

Dangers of the road revealed in new WHO survey



Family on a motorbike in India. Photo: WHO

New global figures on road safety show the stark variation in safety standards between nations.

Only 57% of countries have laws that require all car occupants to wear seat-belts. In low-income countries this figure is only 38%. Half of all countries do not have laws requiring the use of child restraints like child seats and booster seats. There are laws governing child restraints in 90% of high-income countries but only 20% of low-income countries.

And while helmet laws exist in more than 90% of countries, only 40% have a law that covers both riders and passengers while also requiring that helmets meet a specified standard.

These findings come in the first global assessment of road safety, conducted by the World Health Organization. The global status report, released in New York in June, provides the first worldwide analysis of how well countries are implementing effective road safety measures. These include limiting speed, reducing drink-driving, and increasing the use of seatbelts, child restraints and motorcycle helmets.

WCPT is backing the World Health Organization's efforts to draw attention to the devastating toll of road traffic accidents, and the need to implement comprehensive road safety measures. "Physical therapists know better than anyone else the devastating consequences of road accidents — not just in terms of bereavement, but long-term disability," says WCPT President Marilyn Moffat. "I hope that WCPT's member organisations will become involved in encouraging new integrated approaches to road safety at national level."

"Physical therapists in many countries know the enormous impact that

What's inside this issue?

News

- Global road safety danger (p1)
- WCPT visit to Ukraine (p3)
- WCPT Awards programme (p5)
- A common data set about global PT (p7)
- Education programmes charted (p9)
- Journal gets on Medline (p10)
- World news in brief (p11)
- News in brief (p13)

Features

- The President's travels (p14)
- Why regulation matters (p18)

Region News

- European projects on display (p20)
- NACR General Meeting (p21)

Member News

- Nigerian Golden Jubilee (p22)
- New Fiji sports group (p23)
- Brazil Congress (p24)

Subgroup News

- IFOMT Nordic conference (p25)
- New group on work and health (p27)

compulsory helmet use has in preventing head injury and consequent disability, and should be advocating for their universal use."

The WHO assessment finds that almost half of the estimated 1.27 million people who die in road traffic crashes each year are pedestrians, motorcyclists and cyclists. While progress has been made towards protecting people in cars, the needs of these vulnerable groups of road users are not being met.

The report presents information from 178 countries and finds that traffic injuries remain a global public health problem, especially in low-income and middle-income countries. Few countries have well-enforced road safety laws or reliable data on road traffic injuries.

Where laws on risk factors are in place they are often inadequately enforced, particularly in low-income countries. For example, only 9% of countries rate their enforcement of speed limits as over 7 on a scale of 0 to 10, while the corresponding figure for enforcement of seat-belt laws is 19%.

More than 90% of the world's road deaths occur in low-income and middle-income countries, while these countries only have 48% of the world's vehicles.

The global status report on road safety aims to help countries assess their road safety progress and encourages increased investment in road traffic injury prevention.

Building a firm professional footing in Ukraine



Pictured during a workshop section, seated left to right: Ulyana Kuka and Thereza Lavrukh of the Ukrainian Association of Rehabilitation Specialists; Emma Stokes, WCPT Executive Committee member; and Oksana Kunanec-Swarnyk of the Ukrainian Association of Rehabilitation Specialists. Left foreground: Natalia Skrypka, Ukrainian Association of Rehabilitation Specialists.

Physical therapists in Ukraine welcomed a visit by representatives from WCPT and the Royal Dutch Physiotherapy Association (KNGF) in May as they build a professional body and a strong footing for the profession in their country.

The Ukrainian Association of Specialists of Physical Rehabilitation is seeking admission to WCPT as a member in 2011, and Brenda Myers, WCPT Secretary General, along with Emma Stokes, WCPT Executive Committee member, were invited to attend to provide information about the requirements of member organisations, and advice on how their push for professional status compared with the profession in other countries. Their visit coincided with the association's annual general meeting.

Philip van der Wees and Henri Kiers from the KNGF also attended. The Ukrainian Association has a twinning arrangement with the KNGF, which wants to support it in developing a strong professional base in Ukraine. In a series of meetings and workshops over four days in Lviv, the representatives of WCPT, the Ukrainian and Dutch associations explored not only the practicalities of setting up a professional association, but also looked at some of the issues of status the profession faces globally, how those compare with the situation in Ukraine, and how to build a strong foundation for the future.

