

Standards of physiotherapist practice

Policy statement

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Standards of physiotherapist practice

World Physiotherapy recognises the diverse social, political and economic environments in which physiotherapy is practised worldwide.

World Physiotherapy recognises the importance of developing and documenting agreed professional standards for the practice of physiotherapists. These standards will ensure that physiotherapists are competent and safe to practise within a given context and facilitate the development of the global physiotherapy workforce. Harmonisation of standards across the profession may also facilitate mobility.

These standards are necessary to:

- demonstrate to the public that physiotherapists are concerned with the quality of the services provided and are willing to implement self-regulatory programmes to provide quality assurance
- support entry level physiotherapist professional education
- facilitate continuing professional development
- guide practitioners in evidence based contemporary approaches to practice and their evaluation
- provide governments, regulatory bodies and other professional groups with background information about the professional practice of physiotherapy
- effectively communicate with members of the profession, employers, other health professions, governments and the public.

World Physiotherapy encourages its member organisations to:

- utilise World Physiotherapy's guideline for standards of physiotherapist practice(1)
- develop specific standards for physiotherapist practice if necessary to suit local circumstances or political environments, assuring they align with the World Physiotherapy guidelines
- consider the following principles in the process of developing standards:
 - reflect the values, conditions and goals necessary for the continuing advancement of the profession
 - values that are measurable and based on principles
 - design standards to help the profession meet the changing needs of the community
 - base standards upon clear definitions of the scope of practice and accountability
 - make standards sufficiently broad and flexible to achieve their objectives and, at the same time, permit innovation, growth and change
 - undertake regular review with revision as required
- set national practice standards in the following areas:
 - physiotherapist assessment and intervention
 - ethical and professional practice
 - communication
 - evidenced based practice
 - interprofessional teamwork
 - reflective practice and lifelong learning

- quality improvement
- leadership and management

Glossary (www.world.physio/resources/glossary)

Quality assurance

Standards of practice

Approval, review and related policy information	
Date adopted:	Originally approved at the 13th General Meeting of WCPT June 1995. Revised and re-approved at the 15th General Meeting of WCPT June 2003. Revised and re-approved at the 16th General Meeting of WCPT June 2007. Revised and re-approved at the 17th General Meeting of WCPT June 2011. Revised and re-approved at the 18th General Meeting of WCPT May 2015. Revised and re-approved at the 19th General Meeting of WCPT May 2019. Revised and re-approved at the 20 th General Meeting of WCPT May 2023.
Date for review:	2027
Related World Physiotherapy policies:	World Physiotherapy policy statements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality services World Physiotherapy guideline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards of physiotherapist practice

References

1. World Physiotherapy. World Physiotherapy guideline for standards of physiotherapy practice. London, UK: World Physiotherapy; 2023 [24 Nov 2023]. Available from: <https://world.physio/guideline/standards>.

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