World Physiotherapy Day 2015

‘Thanks To My Physio’

World Physio Day (WPD) took place on the 8th of September 2015 with the launch of a new promotional campaign entitled ‘Thanks to My Physio’. The campaign was designed to target external stakeholders, drawing attention to this world-recognised day and inviting service users to get vocal about how physiotherapy has been of benefit to them. It drew on the WCPT theme of ‘Fulfilling Potential’, seeking stories of how physiotherapy has facilitated patients in doing so, and laid the foundations of a format that can be utilised to promote the profession and mark the day for a number of years to come. The primary objectives of the campaign were to generate a cohesive, national look-and-feel for WPD, to promote widespread, unified local activity on the day and to engage external stakeholders in celebrating the profession while generating national PR.

Campaign structure

- Local support; all local department and private practice managers were contacted directly by the Society with a detailed email explaining the nature and purpose of the campaign. A call-to-action went out to promote the day, with explicit instruction on how to do so including suggesting activities, availing of printed support materials on request, encouraging local stands and asking that all departments engage staff in running their own WPD events.
  - ‘Thanks To My Physio’ printed materials were developed for distribution to all local sites requesting supports for their activities. A series of patient stories were obtained and edited with consent to form the primary messages of the print materials. These were also entered into the competition.
  - The mechanics of a ‘Thanks To My Physio’ competition were developed and provided to members. Members were invited to supply printed competition leaflets at their WPD stands and encourage the public to complete them, telling their positive physiotherapy stories. A competition prize of four physiotherapy treatment sessions was made available.
  - ‘Fulfilling Potential’ WCPT materials were uploaded to the ISCP website for self-printing to add to each site’s visual display and support the broader message.

Activities on the day varied from site to site and included fitness and BMI testing, information and advice with educational leaflets for distribution, physical activity quizzes, planned staff exercise initiatives (classes and organised walks), and the promotion of the ‘Thanks To My Physio’ competition with collection of entrants stories.

- National Media;
Using external PR support, national radio stations and print publications were approached to seek uptake of the competition, the goal being to have entrant’s stories broadcast/published on and around WPD. Radio stations unfortunately did not agree to any structured promotion of the competition however the Irish Times became keenly involved, starting with a feature piece on the benefits of physiotherapy through the life cycle. On WPD the paper published four articles on physiotherapy in its health supplement, and are due to follow with a piece on those winning stories in the coming weeks. All press features were either written, edited or directly informed by members including Society President Jill Long and WCPT President Dr Emma Stokes.

Web links to Irish Times WPD press and online activity:


http://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/health-family/giving-patients-the-power-to-make-themselves-better-1.2334997


PR was also obtained on the day on a scheduled photo-call launch with the Minister for Health, and active promotion of the event and competition took place via the Society’s social media sites. Members engaged in social media promotion independently as did some of the local sites conducting activities on the day. Where possible, any radio interviews conducted by members on behalf of the Society used the opportunity to promote WPD in advance – Jenny Brannigan did so on the Pat Kenny show on NewsTalk FM.

A new page was constructed on the website to house a permanent feature entitled ‘Patient Stories’ which now features those winning patient stories and others provided to the Society.
The Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists is the sole professional body representing chartered physiotherapists in Ireland. Physiotherapy is the health profession with expertise in movement and exercise prescription throughout the lifespan across the health spectrum. Physiotherapy involves specific interventions to individuals and populations where movement and function are, or may be, threatened by illness, ageing, injury, pain, disability, disease, disorder or environmental factors. Such interventions are designed and prescribed to develop, restore and maintain optimal health.

Sample participating local physiotherapy sites

St. Mary’s Hospital, Phoenix Park, Dublin
Milltown Physiotherapy Clinic, Dublin

Connolly Hospital, Blanchardstown

Galway University Hospital

St James’s Hospital, Dublin

Tallaght, Hospital, Dublin
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