Oksana Kunanec-Swarnyk of the Ukrainian Association of Rehabilitation Specialists said there were three major issues facing them in establishing the profession in Ukraine. "We need to strengthen the capacity of our association in the way it is organised and the number of members it has.

WCPT NEWS

July 2009

We need to establish standards of practice for our profession by establishing eligibility criteria for membership of our association. And we need recognition of the profession by having recognised job places in the Ministries of Health, Education and Social Services, and in private practice.”

She says the highlight of the business part of their AGM was approving a professional code of ethics for the association. “The presence and participation of Brenda and Emma gave us important information concerning membership in WCPT and a real desire for our successful acceptance to WCPT. Philip and Henri’s participation gave us the understanding that we are not alone and have true partners in our aspirations.”

“Our guests gave our members the incentive to aspire to professional excellence and made us feel a part of a greater mainstream physical therapy family.”

One particular problem faced by physical therapists in Ukraine, particularly in light of their desire to be part of the profession’s global community, surrounds professional title. When the profession effectively came into being in Ukraine, in 1997, practitioners were known as “physical rehabilitation specialists”. The name “physiotherapist” or “physical therapist” was not used because there was already a profession called “physiotherapy doctor”, focused mainly on the use of electrotherapy.

Emma Stokes, who comes from Ireland where there have also been problems surrounding another profession calling themselves “physical therapists”, could provide the Ukrainians with some reassurance that they were not alone.

“I provided them with a historical perspective, showing how the profession has evolved in other countries and has faced similar issues,” says Emma Stokes, who is a Senior Lecturer at Trinity College, Dublin. “Professional bodies often evolve organically, by amalgamating different groups of people.”

“The association is very interested in how they can improve the quality of physical therapy education in their country, and how they can benchmark it. And if they identify competencies for new graduates, that may help them define the differences between them and the other professional groups.”

Pictured during the AGM, from left to right: Stepan Kobelev, President Ukrainian Association of Rehabilitation Specialists; Olexandr Shupikov, Plastic Surgeon from Donetsk; Lesya Kalandyak, Secretary Ukrainian Association of Rehabilitation Specialists; Jaroslav Hrybalskij, President of the Lviv Regional Foundation for the Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities and Member of Regional Government

New WCPT awards programme

A new WCPT Awards programme will be launched in September, following the appointment of the Awards Committee, and the finalisation of award categories.

These awards recognise outstanding contributions made by physical therapists to the profession at an international level. They will be presented during WCPT's Congress, World Physical Therapy 2011, in the Netherlands in 2011.

The newly appointed Awards Committee will review the nominations received, and make recommendations to the WCPT Executive Committee as to the recipients. Zola Dantile, the WCPT Vice President, is the Chair, and there are representatives from each WCPT region:

- Dele Amosun from South Africa (Africa Region)
- Barbara Hetherington from New Zealand (Asia Western Pacific Region)
- Sigrún Knútsdóttir from Iceland (European Region)
- Tony Chang from Suriname (North America Caribbean Region)
- Gil Lúcio Almeida from Brazil (South America)

They will judge entries in five categories – slightly amended from previous years. "After the last awards programme, it was commented that the awards seemed to run together, and weren't sufficiently distinguished," says Brenda Myers, WCPT Secretary General. "Simplifying the structure of the programme, and giving each award a shorter title and distinct identity, should help to rectify this."

The awards are as follows:

Mildred Elson Award

For sustained and continuous leadership over a career, the award honours physical therapists who, like Mildred Elson, have contributed significantly to the development of physical therapy at an international level. It is the highest honour that WCPT can bestow.

International Service Award

Awards for international service are to honour individuals who have made a great contribution towards physical therapy internationally or within their region.

Humanitarian Service Award

WCPT is seeking to recognise individual physical therapists who have improved people's lives through their exceptional care, compassion, dedication and personal commitment.

Leadership in Rehabilitation Award

July 2009

The purpose of this award is to recognise an individual or group who are not physical therapists and who have made a great contribution to rehabilitation and/or global health.

