Around 3400 delegates and over 100 exhibitors are already signed up to attend the WCPT Congress 2015, which begins on 1st May. And with more expected to register in the final days before the big event starts, the pieces for a fabulous physical therapy event are in place.

“Counting down to the arrival of congress is making us in Singapore nervous yet excited,” said Maureen Loh, on behalf of the Singapore Physiotherapy Association (SPA) local organising team. “We are looking forward to being great hosts to you, creating beautiful memories and lasting friendships with physiotherapists around the world!”

Marilyn Moffat, the WCPT President, complimented the International Scientific Committee which has developed the programme. It includes a remarkable 160 sessions, 572 platform abstracts and 1578 poster presentations. “I guarantee delegates will go home buzzing with new ideas,” she said. “This is my seventh congress, and we all come here with questions that need answers, an openness to new ideas and thinking, and a thirst to learn and share with our international colleagues.”

This is the first WCPT Congress to be held in the Asia Western Pacific region since 1999, when it was held in Yokohama, Japan. Margot Skinner, the WCPT Executive Committee member from Asia Western Pacific, said: “This is a great opportunity to highlight issues affecting the profession in the region. It offers the chance for other colleagues to learn from us – for example physical therapists here have a lot of expertise in disaster management.”

Of the delegates currently registered, there are large representations from Japan, Australia, UK, US and – not surprisingly – Singapore. But delegates are coming from all corners of the globe. There will be representatives from Brazil to Brunei, Congo to China, Italy to Iran, Jamaica to Jordan, Myanmar to Malta.

An essential part of the smooth-running of the congress are the volunteers, and there are 250 of them who have offered their time to ensure that delegates know where they’re going and what to do.

• If you haven’t signed up for congress yet, don’t worry. You can register online until 21st April, or turn up to the Suntec Convention Centre on the day to register there. www.wcpt.org/congress

A warm Singapore welcome awaits you!

Student physiotherapists from Singapore are preparing to welcome delegates and exhibitors. Picture: Tracy Bury
How the 2015 WCPT Congress was shaped

By Aimee Stewart, Chair of the International Scientific Committee

The 2015 WCPT Congress has been years in the planning. It began in 2012—just months after the last congress in Amsterdam ended—when WCPT conducted market research to find out what physical therapists wanted to see at the next congress.

The answer was a diverse scientific programme, high profile speakers, networking opportunities and pre- and post-congress courses. Physical therapists wanted sessions on musculoskeletal physical therapy, evidence based practice, the value of physical activity, continuing professional development and clinical guidelines. And that is what we have provided, along with so much more.

I am privileged to be the Chair of the International Scientific Committee (ISC), which has worked so hard to put together an amazing congress programme which has been three years in the making. It includes 572 platform abstracts, 1,578 poster sessions, 25 focused symposia, 11 discussion panels, 18 seminars and 36 networking sessions. Everything is now in place, and we truly have something for everyone.

All we need now is for delegates to breathe life into the WCPT Congress 2015. We can’t wait, because it is delegates’ contribution that really makes a congress.

Their interactions can bring lasting good to the profession. This is an opportunity to see and contribute to cutting edge research, to interact with leaders in many fields, to network and meet potential collaborators. There are opportunities to meet researchers from all our regions, to gain understanding of the complexities of our profession and to find out about the innovative approaches our colleagues from different parts of the world bring to meeting health service challenges.

My advice is to attend as many sessions as you can, to get involved in the discussion in these sessions to interact with as many delegates as possible, and to have as much fun as you can!

Aimee Stewart is Chair of the International Scientific Committee. She has over 100 publications in peer-reviewed journals and has made over 70 presentations at congresses. In 2011 she was awarded the South African Department of Science and Technology Distinguished Women in Science Award.

She will be speaking in the following sessions:

- Evidence based practice: in 2025 what will be the most important evidence look like? Monday 4th May, 13:45, Summit 2
- Have your say: help shape future congresses: Monday 4th May, 15:45, Summit 2

Did you know?

The first WCPT Congress was held in 1953 in London, United Kingdom, and since then there have been 15 WCPT congresses held every four years all over the world. The venue of the next congress is about to be announced.

