



Press release

For immediate release
4th September 2012



Movement for Health
World Physical Therapy Day

Physical therapists help people be fit for life

Evidence shows that people who stay active are more likely to keep working, engaging in society and enjoying life – and that physical therapists have a vital role in helping them do so at every stage of life. 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.

Every year, physical therapists help millions of people prevent non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease and cancer through recommending safe and appropriate exercise programmes. They help people be “Fit for Life” – the theme of this year’s World Physical Therapy Day.

Physical therapists also help people manage the effects of these conditions, along with the effects of aging, a wide range of diseases, accidents and the stresses and strains of life. WCPT has compiled a resource booklet demonstrating the immense contribution of physical therapists, available at www.wcpt.org/wptday-clinical-resources.

WCPT President Marilyn Moffat says the message on World Physical Therapy Day is clear: as the movement, physical activity and exercise experts, physical therapists are a vital resource in helping people remain active, happy and productive – all the way from childhood to later life. “Many people do not recognise the contribution to keeping people healthy and independent,” she says. “World Physical Therapy Day is an opportunity to change that.”

For more information, contact your national physical therapy organisation (see www.wcpt.org/members),

see the article by Marilyn Moffat at, www.wcpt.org/sites/wcpt.org/files/files/wptday12/NCD_article_MMoffat.pdf

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-clinical-resources.

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.

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 106 countries. For more information go to www.wcpt.org.