

# Physiotherapy documentation and records management

Policy statement

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# Physiotherapy documentation and records management

World Physiotherapy aims to improve the quality of global health service delivery by strengthening agreed professional standards that recognise the importance and legal requirement for accurate and comprehensive documentation and records.(1-3)

Documentation and records management include record keeping, storage, retrieval and disposal. Physiotherapists have a professional and legal obligation to document and maintain an appropriate up-to-date patient/client record.

Documentation and records provide valuable information that can be used to:

- provide a timely, accurate, clear record of care the patient/client received
- record appropriate informed consent
- facilitate clinical decision making
- demonstrate duty of care
- improve the quality and safety of services through clear communication of the intervention or treatment rationale
- facilitate a consistent approach to collaborative teamwork, particularly in the context of multidisciplinary records
- ensure continuity of service provision and management between different service providers
- support other activities such as teaching, research, audit, quality assurance programmes and outcomes monitoring
- demonstrate that physiotherapists select and provide the appropriate quality services
- provide a vital source of statistical and managerial information for current and future planning of physiotherapy and health service provision
- provide evidence in the event of litigation.

World Physiotherapy advocates that member organisations should:

- support and ensure their members implement procedures for documentation and record keeping, safe storage, retrieval and disposal of all records in all formats (paper or electronic) with consideration of the confidentiality requirements and compliance with applicable legal, national, and local requirements.
- ensure professional accountability for the services provided by a physiotherapist and for quality service provision and management
- ensure their members are aware that individuals have the right to information in their records in an easily accessible and understandable format
- ensure that physiotherapist professional entry level education and continuing professional development cover documentation and records management<sup>1</sup>
- advise their members of the World Physiotherapy guideline for documentation and records management.<sup>3</sup>

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[Glossary https://world.physio/resources/glossary](https://world.physio/resources/glossary)

**Duty of care**

**Informed consent**

**Physiotherapy record**

**Service standards**

**Standards of care**

<b>Approval, review and related policy information</b>	
<b>Date adopted:</b>	Approved at the 17th General Meeting of WCPT in June 2011. Revised and re-approved at the 18th General Meeting of WCPT in May 2015. Revised and re-approved at the 19th General Meeting of WCPT in May 2019. Revised and re-approved at the 20 <sup>th</sup> General Meeting of WCPT in May 2023
<b>Date for review:</b>	2027
<b>Related World Physiotherapy policies:</b>	World Physiotherapy policy statements <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Description of physiotherapy</li><li>• Ethical principles and the responsibilities of physiotherapists and member organisations</li><li>• Quality services</li><li>• Relationship with other health professionals</li><li>• Standards of physiotherapist practice</li><li>• Support personnel for physiotherapy practice</li></ul> World Physiotherapy guidelines <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Documentation and records management</li><li>• Standards of physiotherapist practice</li></ul> Physiotherapist education framework

## References

1. World Physiotherapy. Physiotherapist education framework. London, UK: World Physiotherapy; 2021 [3 Nov 2023]. Available from: <https://world.physio/what-we-do/education>.
2. World Physiotherapy. Policy statement: Standards of physiotherapist practice. London, UK: World Physiotherapy; 2023 [3 Nov 2023]. Available from: <https://world.physio/policy/ps-standards>.
3. World physiotherapy. World Physiotherapy guideline for documentation and records management London, UK: World Physiotherapy; 2023 [2 Nov 2023]. Available from: <https://world.physio/guideline/records-management>.

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