Quick guide to congress days one and two

Discussion panels

Constructive debate and controversy are welcome at discussion panel sessions, where delegates have the opportunity to explore hot topics with experts.

Saturday

HIV/AIDS, health promotion, exercise as medicine, personalising physical therapy

Sunday

Advanced practice, research careers, collaborative practice, affordability of physical therapy

Look in the congress programme for details of these sessions, and for information about the dozens of platform presentations and seminars also being held. A summary of the Monday sessions will be published in WCPT Congress News on Monday morning.

Focused symposia

Focused symposia provide a forum where cutting edge topics can be explored and debated by experts in their fields, drawing together different research and practice perspectives.

Saturday

Clinical trials, exercise therapy for chronic pain, student clinical internships, inactivity in childhood, EPAs for musculoskeletal pain, managing information, stroke rehabilitation, cerebral palsy, tendinopathy

Sunday

Exercise adherence, advocacy, exercise training, interactive technology, low back pain, chronic respiratory disease, stroke rehabilitation, pain education, global health

Meet our speakers

Peter O’Sullivan, Australia

“I’m very excited to be attending my first WCPT Congress. I’ve wanted to come over a number of years. I believe strongly in the marrying of all the different fields of physical therapy, which have a lot to tell each other, and that fits in very well with the concept of a WCPT Congress.”

Peter O’Sullivan will be speaking at the focused symposium on back pain (FS-17) on Sunday.
Ten tips for a great congress

You’re sure to have a great congress, but knowing one or two things might help you make the most of your time...

1. **Know your way around**
   When you arrive at the Suntec Centre, familiarise yourself with the layout – you’ll find a floor plan on the congress app (see back page) and at www.wcpt.org/congress/plan. There are signs positioned around the centre to help you find events, rooms and routes.

2. **Ask volunteers**
   There are 250 of them all over the Suntec Centre, recognisable by their red t-shirts. They’re there to help you, so do ask them questions. Multilingual volunteers will be wearing badges identifying languages spoken.

3. **Don’t be daunted.**
   There’s a huge amount going on at the WCPT Congress 2015, but it’s not that difficult to pinpoint the things you really want to do and see. Have a good look at the programme in advance (www.wcpt.org/congress/programme).

4. **Use the iplanner and app**
   Our interactive planner helps make the massive congress content manageable. You can access it on www.wcpt.org/congress/iplanner. Have a go as soon as you can – you can see what’s on offer in your specialty and plan the congress sessions you’re going to attend. The iplanner interacts with the congress app, which can be downloaded onto your smartphone or tablet, and provides you with personalised congress information and news (more details on the back page).

5. **Look at our topic guides**
   If you’re interested in attending presentations with a particular area of practice in mind – such as cardio-respiratory, disability, paediatrics – have a look at our congress topic guides in the congress section of the WCPT website www.wcpt.org/congress/programme/by topic.

6. **Open up your mind.**
   There’s so much going on at the congress that it’s a wonderful opportunity to look beyond your own clinical area and consider general professional issues that affect you – and many professional colleagues around the world. There are plenty of discussion panels, seminars and networking sessions that are relevant to everyone, whatever your work specialty.

7. **Talk to people**
   Past delegates have told us that they value what happens between sessions just as much as the formal sessions themselves. A WCPT Congress is a unique opportunity to get new perspectives, form new networks and make new friends. It’s the same for everyone, so don’t be shy about starting conversations with people you don’t know!

8. **Visit the Global PT Village**
   The Global Physical Therapy Village, at the centre of the exhibition is a meeting point where you can talk to representatives of WCPT, its regions, subgroups and partners. You can also visit Singapore House, where you can meet our hosts, the Singapore Physiotherapy Association.

9. **Don’t worry**
   If the session you wanted to go to turns out to be full when you get there, there are always plenty of other sessions at the same time – some of the best are those you arrive at unexpectedly! Many presentations will be made available via the WCPT website after congress has ended, so you can always catch up.

