World Physical Therapy Day

What to do
How to do it
How to get noticed

Movement for Health
World Physical Therapy Day

World Confederation for Physical Therapy
“World Physical Therapy Day is a wonderful annual event where we can promote the role physical therapists/physiotherapists play in keeping populations well, mobile and independent. We hope you’ll join the Movement for Health on 8th September!”

Marilyn Moffat, WCPT President

Note about this booklet: physical therapy or physiotherapy?

The terms physical therapy and physiotherapy refer to the same profession – some countries use one term, some the other. When the words physical therapy and physical therapist are used in this document, they also refer to physiotherapy and physiotherapist.
World Physical Therapy Day is held every year on 8th September, the day the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) was founded in 1951. It is a day when physical therapists (known in many countries as physiotherapists) can promote the profession and its work. They can:

- showcase the significant role the profession makes to the health and wellbeing of the global population
- raise the profile of the profession
- campaign on behalf of the profession and its patients/clients to governments and policy makers
WCPT believes that *Movement for Health* conveys the core of what physical therapists/physiotherapists do. In 2008 WCPT launched *Movement for Health* as the theme for World Physical Therapy Day. Since then the theme has been picked up and used by the profession around the world.

Over the next four years WCPT will be introducing an annual campaign message within this theme. While still leaving you scope to incorporate and add your own ideas in your activities, the campaign offers an opportunity for the profession to deliver a united global message on World Physical Therapy Day.

See page 4 for information about this year’s campaign message: Fit for life.

**Physical therapists as exercise experts**

As experts in movement and exercise, and with a thorough knowledge of risk factors, pathology and their effects on all systems, physical therapists are the ideal professionals to promote, guide, prescribe and manage exercise activities and efforts. Exercise promotes health, wellbeing and fitness.
This year: Fit for life

What’s the campaign message for 2012?

Each year, under the general theme of Movement for Health, WCPT will be introducing a new campaign message. This year, the campaign message and theme of materials from WCPT is Fit for life.

Fit for life embraces the important role physical therapists have in promoting activity and health among every section of the population at every stage of their life.

We are encouraging individual physical therapists, their workplaces and WCPT member organisations to take up this theme. We hope that Fit for life and the materials we produce under this theme will allow you to demonstrate that:

- physical activity is beneficial at all stages of life
- physical activity helps people stay engaged in life and employment
- physical activity promotes mental health
- physical activity can help prevent non-communicable diseases (such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic respiratory disease and diabetes)
- physical therapists as physical activity experts can help people remain active
- physical therapists can help people adapt to any health or mobility problems to help them stay active

These messages are important not just to encourage health and activity in the population. They can help establish physical therapists as physical activity experts, and communicate the fact that they have a vital role in preventing illness, disability and death from non-communicable diseases. This is a particularly important time to be making these points, because of new pressure from the United Nations and the World Health Organization to make national governments take action to prevent non-communicable diseases.

Key messages

The four key messages under this year’s Fit for life campaign are:

- If you want to keep healthy, keep moving - all through your life.
- People who stay active are more likely to keep working, engaging and enjoying without having to depend on others. They are fit for life.
- Inactivity causes disability and contributes to millions of deaths around the world every year. It can lead to heart disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer.
- You’re never too young or too old to stay active – just half an hour of moderate exercise (like walking fast) every day can make a real difference.
What materials are available?

WCPT is providing two types of Fit for life materials.

- Materials that you can provide directly to the public and/or policy makers as part of your campaigns and events.
- Materials that will help you plan campaigns and events, and provide source material for speeches, articles and press releases.

Materials for the public/policy makers

- A Fit for life leaflet: to distribute directly.
- Fit for life posters: to put up in public places.
- A t-shirt design and logo: to download and get printed locally.
- Stickers: to download and print on standard printer labels.
- Banner artwork: to download and be supplied to local manufacturers.
- Twibbons: to add to your Facebook and Twitter profiles.

Materials to help you

As well as this booklet, we are providing the following:

- A clinical resources booklet on physical activity, physical therapy and non-communicable disease: providing valuable research findings, statistics and policy background for use in your own campaigns and events.
- An article about physical therapy and non-communicable diseases by the WCPT President: to be used in newsletters, magazines, newspapers etc (find in the clinical resources booklet).
- Press release template and guide to writing a press release.
- Facts and figures about physical therapy (find in the clinical resources booklet).
- A list of journal articles showing the effectiveness of physical therapy (find in the clinical resources booklet).
- E-postcards: to send to people in your email contacts.

Download the above resources for free at: www.wcpt.org/wptday
Whether you work for a national association, in a hospital department, in a small clinical setting or are still studying physical therapy, you can find ways to mark the day.

Here are some suggestions to help you make sure that you choose something that’s right for you, and that fits in with what you want to achieve for the day. The ideas focus particularly on the theme Movement for Health and physical therapists’ role in encouraging fitness and preventing disease.

