

Evidence-based practice

Policy statement

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Evidence-based practice

The World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) believes that physical therapists have a responsibility to ensure that the management of patients/clients, carers and communities is based on the best available evidence. They also have a responsibility not to use techniques and technologies that have been shown to be ineffective or unsafe.

Evidence should be integrated with clinical experience, taking into consideration beliefs, values and the cultural context of the local environment, as well as patient/client preferences. Evidence-based practice (EBP) is more easily achievable in environments that embrace and promote it.

WCPT encourages its member organisations to:

- work with managers and organisations to provide appropriate support structures, resources, facilities and learning opportunities to ensure the delivery of the highest quality of physical therapy services possible
- ensure that physical therapists are able to evaluate practice critically, including being able to identify questions arising in practice, accessing and critically appraising the best evidence, and implementing and evaluating the outcomes of their actions
- facilitate the provision of relevant life-long learning activities that are fundamental to evidence-based physical therapy practice, which should be introduced in entry level physical therapy education programmes and should extend through continuing professional development opportunities ^{1, 2}
- promote collaboration within the profession and with other professions or disciplines at local, national and international levels to facilitate information generation, sharing and implementation
- develop partnerships and collaborations on projects relevant to EBP
- call on national governments and non-governmental organisations to facilitate and promote evidence-based health services (eg through providing appropriate resources such as computers, internet access, online databases, libraries, and training in EBP skills)

Glossary (www.world.physio/resources/glossary)

Continuing professional development (CPD)

Entry level physical therapist professional education programmes

Evidence-based practice (EBP)

Interprofessional collaborative practice

Approval, review and related policy information	
Date adopted:	Approved at the 15th General Meeting of WCPT June 2003. Revised and re-approved at the 16th General Meeting of WCPT June 2007. Revised and re-approved at the 17th General Meeting of WCPT June 2011. Revised and re-approved at the 19th General Meeting of WCPT May 2019.
Date for review:	2023
Related WCPT policies:	WCPT policy statements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Ethical responsibilities of physical therapists and WCPT members • Research • Standards of physical therapy practice

References

1. 1.World Confederation for Physical Therapy. WCPT guideline for physical therapist professional entry level education. London, UK: WCPT; 2011. www.wcpt.org/guidelines/entry-level-education (Access date 30 August 2019)
2. World Confederation for Physical Therapy. Policy statement: Education. London, UK: WCPT; 2019. www.wcpt.org/policy/ps-education (Access date 30 August 2019)

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