10. **Keep active**
    Every physical therapist knows the importance of keeping active during conferences. The Singapore Physiotherapy Association is laying on lots of activities, including table tennis, tai chi, pilates, yoga and meditation sessions. Look out for information about what’s going on in the exercise area of the exhibition.
This is the first time WCPT has held its flagship event in the Asia Western Pacific Region since 1999. And what a congress destination! Singapore is famous for its food, shopping, multiculturalism, spectacular buildings and remarkable buzzing atmosphere.

There's so much to see and do, it's hard to know where to start. So what better way to guide you around this unique city state than through the eyes of physical therapists who live and work here? We asked members of the Singapore Physiotherapy Association to nominate their personal favourite places – so meet our hosts.

Shirlynn Cai
The Henderson Waves Bridge
The Henderson Waves is an artistically designed bridge with undulating curves mimicking the shape of waves. It connects Mount Faber Park to Telok Blangah Hill and is the highest pedestrian bridge in Singapore. The Henderson Waves is part of the Southern Ridges, a nature walk that boasts panoramic views of the harbour and city, tropical flora and fauna and the history of this island nation.

Derek Tan
Ang Mo Kio suburb
Experience the hustle bustle of Ang Mo Kio, a suburb of Singapore. Planned and developed in the 1970s, Ang Mo Kio is Singapore heartland with its mature neighbourhood, good street food (known as hawker food in Singapore) and unique shops and businesses which have been operating since the town was built. Hop on bus service 138 at the terminal and it will take you to another jewel of a Singapore attraction – the Singapore Zoo.

Gigi Kuwan
Tiong Bahru
Tiong Bahru is where the new meets the old. It is one of the oldest estates in Singapore, filled with history, nostalgic pre-war flats, and a blend of modern cafes and shops. I never fail to find hidden treasures each time I walk around this quiet neighbourhood. It might be the bustling local wet market that brings back childhood memories, an elderly resident walking around in her comfortable samfoo (trouser suit) or a new shop for me to check out.

Lee Sin Yi
Esplanade Theatres on the Bay
Esplanade Theatres on the Bay is one of my favourite places in Singapore – especially at night time, when you can see the Singapore skyline lit up from here. For the perfect evening, soak up the music of the live bands in the bars along the Singapore River, watch the laser show from the Marina Bay Sands opposite or enjoy local hawker food at Makansutra Gluttons Bay.

Shawn Soh
The Orchard Central vertical mall
Physiotherapy is a tough profession and like many of my colleagues I recharge by spending time with my family. One of our favourite hangouts is the Orchard Central (OC). OC is Singapore's tallest vertical mall. It has everything from fashion to food, and is an exciting spot for stylish shoppers and foodies. You'll find Singapore's first Mediterranean-style marketplace here. And remember to check out the super escalator!

FREE T-SHIRT
*for the first 50 therapists to our booth Daily
Roselyn Choo  
ION Sky  
Do you want to feast your eyes on a good view of Singapore? I would like to recommend ION Sky which is situated in the heart of Orchard Road. You can see the view from 56 floors up above Orchard Road – without paying a fee!

Tan Bee Yee 
One Fullerton  
The view of Marina Bay from One Fullerton is breathtaking in the day and spectacular at night, taking in the laser show at the Marina Bay Sands. It provides a 360-degree view of the Singapore skyline where you can also see the Merlion and heritage buildings like Clifford Pier and Fullerton Hotel.

Vivian Lim 
Katong  
Nestled in the eastern part of Singapore, Katong boasts a great integration of Eastern and Western cuisine and architecture. I love going there for my chicken rice, pastries and Peranakan food!

Maureen Loh  
Food on the streets  
Singapore is well known as a food paradise and you don’t want to miss the hawker food. There is a rich variety of dishes to choose from, and it is not expensive. My favourites are: Hainanese chicken rice, fried carrot cake, hokkien mee, nasi lemak, satay, roti prata, rojak, popiah, ice kacang, chendol... to name just a few!

Calvin Sim  
The Peranakan Museum  
The museum displays the Peranakan culture – a unique mixture of the Chinese and Malay cultures unique to this region. From the delicate design of their clothing to their unique culture and food, learn more about this colourful culture and how its interesting blend of culture came about. There are guided tours to explain more about this unique group of Singaporeans.

