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## Press release

*For immediate release*

24 August 2021

### **World Physiotherapy offers support to physiotherapists in Haiti and Afghanistan**

**World Physiotherapy offers condolences and support to physiotherapists in Afghanistan and Haiti as they struggle to meet healthcare needs of their people**

Physiotherapists in Afghanistan are working to support the many people injured and displaced during the current political upheavals. World Physiotherapy has sent a message of support and condolence to the [Afghan Association for Physical Therapy](#) and its members.

In Haiti physiotherapists are working as part of the response to the earthquake that struck the island on 14 August, killing more than 1,000 people. World Physiotherapy has a strong working arrangement with the [Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization \(PAHO\)](#), and has introduced representatives of PAHO to the president of the [Haitian Physiotherapy Society](#). This introduction will help PAHO better understand the physiotherapy situation in Haiti and offer support to the local physiotherapy community as they assess rehabilitation needs in the aftermath of the earthquake.

Since its foundation in 1951, World Physiotherapy has advocated for the rights of physiotherapists and for equal access to healthcare for all. Our participation in the International Committee of the Red Cross' [Healthcare in Danger](#) project demonstrates our commitment to raising awareness of the need to protect physiotherapists, and other healthcare workers, delivering care in dangerous situations.

World Physiotherapy is calling on the people in positions of power and leadership in Afghanistan and Haiti to ensure physiotherapists' safety and wellbeing, and to help and protect them with any means possible to continue their work.

Emma Stokes, World Physiotherapy president, said: "Our thoughts are with our colleagues and communities in Afghanistan and Haiti at this time. We hope that they and their loved remain safe.

"As an organisation and global community, we are committed to supporting our member organisations, particularly in times of great challenge. We will also liaise with our international partners to assist in advocacy and other requests for assistance as they arise."

*Note to World Physiotherapy member organisations:* please use this information in your magazine, journal, newsletter or social media channels. It may also be forwarded to your local or national media.

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## **EDITOR'S NOTES**

### **About physiotherapy**

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.

Physiotherapists 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 physiotherapists to practise independently. Continuing education ensures that they keep up to date with the latest advances in research and practice. Many physiotherapists are engaged in research themselves.

### **About World Physiotherapy**

World Physiotherapy is the profession's global body representing over 660,000 physiotherapists from member organisations in 125 countries/territories. More information: [www.world.physio](http://www.world.physio)