia and use of ICF in Europe and Asia. “The aim of the talks was to show the participants how the ICF has been used in different types of data collections in different countries as a background to the development of a new disability eligibility assessment process for Taiwan.”

“A strong programme of ICF research is underway in Taiwan, with physical therapists taking the lead in such activities as translating the classification into Chinese, monitoring child development using the ICF and a range of other studies.” The Taiwan research programme will be featured in a future edition of WCPT News.