Recognition of Service to WCPT Award

WCPT will recognise individuals who have contributed to WCPT as chairs of regions and subgroups and through membership committees.

The call for nominations will be issued in September. Nominations will be accepted from member organisations, regions and subgroups for all of the awards, apart from the Mildred Elson Award, where nominations may only be made by WCPT member organisations, and the Recognition of Service to WCPT Award, where nominations are made by the WCPT Executive Committee.

WCPT develops resource about the global state of the profession

Two major new projects reinforce WCPT's role as a focal point for information about the profession internationally. The confederation will be collecting data providing a snapshot of physical therapy around the world, and compiling a register of experts in particular professional areas.

WCPT will be contacting all its member organisations early next year to gather information about the practice, education and regulation of the profession in their country. Having this "common data set" easily available will help WCPT represent the profession internationally, provide support to its member organisations, and provide vital information to organisations like the World Health Organization.

WCPT has now set up a data advisory group, consisting of physical therapists known for their expertise on data. This is providing its input on the most feasible ways to collect the information, how to define the information needed in questionnaires, and how to ensure there is consistency in the information provided from country to country. WCPT will then build an online system to capture this data, and member organisations and other bodies will be asked to start contributing information into the system at the start of next year.

"The common data set will be an extremely important resource for helping WCPT represent its member organisations and their concerns to national governments and world bodies," says Catherine Sykes, WCPT's Professional Policy Consultant.

"For example, it will help us identify areas underserved by physical therapists, if we collect information on how many of us there are, where we're working, how our scope of practice differs, how many work in the public sector and so on. Governments really expect physical therapy organisations, and WCPT in particular, to have this kind of information. It's particularly important when we want to address workforce issues, and will influence the way WCPT and member organisations can advocate, for example, on obtaining more places on education programmes for physical therapists."

"Knowing which countries have a system of regulation, and of what type, will also be useful in our attempts to help member organisations move towards regulation."

In parallel to this project, WCPT is also beginning work on a register of experts in particular areas of physical therapy. It will be calling for individual experts to put forward their names so that WCPT can put them in touch with member organisations and projects which may be in special need of their skills and knowledge. Member organisations, subgroups and regions will also be asked to put forward names of people who may be able to share their expertise with others around the world.

"Having such a register of experts will help member organisations identify

WCPT NEWS

July 2009

people who might be able to work with them,” says WCPT Secretary General Brenda Myers. “We want to be able to draw on people who are happy to be a resource for those around the world trying to develop practice, education and services. We hope this will strengthen the profession, nationally as well as internationally.”



WCPT creates new links to education programmes

WCPT is compiling information about approved physical therapy entry-level education programmes around the world. It will be making information about the programmes easily available via the WCPT website.

The project follows a resolution at the 2007 General Meeting, and will provide ready access to information about formal education within each WCPT member organisation.

The information is being gathered via member organisation websites and membership application forms. Emails requesting information about education programmes available in their countries have also been sent to Executive Committee members and other contact persons. WCPT has now obtained information from 89 countries, with 10 more yet to provide details.

Once the information has been collected, WCPT will provide links from its website to the websites holding the information about education programmes in each country. In some cases, this will be the WCPT member organisation website, and in others, the educational establishments themselves.

Physiotherapy journal gains Medline status

The journal Physiotherapy is to be included in Medline – reflecting growing recognition of physical therapists by doctors and other health professions, and an increasing scientific evidence base for the profession.

Searching Medline, the primary component of the electronic PubMed database, brings up citations to journal articles, including title, authors and abstract. Publications have to apply to the US National Library of Medicine to have their journal included, which makes a judgement based on scientific policy and quality.

“Following indexation, papers in Physiotherapy will now be visible to a global audience,” says Michele Harms, Editor-in-Chief of Physiotherapy, the official journal of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy in the UK. “This will attract an international author base and readership.”

“Inclusion in Medline not only recognises the journal as an authoritative source of biomedical research, but also provides the foundation for future growth.” The application was supported by high profile sponsors, including Marilyn Moffat, President of WCPT.

