



## Press release

*For immediate release*  
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### Physical therapists helping people become fit at every age

Physical therapists can help people become fit and active contributors to society, whatever their physical limitations or 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 and overcome musculo-skeletal problems and non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease and cancer. They do this by recommending safe and appropriate exercise programmes.

They help people throughout the lifespan. Studies have shown that older adults engaged in regular physical activity demonstrate improved balance, strength, coordination, motor control, flexibility, blood pressure and endurance. At the other end of the age range, physical activity prescribed by physical therapists counters the inactivity and poor posture in children that can lead to obesity, musculoskeletal disorders and a range of other problems in adult life.

That is why the message for this World Physical Therapy Day is Fit for the Future.

Marilyn Moffat, WCPT's President, says that because of their specialist knowledge physical therapists can help all children, adults and older people participate in physical activity. "Physical therapists can help them overcome physical problems that may restrict their ability to move," she says.

"Physical activity doesn't just mean more healthy people, but happier more productive people, whether young or aging. It's time for all of us to be fit for the future."

*For more information, contact your national physical therapy organisation (see [www.wcpt.org/members](http://www.wcpt.org/members)), see the article by Marilyn Moffat at <http://bit.ly/192zEAD> or email Simon Crompton at [news@wcpt.org](mailto: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](http://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](http://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. More details and toolkit at [www.wcpt.org/wptday](http://www.wcpt.org/wptday).

### **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](http://www.wcpt.org).