

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>