World news in brief



An outdoor session, during the workshop on CBR and mental health, held before the Asia-Pacific CBR Congress

New CBR network formed for Asia and Pacific regions

A new network on community based rehabilitation (CBR) has been formed as a result of the First Asia-Pacific CBR Congress, held in Bangkok, Thailand, in February. The Congress, with the theme of Community-Based Inclusive Development, was jointly organised by the World Health Organization, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Government of Thailand.

Over 700 participants attended from over 50 countries in the region, including disabled people's organisations, and regional and international organisations. The congress was the largest gathering of CBR practitioners to date. As a result of the congress, a CBR Asia-Pacific Network has been formed, with 26 representatives nominated by their countries to participate. Two subcommittees have been created to develop a common charter, a constitution and future plans of action.

Before the congress, a workshop on CBR and mental health was held, exploring how CBR programmes can support and work together with community mental health programmes. There were 50 participants from 20 countries. The workshop acknowledged that although mental illness is an important area for CBR programmes, many do not reflect sufficient knowledge in this area. To move forward, people working in CBR programmes require better guidance and skills to work with mental illness.

Workshops were also held on CBR and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and CBR and leprosy.

New partnerships to improve trauma care

The European Federation of National Associations of Orthopaedics and Traumatology ([EFORT](#)) is joining forces with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the [Bone and Joint Decade](#) (BJD) to help improve trauma and emergency care worldwide.

The organisations will hold a Global Forum for Trauma Care in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on 28-30 October 2009. The forum will emphasise goal-setting, creating tools and key messages to convince the health-decision makers about the social, human, economic and scientific importance of trauma care.

This follows the 10th EFORT Congress held in Vienna, Austria, in June. Participants included the 82 presidents of EFORT's participating national societies, international associations and specialty groups.

At the Congress, Professor Karl-Göran Thorngren, President of EFORT, highlighted the importance of participants joining WHO's Trauma Care Network, and encouraged their participation of and support in the Global Forum.

EFORT: www.efort.org/

For further information contact Dr Marcos Musafir, musafir@who.int

Laws for disabled people in Cambodia

New laws ensuring the rights of people with disabilities to access employment opportunities, healthcare and education have been adopted by the National Assembly and Senate of Cambodia.

The new legislation has been welcomed by the Disability Action Council of Cambodia, which says it is of far-reaching benefit to people with disabilities. "The achievement in passing this significant law is owed to the hard work, commitment and cooperation of all the stakeholders in the process: the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation, all the development partners, NGOs and INGOs in the disability sector, disabled people's organisations and the people with disabilities who have contributed their experiences." said Ung Sambath, of the Disability Action Council.

News in brief

Nigerian visit

Bakare Ummukulthoum, Secretary of the Lagos State Chapter of the Nigeria Society of Physiotherapy, visited the WCPT Secretariat offices in London, during a visit in May. Pictured above with WCPT Secretary General Brenda Myers, she presented a commemorative programme of the society's 50th anniversary meeting last year.

India doping officials

Staff and students of the Amity Institute of Physiotherapy in India will be acting as doping control officials at the forthcoming Commonwealth Games, to be held in Delhi in October. The games organizing committee has trained 71 students from the institute, says Dr Nitesh Bansal, Director.

Awards deadline nears

The closing date for WCPT Awards nominations is 31st July. If you think someone you know, or know of, deserves recognition for their achievement, please go to www.wcpt.org/awards for further information, or request a nomination form by emailing info@wcpt.org as soon as possible.

Around the world with Marilyn Moffat: reflections on the President's two years of travelling



Marilyn Moffat during her trip to Dubai in April 2008

Two years into her WCPT Presidency, Marilyn Moffat talks to Simon Crompton about how her global travels have broadened her mind – and encouraged an increasing sense of closeness in the WCPT family

What has impressed you most as you've travelled the world over the past two years?

Although we often think of countries as being different, the more I travel the more I am ever reminded of the many similarities amongst us. Some of the problems being faced by countries with well-established physical therapy professions are often so very similar to those facing countries with emerging professions.

Can you give any examples?

Physician control over physical therapy is almost omnipresent. Whether it is physician-owned physical therapy services or physiatrist-dominated prescriptive requirements, the problems imposed on physical therapists are inappropriate in this day and age.

