



**2-6 June 2007, Vancouver Canada**

**Why not write a feature about Congress in your physical therapy journal/magazine**

**Here are a few key points to help you**

➤ **Introduction**

Every four years WCPT hosts a scientific congress showcasing advancements in physical therapy research, practice and education. Where better to move physical therapy forward than at its prestigious international congress!

➤ **Reputation**

WCPT congresses have a reputation for being inclusive, embracing the diversity of physical therapy practice worldwide, for providing an environment where experiences can be shared, lessons learnt, life-long friendships made and a new outlook on the profession developed. This is underpinned by the presentation of cutting edge research, presentation of innovative service delivery, an appreciation of different health systems and cultures, and the opportunity to listen and exchange views with leading researchers from around the world across the breadth of physical therapy practice. The scientific programming of Congress has been strengthened by the establishment of an International Scientific Committee, which includes membership from each of WCPT's regions and the host member organisation. An extensive network of international reviewers will help to ensure the quality of free papers presented and a peer-review process has also been used for the recent highly successful call for focused symposia and workshops.

➤ **Congress Theme/Tracks**

The overall congress theme for 2007 is Moving Physical Therapy Forward. It continues the theme used in 2003 and as promoted in the current strategic direction and policies of WCPT. It is seen as a unifying theme encompassing global change, challenges and opportunities for the profession of physical therapy and the governments, professionals and populations we work with. This overall philosophy is underpinned by 5 core programme tracks. It is the first time these tracks have been used to structure the programme. These will be used to draw together different sessions that complement each other. They are:

**[Track 1: Global Health](#)**

Congress provides an excellent opportunity to reflect on international health care policy and its implications for physical therapy and the population. With an ageing population and the ever increasing burden of disease and disability, physical therapists have a vital role to play in working with individuals and populations affected by the epidemics of modern society, such as HIV / AIDS, cancer and cardiovascular disease. In addition, the increasing focus on wellness and health promotion provide many opportunities for physical therapy. WCPT is working with governmental and non-governmental international agencies to address many of these issues. This programme track will take a look at issues related to global health from a population perspective.

**[Track 2: Professional Issues](#)**

The profession of physical therapy is evolving all the time, learning from the past and looking to the future. The status and profile of physical therapy varies internationally as does the context within which physical therapists work. The way in which health care services are delivered is continually changing with new models developing and

opportunities for physical therapists emerging, at the same time as putting patients at the centre of health care provision. And yet, in some countries physical therapists continue to face a struggle for autonomy, often working in difficult and hostile environments. However, wherever physical therapists practice they share common goals: putting patients first, providing high quality services, maintaining professional standards and the ability to adapt to change. This track focuses on the many issues that affect the context and scope of practice.

### **Track 3: Professional Practice**

This track will focus on the practice of physical therapy from referral through assessment, diagnosis, planning, intervention and evaluation. Encompassing health promotion, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation throughout the lifespan and across different health care settings, this track emphasises the clinical practice of physical therapists working with patients / client groups seen every day. Underpinning this clinical practice is the knowledge derived from the biological, physical, behavioural and clinical sciences. The latest research and innovation to inform practice are vital requirements in contributing to the development of the profession and evidence based practice. Congress provides an excellent opportunity to present and discuss the latest advances.

### **Track 4: Education**

Physical therapy education is a continuum of life long learning beginning with admission to an accredited physical therapy school and ending with retirement from active practice. It includes post-qualifying education and specialisation opportunities. How educational provision is organised, delivered and evaluated are important issues. In striving to meet the need to educate physical therapists for practice in a changing environment and in different practice contexts new models of education provision and delivery are continually evolving. This track will focus on ensuring that physical therapists are appropriately prepared and fit for practice and the roles they take on as their career paths progress.

### **Track 5: Research and Development**

The generation of evidence through research is essential to the development of evidence based practice. The methods used to generate, disseminate and implement this evidence require scrutiny and evaluation. Additionally, innovative ways to build research networks, define research agendas and to develop capacity and capability within the profession are critical to delivering the evidence required for practice. The challenges for new researchers are well known and there is much to be learnt from sharing good practice and collaboration. This track will focus on the processes of research and development.

