Quality services

The World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) recognises that patients/clients, governments and funding agencies have a right to expect that the services provided by physical therapists will be consistent with national quality standards.

Quality services mean the provision of the best possible physical therapy at an appropriate cost, balancing patient/client, organisational and professional considerations. It involves considerations of:

- equity
- efficiency
- effectiveness
- appropriateness
- acceptability
- accessibility
- availability
- safety

To ensure optimal quality physical therapy services there is a need to:

- utilise evidence based practice
- manage change effectively
- evaluate practice structures, processes and outcomes
- monitor efficiency, effectiveness and safety
- measure and respond to patient/client satisfaction
- conduct research

WCPT encourages its member organisations to:

- demonstrate leadership in quality issues by adopting WCPT standards of practice or developing practice standards and monitoring procedures
- contribute to the development of professional tools, such as clinical guidelines, designed to facilitate evidence-based practice
- work collaboratively across professions to raise standards of health services
- explore opportunities for international collaboration in developing resources

Glossary

Clinical practice guidelines — “are statements that include recommendations intended to optimise patient care that are informed by a systematic review of evidence and an assessment of the benefits and harms of alternative care options”. ¹

Evidence based practice (EBP) — is an approach to practice wherein health professionals use the best available evidence from systematic research, integrating it with clinical expertise to make clinical decisions for service users, who may be individual patients/clients, carers and
comunities/populations. EBP values, enhances and builds on clinical expertise, knowledge of disease mechanisms, and pathophysiology. It involves complex and conscientious decision-making based not only on the available evidence but also on patient/client characteristics, situations, and preferences. It recognises that health services are individualised and ever changing and involves uncertainties and probabilities. 2–4

**Standards of practice** — are a collection of documents describing the professional consensus on the practice of physical therapists in any occupational setting. Standards reflect the collective judgement of the profession at a given point in time. 5

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**References**


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