Difficulty also exists in getting educational programmes established where none exist. And upgrading of those programmes that do exist often presents major problems to local physical therapists as a result of lack of support and at times opposition from bureaucratic and government agencies.

Many countries are faced with a shortage of appropriately trained physical therapists, making provision of services to large populations extremely

trying. There are only one or two countries where an over-supply of physical therapists seems to exist, and from my perspective, this is a reflection of their health systems and the limitations that are placed upon the types of environments in which physical therapists may practice.

What have you observed about variations in practice?

You see high quality services being provided whatever the working environment and resources available. But there is a lot of variation in practice. In some locations, I have observed an overemphasis on modalities like heat, ultrasound, and electrotherapeutic agents. While these agents have their place in our practice, I have a great concern when they are mainstays of practice and not ancillary to our practice.

The central interventions in our practice are therapeutic exercise and functional training in self-care, in home management, and in work, community, and leisure activities. Our manual skills, use of devices and equipment, airway clearance techniques, integumentary protection techniques, and the electrotherapeutic modalities, physical agents, and mechanical modalities are all adjuncts to getting our patients and clients moving, no matter what the diagnosis is.

You've been running your own course on physical therapists as exercise experts with aging adults as you've travelled. How's that gone?

I have been so pleased by how well these courses have been received. It has been a wonderful opportunity for me to share this information, which I think many physical therapists have found will enhance their practice. My keynote speech looking at our roles in the management of diseases of civilisation has also sparked interest. It is so important that we all understand that we have a role in preventing lifestyle-related diseases like obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and pulmonary and tobacco-related conditions, as well as treating people affected by them.

How did you choose where to travel?

In almost every instance, I have been invited by the member organisation. I don't want to impose myself on anyone. The member organisation to which I travel provides travelling costs since a main goal of mine has been to rebuild WCPT's reserve fund and to leave the organisation on a totally solid financial footing.

I have also attended three regional meetings (the Africa Region meeting in Abuja Nigeria, the Asia Western Pacific Region meeting in Mumbai India, and the Europe Region meeting in Athens Greece) so far and plan on attending the other two regional meetings during the next year. These regional meetings enable me to see a lot of people from many countries at one meeting.

How important is that personal contact with physical therapists around the world?

Very. Because when talking to physical therapists and governmental officials directly to ascertain the specific issues that they face, I get a far more accurate impression of what is really happening. I can probe issues more deeply. I can also see the extent to which WCPT structures and

policies are working, and where they are not. My travels have made me increasingly aware of how effective the regional structure can be for bringing people together. But I can also identify concerns, which may mean we need to look at new areas or develop new positions in the future.

Where are you planning to visit next?

Next year, I will be going to the North America/Caribbean Region meeting in Suriname and the South America Region meeting in Chile. I will also be attending meetings in Qatar, Switzerland, Dubai, India, and Japan. I'd also like to make sure that we have increasing contact with China and Russia, because I think it is important that WCPT's guidelines and positions on education of physical therapists be at the forefront in those countries. Neither of those huge countries currently has physical therapy services and education across the board as we know them. While there are some programmes in those countries, we would really like the key people in those countries to know that WCPT should be the first resource they seek when developing physical therapy education programmes.

I will continue to make myself available whenever I possibly can. I am still teaching full time and practising on a regular basis, so I must juggle all responsibilities as best I can. Travelling for WCPT has made me very proud to be representing our wonderful global family of physical therapists, and the more I travel, the more I know how close that family is.

Marilyn Moffat's destinations...