Public events

- A free health screening programme in a public place – measuring, for example, weight, BMI, blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, lung capacity. Shopping centres are an ideal place.
- Talks and seminars in workplaces, suggesting workplace exercises and providing literature to employers.
- Talks or events at community centres such as youth centres, old people’s homes, day centres, adult education colleges.
- Public workshops on obesity, diabetes and other diseases of civilisation.
- A roaming information booth, visiting different locations in the day, or over a week.
- A “health challenge” for the public, politicians or celebrities – for example, challenge them to walk a certain number of steps during the day. You could lend out pedometers for the challenge, or give them away free.
- A fun run.
- Public exercise classes, say in a large city park.
- A parade, or road walk (a sponsor may be interested in providing caps/t-shirts).
- A cycle race.
- A sports day in a local park, with races, obstacles courses, long jump, tug of war.
- A Movement for Health fair with stands from companies, specialist physical therapy groups, voluntary organisations demonstrating their work and providing information on current projects.

Events in schools

- Arrange a school assembly on Movement for Health with a guest speaker.
- Provide a leaflet on the importance of exercise for young people and the role schools play.
- Find a way of rewarding children who walk/cycle to school.
- Have a walk/cycle to school day.
- Give schools the opportunity to set up “walking buses” to school.
- Hold an essay or art competition, perhaps with a prize donated by a local company.
- Hold a seminar for school teachers.
- Hold a school quiz, testing children’s and teachers’ knowledge of healthy lifestyles.
- Work with children and teachers to assess ergonomic challenges such as carrying book bags/rucksacks, using computers, sitting on the floor, using low chairs.
In clinical settings

• Set up an information booth or exhibition in a reception area with information about what physical therapists do.

• Put up WCPT’s campaign posters on your walls and hand out our ready-to-print flyers.

Added extras

• See if there’s a local celebrity who can support your cause, and participate in any events. This is likely to increase public and media interest.

• Offer to be a guest on a local radio show, or to answer questions online.

• Have something to give people which will help them stay healthy, and show what physical therapists do to help: flyers, information sheets and stickers like those available from the WCPT website are a good place to start. You might also be able to get companies to donate pedometers, healthy eating sheets etc.

Get ideas

Take a look at the WCPT website for materials and to see what celebrations and events other people have organised in the past.

www.wcpt.org/wptday
How to start planning

The main goal of any activities you organise for World Physical Therapy Day will be to raise the profile of the physical therapy profession, and to demonstrate what physical therapists can do to improve health. Use the day as a platform to promote how the profession is tackling these issues and improving public health.

Before planning any event, or publicity campaign, you’ll need to ask four simple questions. You may have to think carefully to come up with the right answers.

What?
What do you really want to achieve:
• Increase the public profile of the profession?
• Communicate a particular health education message?
• Promote this year’s campaign message: Fit for life?
• Improved status for the profession among policy makers?

You may want to pick up on a general theme suggested by WCPT, but it is a good idea to focus on specific issues that are important in your country.

Who?
Who do you really want to get your message through to? You may think it’s everyone, but to decide on the right sort of activities, you’re going to have to consider who is your main target group. Is it young people, or teachers, or older people, or the general public? Or perhaps your efforts might really be best targeted at the policy makers who as yet do not understand physical therapy or its contribution?

How?
When you’ve decided on your message, and who you want to reach, it’s time to decide on the best means to reach those people with your message. It might be an event, or some sort of publicity campaign. There are some ideas in the previous section, but you might want to think of your own.

Where?
If you’re holding an event, would you like to hold one large event or several smaller ones? Is it better to hire a large space like an auditorium, or hold it in a public place like a shopping centre or visit various small venues? When deciding on a location, do consider parking, transportation, public access, capacity and access for people with disabilities.

Other considerations
Planning
Allocate a team of people responsible for planning the activity, each with a clear role. Together, establish targets for what you want to achieve. You may also want to organise follow-up activities.

Timing
Set a realistic timetable, bearing in mind the following:
• Speakers and contributors may need good notice, and time to prepare.
• Venues often need to be booked well in advance.
• Invitations need to be sent out at least three weeks in advance.
• Publicity materials may take time to get printed.
• The media are more likely to cover an event if you notify them in good time.
Local interest

Sometimes it’s best to keep the theme local and relevant to the people in that community. Gather some local data to ensure the message is directly relevant to the audience and have some statistics available to substantiate issues and problems identified. The day provides a great opportunity for creating community awareness of these problems and how they may be tackled and prevented.

Speakers

Identify local experts, leading physical therapists, academics and celebrities who can support your messages, and can speak on your selected theme at events, or to the press.

Partners and sponsorship

Approach other organisations and companies who you think might enhance your event or campaign, perhaps providing financial support.

