

Research

Policy statement

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Research

The World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) advocates the generation, dissemination and implementation of physical therapy research evidence is essential for the practice of evidence-based physical therapy.

WCPT encourages member organisations to:

- advocate for their members engaged in research to conduct research in accordance with internationally recognised ethical principles and guidelines ¹⁻⁶
- ensure that research is carried out with the approval of a local/national research ethics review committee
 - assemble a properly constituted ethics review committee where there is no such review body, or lobby for another body to do so
- promote good clinical practice in the conduct of research activities, including:
 - adherence to ethical standards
 - appropriate management and monitoring
 - accountability (including financial and reporting)
 - confidentiality and anonymity of participant's data
 - duty of care for research participants
 - identification and protection of intellectual property arising from the research
 - ensuring the integrity of the results and their reporting
 - reporting of adverse incidents
 - reporting results of the research endeavour, both positive and negative
 - following guidelines supporting ethical authorship practices ^{7, 8}
- support and promote collaboration in research endeavours at a local, national and/or international level with all those who can make a valuable contribution with respect to the initial concept, design, planning, execution, analysis, discussion and dissemination:
 - within the profession
 - with other professions or disciplines
 - with service users and providers
- raise awareness among their members of their responsibilities to record research projects on appropriate research databases, for example clinical trial registries, and reporting according to guidelines
- make their members aware of their responsibility to share freely the results of such research through a range of dissemination routes including databases, publication in appropriate professional journals, conference presentations, electronic media and the national press
- urge their members to follow and stay up-to date with research guidelines and standards that support the integrity and quality of research reporting ⁷⁻⁹

- advocate for open access initiatives supporting the dissemination of research
- recognise the role and responsibility that national associations have in promoting the evidence to support the practice of physical therapists

WCPT believes that physical therapy research should encompass all domains that impact on physical therapy and users of these services.¹ Further, that the profession draws on relevant methodological approaches² that are accepted in the literature and appropriate to the design research questions under investigations, and is open to exploring innovation in research practice.

While not all physical therapists are expected to be active researchers, it is a professional responsibility for all physical therapists to use research findings and the best available evidence to inform their practice. This is supported by WCPT's policy statement on evidence-based practice.¹⁰ Physical therapists should also recognise the opportunities for informing research through the routine collection of reliable practice-based data gathered in the course of every day practice.

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

Duty of care.

Evidence-based practice (EBP)

Interprofessional collaborative practice

Interprofessional team

Research ethics

Approval, review and related policy information	
Date adopted:	Approved at the 15th General Meeting of WCPT, June 2003 (replaced Declaration of Principle: Validation of practice techniques and technologies). Edited and re-approved at the 17th General Meeting of WCPT June 2011. Revised and re-approved at the 18th General Meeting of WCPT May 2015. 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 • Evidence based practice • Informed consent

¹ This includes but is not limited to: basic sciences; examination, diagnosis, prognosis/plan, and interventions/treatment; technological advances; theory development; service delivery and organisation of service delivery models/systems; economic analyses (eg cost effectiveness studies); implementation sciences; educational approaches; health and social care policy; patient/client perspectives; effectiveness of interprofessional practice; multimodal interventions.

² Examples of methodological approaches include, but are not limited to: meta-analysis, experimental, quasi-experimental, descriptive/quantitative, qualitative.

References

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6. World Medical Association. Declaration of Helsinki: Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects. Ferney-Voltaire, France; 2013. www.wma.net/policies-post/wma-declaration-of-helsinki-ethical-principles-for-medical-research-involving-human-subjects/ (Access date 29 August 2019)
7. Equator Network. Enhancing the Quality and Transparency Of health Research.: Equator Network; 2014 [Available from: www.equator-network.org/].
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9. International Council for Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Pharmaceuticals for Human Use (ICH). ICH Guidelines. 2016 [Available from: www.ich.org/products/guidelines.html].
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