Sao Paulo, Brazil - October 2007 (90 minute presentation)
Helsinki Finland - April 2008 (40th Anniversary Meeting of the Heads of the Nordic countries, one day course and keynote address)
Dubai - April 2008 (keynote address)
Barbados - April 2008 (WCPT update, one day course, meeting with Minister of Health)
Athens, Greece - May 2008 (Meeting of the European Region, WCPT update)
Tel Aviv, Israel - May 2008 (Keynote address and one day course)
Geneva, Switzerland - May 2008 (Conference on Regulation of the Professions)
Abuja, Nigeria - August 2008 (Africa Region Meeting, one day course and keynote address)
Daegu, Korea - October 2008 (One day course and keynote address, met with head of city)
Amsterdam - November 2008 (KNGF Congress and site visit)
Cairo, Egypt - January 2009 (Opening remarks, keynote address, half day course on bone health, met with university administration)
Mumbai, India - January 2009 (Asia Western Pacific Region Meeting, two day course and keynote address)
Bogata, Columbia - March 2009 (Keynote address, one day course, presentations on evidence-based exercise with special populations)
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia - March 2009 (Keynote address and one day course)
Bahrain - April 2009 (Keynote address and two day course)
Singapore - May 2009 (Keynote address, one day course, presentation on global PT education)
New York City - Armenian World Medical Conference, Physical Therapy Specialty Group - July 2009 (Global PT education)
Bermuda - September 2009 (Two day course and one day course)
London, England - Nov 2007, April 2008, Nov 2008, April 2009 (Executive

WCPT NEWS

July 2009

Committee Meetings)

Why regulation matters to all of us

The regulation of health professionals is emerging as one of the most topical issues among health care disciplines in the 21st century. Next February, the 2nd health professions' regulation conference will be held in Geneva, hosted by the World Health Professions Alliance and WCPT. Why should we be interested?

Professions, governments and policy makers alike are devoting time, money and energy into investigating how regulation can improve comprehensive patient care and outcomes, and decrease the costs of healthcare. That is why the World Health Professions Alliance, with WCPT, has taken up the task of bringing together experts in all fields of healthcare and regulatory policy at the World Health Professions Conference on Regulation, to be held in Geneva, Switzerland, in February 2010.

This will be the second such conference – the first was held in May 2008 and was met with an overwhelmingly positive attendance and response. Over 500 participants, representing a diverse selection of health practitioners and policy makers, were engaged in the theme “The role and future of health professions regulation”.

This time the theme will be “Shaping the future of health professionals’ regulation”. It will be an opportunity for learning, knowledge exchange and multidisciplinary professional growth on an international platform, and is aimed at representatives of regulatory bodies, governments, professional organisations, along with leaders in healthcare, academia and patient groups.

Recognising that public protection is the primary aim of health professional regulation, the conference will aim to help shape the future of health professional regulation as global health systems evolve.

It provides an opportunity to hear as well as contribute to discussions on current issues being faced by health professionals around the world. Speakers have been selected based on their expertise within selected topics as well as their reputation for engaging audiences.

Marilyn Moffat, President of WCPT, said: “While we come from different professions and from different parts of the world, it was clear at the first conference that the issues are similar for all of us. Collaborative events such as this can contribute to finding innovative solutions in a changing environment”.

Regulation is a consequence of the social contract established between professions and governments. As the scope and practice of many healthcare professions changes, so will the regulation model.

Regulation encompasses many aspects of the healthcare professional's life: their education, their entry into the profession, their activities. The conference will explore each of these aspects and examine how each profession may best contribute to the constructive evolution of health professions regulation worldwide.

In particular, it will:

- explore a desired future for health professional regulation;
- examine the regulatory and professional issues relating to the international migration of health professionals;
- evaluate the relationship between health professional education, regulation and standards of practice.

All conference delegates will be invited to participate in the first ever global survey designed to capture information about the regulation of health professionals. Data obtained from this survey will be presented early in the conference and be available for discussion during the professional group sessions.

Margaret Grant, Chief Executive Officer for the Australian Physiotherapy Council and a member of the programme planning group for the second world conference said: "At a global level, governments, professions and the community are grappling with regulatory reform in an attempt to address factors such as workforce shortages, elimination of barriers to global mobility and more explicit recognition of the public interest."

"New models of regulation are emerging as governments, professions and the community try to find the ideal balance between public interest and professional interest whilst creating a more flexible and sustainable workforce. This conference is of vital importance to all physiotherapists who want to know about the potential effect of regulatory change on their own practice and the opportunities for physiotherapy within the new models. The inclusion of themed workshops in the 2010 conference provides a great opportunity for all conference attendees to share their own experiences. The outcomes of the conference will help to shape the future for us all.

