



Information sheet

Tips for using WCPT's web-based discussion forum

This information is provided to help you get the most out of using the forum.

What is the WCPT discussion forum?

The forum provides the opportunity for physical therapists to exchange ideas, collaborate, share information and develop networks. It has been set up in response to suggestions from WCPT member organisations and physical therapists worldwide.

The forum provides you with the ability to post and respond to questions on topics of professional interest. It is available to anyone. All you have to do to register is provide your email address and a username/password.

By contributing to the forum, you'll not only be getting answers yourself – but helping colleagues around the world.

TIPS for learning from a discussion

1. **CRITICALLY APPRAISE WHAT YOU READ** - it will not generally be evidence based so assimilate it into your clinical reasoning with care, always have a sound basis for your decisions and actions and **ONLY** operate within your scope of practice.
2. **YOUR ACTIONS ARE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** - if in doubt seek guidance from clinical colleagues or supervisors or seek further evidence before acting.

TIPS for adding a new topic

3. **IS IT THE RIGHT ROUTE TO ADDRESS YOUR NEED?** – are local colleagues a better option? Is it confidential or advertising of any kind? If so, please do not use the Forums.
4. **HAS YOUR QUESTION ALREADY BEEN ASKED AND ANSWERED?** - start by searching the board(s), you may find the answers/support you need or an established discussion that you can join.
5. **THINK IT THROUGH BEFORE WRITING** - the context and reason for creating it, your main points/needs, how you will encourage people to respond, who you want to hear from etc.

6. **WRITE IN A WAY THAT ENCOURAGES PEOPLE TO RESPOND** - try to interest and engage people and make it easy for them to join in. Summarise the theme in the title, use accessible language, write abbreviations in full, adopt a friendly tone and sign off and thank people at the end. Remember you are talking to an international audience for whom English may not be their first language.

TIPS for replying to an existing message

7. **READ THE OTHER REPLIES BEFORE RESPONDING** - so you know what has been said. This will guide how you reply and may challenge and further your own understanding. It may also reduce what you need to say e.g. 'I agree with ... but would also add...'
8. **PUT YOUR REPLY INTO CONTEXT** - what part(s) are you responding to and on what basis eg, personal opinion, clinical experience, research, etc. This helps others to understand what your views are based upon. If possible sign-off with your name and role to help put your reply into context and give the forum a human face.
9. **WRITE IN A WAY THAT ENCOURAGES FURTHER DISCUSSION** - be constructive. Debate the facts and focus on the issues not other contributors. If you disagree explain why. Use accessible language, write abbreviations in full, adopt a friendly tone and use the title to capture the essence of your contribution.

We hope you find this guidance useful.

These Tips on using the discussion forum are based on those developed by the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP). WCPT would like to thank CSP for permission to use its document.