You can find out more about things to see and do in Singapore at the Singapore Tourism Board website:  
http://www.yoursingapore.com

Singapore rules  
Smoking is an offence indoors, in air-conditioned areas such as shopping centres, on public transport, in lifts and some other public areas.  
Electronic cigarettes and chewing tobacco are not allowed.  
Eating, drinking and smoking are not allowed on all public transport.  
Littering will attract a fine, as will spitting or spitting out gum.  
As with many countries there are severe penalties for drug offenses and overstaying visas.  
Visitors are also advised to avoid photographing or attending public demonstrations and speaking out on racial, religious or political topics, which might be illegal.

Maureen Loh 
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Top: Kapong houses (picture: kongxg504); above: the Maxwell Road Hawker Centre (picture: Premshree Pillai); below: Orchard Central, with the ION Sky viewing point towering 56 floors up (picture: William Cho); right: laser show at the Marina Sands casino (picture: Joe D Silva)
More than just stands: why the congress exhibition hall is a hub of activity

Here are just some of the reasons delegates will find themselves congregating in the Suntec Centre’s exhibition hall.

**The welcome reception**
After the formality of the congress opening ceremony, the social part of congress really gets going with a welcome reception, food and drink for all delegates in the exhibition hall.

**The exhibitors**
There are more than 100 companies and organisations exhibiting services and products in the exhibition hall – providing demonstrations and entertainment as well as information. Don’t be afraid to stop and ask questions!

**The posters**
The poster viewing area is within the exhibition hall. The posters will change over the course of the congress – and 550 will be on show each day. “The poster area is always a lively area of the WCPT Congress and allows for great interactions with delegates,” says Aimee Stewart of the Congress International Scientific Committee. “And because of the poster walks we’re organising this time there’s opportunity to interact with some of the top names in each specialty.”

**A community of stands**
WCPT, its regions, subgroups, networks, partners and some member organisations are all gathered together in a community of stands at the heart of the exhibition. Together, they provide a panorama of global physical therapy, and WCPT’s work and vision. Be sure to visit and find out more about WCPT and the organisations it works with.

**Singapore House**
Meet your hosts the Singapore Physiotherapy Association and discover more about Singapore and its physical therapists at Singapore House. Part of the Global Physical Therapy Village at the centre of the exhibition hall, Singapore House will provide activities, samples of local culture – and the opportunity to have your photo taken next to Singapore’s iconic Merlion.

**Games and exercise**
In one corner of the exhibition hall is an exercise area where there are opportunities to participate in Tai Chi, Pilates or Yoga sessions during lunch breaks. Or, if you fancy something more competitive, you can play table tennis or try the local Singapore shuttlecock game of chaptek.

**The art and health exhibition**
View the winners and runners up of WCPT’s art and health competition. Physical therapists and service users from all over the world have been submitting paintings, drawings and sculptures that represent the theme “Fulfilling potential” – and there are some stunning images.

**Food, drink and internet**
delegates need regular refuelling, so there is a selection of foods and drink for sale on concession stands in the hall. If you fancy answering your emails over a coffee, there’s an internet cafe and charging station for delegates too.

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Rob Herbert, one of the profession’s biggest name in evidence based practice, speaks at one of the first sessions of the congress. He thinks it’s time the profession congratulated itself on the number of clinical trials it now performs – and considered what to do next.

Physical therapists worldwide now have over 20,000 randomised controlled trials under their belts. In the past 20 years they have responded “spectacularly well” to the challenge of providing an evidence base for what they do, says Herbert – a founding director of the Centre for Evidence Based Physiotherapy in Australia, which maintains the PEDro physiotherapy evidence database.

In fact, it now puts some parts of the medical profession to shame. “I remember as a young physiotherapist being mocked by orthopaedic surgeons for the lack of evidence in physiotherapy, and we’re now very much in a position where we can mock them,” says Herbert, Senior Principal Research Fellow at Neuroscience Research Australia. He has been published widely in top-tier journals including JAMA, Annals of Internal Medicine and BMJ.

“Orthopaedic surgeons are now way behind us in terms of the extent and quality of the evidence. So we can be proud of that.”

But there is still – and will continue to be – room for improvement. “It’s not easy to do the perfect trial. I haven’t seen it yet, and there are still plenty of questions that need to be tackled. There are some aspects of the conduct of trials that could be greatly improved.”