The 2nd World Health Professions Conference on Regulation (WHPCR 2010) 18-19 February, 2010 Geneva. For more information on the programme and how to register, please visit www.whpa.org/whpcr2010

European Region's back pain and smoking projects presented at European Parliament

The European Region of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy presented projects promoting back health and stopping smoking at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France in April.

The projects, co-funded by the Executive Agency for Health Consumers, have been developed by 23 national associations of physiotherapy under the umbrella of the region. The "Pain in the Back" project seeks to prevent back pain in school age children through the promotion of a physical exercise programme. The "Staying Clean" project seeks to help people stop smoking through physical exercise, controlling weight gain, and dealing with anxiety and other side effects that occur on stopping smoking.

The projects were presented within an exhibition entitled "Physiotherapy: moving forward health's prevention and promotion". The purpose of the exhibition was to show the benefits of health promotion for citizens and authorities.

"With physical activity, people not only gain health but save public money," said David Gorriá, the region's Secretary General, "We all know that a treatment is much more expensive than prevention and it is the task of the physiotherapists to promote health, especially in this time of economic crisis." According to Bernard Wojciechowski, the Member of the European Parliament from Poland hosting the exhibition: "It is the role of the European Parliament to promote and support our European health workforces in their efforts to help people be in good health in their work environments. It is also the role of the European Parliament to assist any organisations that are engaged in offering advice and treatment for a range of health problems to help people to make the most of their lifestyle."

The "Pain in the Back" project highlights the fact that millions of children and teenagers go to school carrying backpacks filled with books and materials, increasing the possibility of future back pain. The average schoolchild carries more than 30 percent of his or her body weight at least once a week. The region says that prevention is the key and physical exercise is the tool to assure and improve physical and mental health in children and teenagers.

The region is also highlighting, through the "Staying Clean" project, the way physical activity contributes to achieving smoking cessation, a healthy lifestyle, and preventing people from going back to smoking.

Further information about the projects can be found on www.painintheback.eu and www.stayingclean.eu

NACR meeting in Florida addresses scope of practice



Pictured at the AGM, front row: Ronald Wharton (Guyana), Kitiboni Rolle Adderley (Bahamas), Cynthia Thomas (Guyana), Stacy de Gale (Chair of the NACR), Kathya Echevers (Panama), Andrea Cann (Bermuda), Gail Nelson (Jamaica), Heather Hanlan (Bahamas), Anayansi de Vizor (Panama).
Back row: Tony Chang (Suriname), Helen Leister (Secretariat), Jennifer Baker (USA), Sandra Thornhill (WCPT Regional Rep), Jacqueline Rouse (Trinidad & Tobago), Scott Ward (USA), Eyonthe Husbands (St Lucia), Alice Aiken (Canada), Michel Landry (Canada), Jacqueline King-Mowatt (Barbados)

The 20th Annual General Meeting of WCPT's North America Caribbean Region was held in April, in Miami, Florida, USA.

The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) acted as hosts to 10 of the 14 member organisations, with representatives attending from Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, Canada, Guyana, Jamaica, Panama, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago and USA. The physical therapy association from St Lucia was also represented, as an observer.

A mini in-house symposium on direct access and scope of practice was presented by Scott Ward, President of APTA; Michel Landry, President of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association (CPA); and Alice Aiken, also of the CPA. There was input from Brenda Myers, WCPT's Secretary General, via teleconferencing.

"Healthy discussion ensued," says Stacy de Gale, Chair of the NACR Region. "The appetites of members were opened to participate in the upcoming International Direct Access and Advanced Scope of Practice Summit, being hosted by APTA, CPA and the WCPT in October 2009."

"The NACR continues to be a diverse and vibrant group, who continue to work towards Moving Physical Therapy Forward throughout the year. We are looking forward to meeting again in Suriname next year."

Nigerian Society celebrates Golden Jubilee with conference

This October the Nigeria Society of Physiotherapy will celebrate its Golden Jubilee with a national conference, bringing together physiotherapists from all over the country.

Held in Lagos on 27-31 October, the conference will have the theme: "50 years of the Nigeria Society of Physiotherapy: changing the culture, making a difference".

