



Press release

For immediate release
28th August 2015



Movement for Health
World Physical Therapy Day

Physical therapists help people lead fulfilled lives

Physical therapists have a key role in helping people with long-term conditions achieve their goals, fulfil their potential and participate fully in society. This is the message that thousands of physical therapists (known in some countries as physiotherapists) are sending out on World Physical Therapy Day on 8th September.

Many people with long-term health conditions or disabilities lead fulfilled lives. But some do not because they do not receive the right kind of support. This can be devastating to individuals and this waste of potential also has a cost to others: families, communities and societies. A recent study showed that the loss of global economic output as a result of long-term conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, lung disease and cancer will be US\$ 63 trillion over the next 20 years.

However, it needn't be like that, says WCPT. "The people who seek and need the services of physical therapists range from babies to older people, from people with profound disabilities to the highest performing athletes. Through our engagement with them and our focus on physical activity, exercise and movement we have the power to ensure that people reach their potential whatever that may be," says Emma Stokes, the WCPT President. "Increasingly, the evidence is there in support of the value of physical therapy. Let's use World Physical Therapy Day to communicate the impact that physical therapy can have on individual lives, and to reach out to politicians and other key decision makers to move our profession closer to fulfilling its full potential in changing the lives of the people we serve."

For more information, contact your national physical therapy organisation (see www.wcpt.org/members), see the resources at www.wcpt.org/wptday-toolkit or email Simon Crompton at news@wcpt.org.

Background information

About physical therapy

Physical therapists (known in many countries as physiotherapists) are experts in developing and maintaining people's ability to move and function throughout their lives. With an advanced understanding of how the body moves and what keeps it from moving well, they promote wellness, mobility and independence. They treat and prevent many problems caused by pain, illness, disability and disease, sport and work related injuries, ageing and inactivity.

Physical therapists are educated over several years, giving them a full knowledge of the body's systems and the skills to treat a wide range of problems. This education is usually university-based, at a level that allows physical therapists to practise independently. Continuing education ensures that they keep up to date with the latest advances in research and practice. Many physical therapists are engaged in research themselves.

More detailed information about what physical therapists do can be found on WCPT's website: www.wcpt.org/policy/ps-descriptionPT.

About the impact of physical therapy

A WCPT online booklet provides facts, research findings, statistics and articles demonstrating the contribution of physical therapists: www.wcpt.org/wptday-resource-booklet.

About World Physical Therapy Day

World Physical Therapy Day falls on 8th September every year, and is an opportunity for physical therapists from all over the world to raise awareness about their crucial role in keeping people well, mobile and independent. The day was established by WCPT in 1996, and marks the date on which WCPT was founded in 1951. More details and toolkit at www.wcpt.org/wptday.

About the World Confederation for Physical Therapy

WCPT is the profession's global body representing over 350,000 physical therapists/ physiotherapists from member organisations in 111 countries. For more information go to www.wcpt.org.