Herbert will join a group of the world’s top names in evidence based physical therapy in the session entitled “Frontiers in clinical trials.” He believes that the session presents a unique opportunity to see some of the world’s best clinical trialists in physical therapy together in one place. “This is a stellar panel,” he says.

Evidence session is “unique”

“We’ll be asking, what do we need to do to carry out really world class clinical trials to inform physiotherapy practice? The session is as much about strategy and conduct as it is about the analysis of clinical trials. We’ll have different perspectives on what the main challenges are. We’ll be discussing the need for large scale collaborative trials to tackle the really big questions in physiotherapy practice.”

Chris Maher, Director of the Musculoskeletal Division of the George Institute for Global Health, Sydney, and other speakers will consider how to take the profession’s achievements in clinical trials to the next level.

Sallie Lamb, Professor of Rehabilitation at Warwick University’s Clinical Trials Unit in the UK will talk about the processes of conducting large scale trials, in particular trials of complex interventions which have implications for policy and practice.

Rebecca Craik, Chair of the Department of Physical Therapy at Arcadia University, USA, will discuss new standards in publication and dissemination of RCTs.

“That’s really important,” says Herbert. “There are some very straightforward mechanisms that should be adopted by all clinical trialists which would greatly improve standards.”

Herbert’s focus will be analytical techniques. And the good news is that as technology improves, there are simple means of overcoming some problems that confronted researchers in the past. Herbert thinks it is important that the profession knows about these.

“I’m going to talk about contemporary methods for optimal analysis in clinical trials,” he says. “In the past 15 years new statistical techniques have emerged that are very valuable for the analysis of clinical trials – they overcome some of the limitations of simpler methods. But there’s also been the development of software that makes these analyses within reach of mortals. It’s no longer the domain of cutting edge statisticians.”

Focused symposium: Frontiers in Clinical Trials (FS-05); Convenor Rob Herbert; 8.30-10; Hall 404
Stay connected: congress apps, news and social media

This WCPT Congress is the first to have its own app. It will be available for download from the Apple Store, Android Play or Windows Phone Store.

The congress app
The WCPT 2015 app for use on smart phones and tablets, provides the information you need to get the most out of your congress. Browse the congress programme, create your own itinerary, access the plan you created on the iplanner (see below), access exhibitor information and venue maps. Available from the Apple Store from mid April. look out for announcements on WCPT social media.

The congress iplanner
The WCPT Congress 2015 iplanner, available on the WCPT website, allows you to plan your congress see what’s on, when and where, every day of the congress; put together a personalised list of favourites; filter congress sessions according to day, topic, session type and location. If you register and sign in to the iplanner, you can sync your personalised plan with the congress app.

Congress e-News
Every day of the congress there will be news, pictures and video going up on the WCPT website as Congress e-News – you’ll be receiving notifications about what’s being published by social media. At the end of each day the news over the past 24 hours will be combined into a daily edition of Congress e-News. Go to www.wcpt.org/congress/articles

Twitter
WCPT is using social media as a key promotional and reporting tool for the event. There will be instant updates of news and information to both delegates and thousands of interested physical therapists who are not at the congress. Twitter in particular will be used to build excitement and an online community around congress. Delegates, presenters, exhibitors and sponsors are all encouraged to get tweeting, and keep tweeting throughout congress, with the hashtag: #WCPT2015

Join the conversation! Follow @WCPT1951 on Twitter and retweet to your own followers.

Facebook Congress Connect
WCPT’s Facebook Congress Connect page is a great way for those attending or presenting at congress to introduce themselves and start networking with your fellow delegates. https://www.facebook.com/groups/ 604324836351791/ Don’t forget to join the 42,000+ already following WCPT on its main Facebook page.

#WCPT2015

Elizabeth Dean, Canada

“The experience of a WCPT Congress is phenomenal. I have been going through the duration of my career, and I have to say that sharing with colleagues internationally gives you a very different perspective, and it’s the sharing which helps improve practice across the board.”

Elizabeth Dean will be speaking at the focused symposium on global health and non-communicable diseases (FS-13) on Sunday at 1600 in Hall 406

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