"It promises to be even bigger than the last WCPT Africa Congress hosted by Nigeria," said Uac Okafor, Public Relations Officer for the society. Further details are available at the society's website: www.nigeriaphysio.org

A first subgroup for the Fiji Association

The Fiji Physiotherapy Association has established its first subgroup – Sports Physiotherapy Fiji. Its inaugural meeting was held on 20 June at the Fiji Olympic House Boardroom in Suva.

The subgroup was formed because sports physiotherapy is one of the fastest growing areas of physiotherapy in Fiji. The new group therefore aims to:

- ensure quality assurance
- ensure qualified physiotherapists
- educate physiotherapists and the public
- ensure recognition worldwide
- access available resources
- ensure development of physiotherapists
- ensure research in sports data
- promote research
- set standards

The meeting also discussed some specific strategies for the future such as: running workshops, tapping into the resources of affiliated local and overseas bodies, making direct contact with international bodies and linking with local teaching institutes.

Brazil Congress marks establishment of profession

The Associacao de Fisioterapeutas do Brasil (AFB) will be holding the 18th Brazilian Physical Therapy Congress on October 14-17 in Rio de Janeiro.

The scientific programme will be based on four of the tracks that WCPT uses for its international Congress. This Congress marks the 40th anniversary of physical therapy establishing a firm legal basis in Brazil.

The event will commemorate the 40 years of physical therapists working with people to promote social inclusion. To reflect this, the scientific programme will address issues like accessibility, ICF, ergonomics and public health. For further information, go to www.jz.com.br/congressos/fisioterapia/ingles/fisioterapia_ing.htm

IFOMT's Nordic conference on manipulative therapy



IFOMT Executive Committee members pictured at the conference, from left to right: Ken Olson (Executive member), Annalie Basson (President) and Erik Thoomes (Treasurer).

Gothenburg in Sweden was the setting for the 10th Nordic Conference on Manipulative Therapy and Medicine, held on 29-31 May. It was hosted by the Swedish Section for Orthopaedic Manipulative Therapy, the Swedish Association for Orthopaedic Medicine and IFOMT.

Notable speakers included Freddy Kaltenborn, William Boissonnault, Alfio Albassini, Deborah Falla, Mariano Rocabado, Roger Kerry, Michael Shacklock and Laurie McLaughlin. Topics ranged from trigger point therapy, neurodynamics and McConnell technique to medical screening.

Anders Ottoson presented his research on the history of physical therapy in Sweden which has been traced back to 1813. There were also well-attended pre- and post-conference workshops. The social programme included a boat trip with seafood buffet where everyone could taste all the local delicacies, and a Gala Dinner featuring a session of tango-dancing.

European education meeting ahead

IFOMT is planning another European Education Committee Meeting – for November 2010, in Spain. The organisation would like to invite all WCPT member organisations which have a manual therapy organisation to consider becoming a registered interest group in IFOMT. IFOMT has an educational fund for WCPT member organisations interested in attending an IFOMT conference. Contact Vicki Reid of the IFOMT secretariat for

WCPT NEWS

July 2009

guidelines and further information about the education fund or becoming a registered interest group. Email admin@ifomt.org.

New group on work and health seeks subgroup status

An international group of practitioners working in occupational health, ergonomics and vocational rehabilitation is establishing an organisation provisionally entitled the International Federation of Physiotherapists in Work and Health (IFPWH), with the aim of becoming a subgroup of WCPT.

A group of interested practitioners met at the WCPT Congress in Vancouver in 2007 and proposed that such a group be formed. In March 2009, the group met again at the International Congress on Occupational Health in Cape Town, South Africa, to decide on a course of action that would lead towards international recognition, with a view to achieving recognition as a WCPT subgroup within a year.

This will require the support of WCPT member organisations or groups recognised by their WCPT member organisation from at least 10 countries, and from three different WCPT regions. Support has already been gained from organisations in Finland, the UK, Brazil, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand.

The proposed IFPWH are hoping to have an occupational health/ergonomics board on the discussion forum of the WCPT website later this month. It is keen to hear from other recognised clinical, occupational and special interest groups which are recognised by WCPT member organisations, or from member organisations themselves.

If you are working in this field, or represent an organisation that is likely to want to become involved, then please contact the co-ordinator Rose Boucaut rose.boucaut@unisa.edu.au

WCPT NEWS

July 2009