



## Press release

*For immediate release*

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### Surveys reveal global state of the physical therapy profession

**Responses to the latest World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) survey reveal a significant rise in the number of physical therapists who are members of their national organisation.**

WCPT publishes data from its member organisations every year on a range of issues, including professional regulation, practice, education, and the number of employed physical therapists. This data provides a comprehensive and valuable global profile of the profession.

The most recent data is based on surveys completed by 105 of WCPT's 120 member organisations in mid-2019. The high response rate, 87.5%, demonstrates strong engagement between WCPT and its member organisations and data reliability. The data gives a global snapshot of the physical therapy profession across the world, showing variations in the density of physical therapists in different countries and between WCPT regions. Highlights of the 2019 data include:

- 70% of respondents said membership of their organisation had increased
- 58% of respondents said there was direct access in their country and people could refer themselves to a physical therapist without a referral
- 81% of respondents said there was no law preventing private practice in their country
- globally, 66% of physical therapists are women – in three countries (Hungary, Myanmar, St Lucia) at least 90% of physical therapists are women

WCPT Chief Executive Jonathon Kruger said: 'The responses to the surveys from our member organisations continue to provide rich and valuable international comparisons which WCPT and its members can use to influence policy decisions around health, health service delivery, human resource planning, and education.'

The country profile maps allow people to see how the global profession has evolved since 2013. The maps are an interactive resource that can be printed or downloaded, and can be accessed [here](#).

Feedback from WCPT member organisations has been overwhelmingly positive:

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'We have been able to increase our membership in 2018 by involving physiotherapists in all our activities. We make sure we ask for their help and include their point of view in everything we do.'

*Société Haïtienne de Physiothérapie*

'The growth in membership is an indicator of success. We believe this gain has come from the trust our members have in the role of Emirates Physiotherapy Society, how we support our members' professional development and meet their expectations.'

*Emirates Physiotherapy Society*

We believe the primary reason for the increase in membership is due to the many events we have organized and participated, giving our association more visibility and making it stronger.

We have also offered discounts to people who have attended our training courses to be part of our association.

We are truly grateful for the help of the WCPT in this endeavor, and we are convinced that the future statistical data will be very valuable to us.'

*Asociación Española de Fisioterapeutas*

## Related links

- [WCPT's member organisations](#)
- [Profiling the profession: WCPT's data collection](#)

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## EDITOR'S NOTES

### About physical therapy

Physical therapists (also known 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.

### About WCPT



WCPT is the profession's global body representing over 450,000 physical therapists/physiotherapists from member organisations in 120 countries. More information: [www.wcpt.org](http://www.wcpt.org).