Media

The greater the coverage you are able to generate in the press (local, national and professional), the more impact your activity will have. See Getting publicity on page 12.

Publicise well!

Make sure you invite the press and key people along to your event. If you involve companies and key figures from your community at an early stage, you may find you get support, and even sponsors for t-shirts, caps, badges or prizes.
Using social media

With the increased use of social media, WCPT aims to maximise the impact of World Physical Therapy Day through various social networking sites. Here is how you can follow the campaign and help spread the campaign's message to engage global support for the day.

Facebook
For the latest Word Physical Therapy Day updates follow WCPT on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/#!/pages/World-Confederation-for-Physical-Therapy-WCPT/116826698351147
Share our postings with your friends.
See our ready-made postings to put on your wall.

Twitter
Follow WCPT for campaign updates:
https://twitter.com/#!/WCPT1951
Use #worldptday when tweeting about the day.

YouTube
Send us videos of your celebrations for the WCPT YouTube channel:
www.youtube.com/user/theWCPT

Twibbon
Support the campaign and use our Twibbon. Click to show your support:
http://twibbon.com/join/World-Physical-Therapy-Day

Using social media for your own events

Don't forget you can also use social media to promote your own World Physical Therapy Day events, celebrations and objectives.

For best results:
• make your postings informative
• ask questions and invite feedback
• include photos
• launch a competition to generate interest
Facebook postings

Use these ready-made postings to put on your wall:

Don’t forget to celebrate World Physical Therapy Day on 8th September. For inspiration see the WCPT website at www.wcpt.org/wptday

What are you doing on 8th September? Find out how you can mark World Physical Therapy Day 2012 at www.wcpt.org/wptday

8th September is the day when physical therapists from all over the world can raise awareness about the crucial contribution we make to keeping people well, mobile and independent www.wcpt.org/wptday

Tweets

Join the conversation on Twitter using these ready-made tweets:

Celebrate #worldptday on 8th September. Find out more at www.wcpt.org/wptday

What are you doing on 8th September? See how you can mark World PT Day #worldptday at www.wcpt.org/wptday

8 September is a unique opportunity for physical therapists around the world to promote their profession. Mark #worldptday www.wcpt.org/wptday
You will get the most out of your events and celebrations by publicising them well. Here are some questions to ask yourself, which will help you put together a publicity plan.

1. **Who do you want to get your message to?**

   Make sure you know exactly what you want to achieve from World Physical Therapy Day and who you want to get your message across to.

2. **Which media?**

   Now you have identified your target market in step 1 work out which parts of the media would help you get your message to them.
   - If you are trying to reach the general public, local and national newspapers, and radio may be your best means to reaching large numbers.
   - If you want to reach managers or professionals, your best route may be getting publicity in professional magazines and newsletters, and making individual approaches.
   - Politicians are harder to reach – individual approaches and getting publicity on national radio, television and newspapers is the best (but difficult) route.

   Put some effort into researching all the possible media outlets for the audience you want to reach. If you have any contacts in the media, use them – approach them directly and get their advice on what your best route to getting publicity might be.

3. **What’s your story?**

   If you are going to ask editors to give coverage to your activity or campaign you will need to give them a “story” – a simply stated, key message, that sounds as if it will interest readers, viewers or listeners.

   Few journalists devote time and space to an issue simply because you want them to – there has to be something interesting or newsworthy in it. For example, the fact that physical therapists have a major impact on preventing and treating lifestyle conditions such as obesity will come as a surprise to many journalists. If you can convince them of this, and make any activity you are planning sound really interesting, you will be well on your way.

   Things that often make subjects newsworthy to journalists are:
   - a new survey
   - a new report
   - interesting facts and figures
   - the involvement of a celebrity or a politician
   - strong quotes from a senior person
   - real people talking about real experiences
4. How should the media be approached?

A press release is the most obvious way to approach the media.

• Make sure it’s concise and gets to the point.

• If you are sending out an advance press release, make sure you do it well before any activities or launch you are planning.

• If you’re sending out a press release reporting on something that’s just happened, do it as soon as it’s happened – otherwise what you’ve done will turn into old news.

• Try and give the media everything they need. The quicker you respond to their requests, and the clearer the information you give them, the more chance you have of getting some publicity.

• See WCPT’s guide on how to write a press release and download a press release template at www.wcpt.org/wptday-press.

Direct approaches to journalists by telephone or email can also work well if you’re very clear about the story you have to sell, and you don’t take up too much of their time.

Don’t forget to follow up

It’s a good idea to follow your press release up with a phone call or an email to see if the journalist has received it, and whether they’re interested in covering it. But don’t pester them. If they aren’t interested, you can try persuading them – but don’t keep at it, or annoy them, because it might jeopardise you getting publicity next time.

If you want further information, there is a WCPT Keynote about getting publicity and dealing with the press, www.wcpt.org/common/docs/wcpt_keynote_press.pdf