WCPT works to improve global health by encouraging high standards of physical therapy research, education and practice; supporting communication and exchange of information among the regions of WCPT and WCPT Member Organisations; and collaborating with national and international organisations. Congress is one way of achieving this.

A deliberately broad theme was chosen to encompass the breadth of physiotherapy and to reflect WCPT's policies, but it is through the programme tracks that this vision will be realised.

## **➤ Who should attend?**

Congress is relevant to any physical therapist, whether they are a student, clinician, manager, educator, researcher or policy-maker. With a range of session formats, that includes keynote speakers, focused symposia, workshops, discussion panels and networking sessions, as well as free papers, there is something to appeal to everyone. In the free papers there are two categories of papers that enable the presentation of research as well as aspects of practice and development that are more applied:

- **Research reports:** presentations of original scientific data collected by the authors.
- **Special interest reports:** include presentations of new or unique programmes or theories and descriptions of innovative ways in which established methods have been adapted to meet the needs of physical therapy practice, management, education or policy. Reports concerned with the organisation, regulation or management of physical therapy services, education, research development and service delivery will be considered in this category. Those wishing to present details of professional resource materials, such as computer-based programs, materials or audiovisual material should submit an abstract for a poster or platform presentation under this category

With the structuring of the programme tracks there is something for every physical therapist no matter their role or area of interest/expertise.

## ➤ **Benefits of attending**

1. As a presenter you are able to:
  - disseminate your work to a diverse international audience
  - gain feedback on your work
  - find out what else is being done in your field well ahead of the time it takes to find out from publications
  - build networks and collaborations internationally (which is helpful for developing international alliances and opening up potential funding sources)
  - meet leading experts
2. As a delegate you can:
  - hear about the latest advances across all areas of practice
  - learn from other physical therapists from around the world
  - question the researchers
  - consider what other countries are doing and what you might bring home and apply that is different
  - broaden your horizons
  - benefit from clinical visits to centres in and around Vancouver
  - attend pre and post congress courses – benefiting from international expertise
3. Both presenters and delegates benefit from:
  - networking
  - friendship building
  - experiencing the wonders of Vancouver
  - the wealth of information and experience gathered together
  - exploring exhibitors stands and seeing leading products from around the work that you might not otherwise know about

## ➤ **Who does attend?**

There have perhaps been more researchers in the past, but we hope that with a specific education track there will be more educators and also with a strong professional practice track supported by one on professional issues we will encourage more clinicians, managers and policy-makers to attend. Students on physical therapy qualifying education programs benefit from a reduced rate and will have the opportunity to meet students from around the world, understand more about global physical therapy and enhance their learning and outlook on physical therapy.

## ➤ **Can attendance at a WCPT congress make a difference to your everyday practice?**

Yes for all the reasons above. Plus you may be exposed to a session that you might not otherwise have chosen to go to and it could change your whole outlook on physical therapy, as well as what you see as important. Take a look at a feature article in the March 2006 edition of WCPT News where Bill Romani talks about the changes to his physical therapy outlook that followed attendance at a WCPT congress <http://www.wcpt.org/common/docs/WCPTNews/WCPT%20News%20March%2006.pdf>

## ➤ Key dates

**30 June 2006:** [abstract mentorship](#) programme closes

**15 September 2006:** FINAL deadline for submission of [abstracts](#) & [Super Early Bird registration](#) deadline

**31 December 2006:** [registration refund](#) less CA\$200 deadline

**31 January 2007:** notice sent to all individuals who submitted [abstracts](#) advising whether their presentation has been accepted, plus notice of date by which confirmation of intention to present must be received, along with payment of registration fees

**28 February 2007:** [Early Bird registration](#) deadline & date by which accepted abstract presenters must confirm their intention to present

**1 March 2007:** [registration refund](#) less CA\$300 deadline (no refunds after this date)

**31 March 2007:** FINAL notification sent to all presenters indicating the day and time of their presentation

**20 April 2007:** deadline to book hotel rooms

**15 May 2007:** [After Early Bird deadline](#) for registration and [name substitutions](#)

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