

Community based rehabilitation

Policy statement

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Community based rehabilitation

Community based rehabilitation (CBR) is a strategy within community development for the rehabilitation, equalisation of opportunities, and social integration of all people with disabilities. CBR is implemented through the combined efforts of persons with disabilities themselves, their families and communities, and the appropriate health, education, vocational and social services. ¹

WCPT encourages the development of CBR addressing individual needs and supports internationally relevant statements, such as the World Health Organization's global disability action plan and the rehabilitation 2030 – a call for action ² which highlight the importance of a strong multidisciplinary approach and recognise rehabilitation as an essential component of integrated health services.

Community engagement is often necessary to promote and fulfil the human rights of people with disabilities and allow them to become active members of society ³. WCPT recognises that CBR extends beyond health and rehabilitation and encompasses educational, social, vocational and economic strategies. Collaboration between agencies, sectors and professionals is vital at all levels to support this comprehensive approach to rehabilitation. Health professionals practise with individuals and local communities as partners in service planning, operation and monitoring.

Physical therapists are equipped through their education to practise in both urban and rural settings and have important contributions to make in CBR. These include:

- providing physical therapy examination/assessment, evaluation, diagnosis, prognosis/plan and intervention/treatment aimed at promoting health, preventing disease and enhancing movement and function
- achieving jointly identified physical therapy and patient/client goals by educating and transferring selected skills to other staff, carers and community members
- providing consultation advice, support and supervision to other health, education and social care/service personnel
- collaborating intra- and inter-professionally in the best interest of the patient/client/population
- initiating and managing programmes
- providing policy advice to governments, non-governmental organisations and disabled people's organisations

WCPT believes that physical therapists have a right to equal status and should be treated the same whether practising in rural or urban communities and calls on its member organisations to support this.

WCPT supports the use of the World Health Organization CBR Guidelines and encourages its member organisations to work with national governments and non-governmental organisations to develop policies that support CBR. ⁴

Glossary (<https://world.physio/resources/glossary>)

Community based rehabilitation (CBR)

Disability

Equity

Multidisciplinary

Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO)

Rehabilitation

Approval, review and related policy information	
Date adopted:	Originally adopted 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 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 statement: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primary health care• Diversity and inclusion

References

1. International Labour Organization, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization. CBR: a strategy for rehabilitation, equalization of opportunities, poverty reduction and social inclusion of people with disabilities: joint position paper. Geneva, Switzerland; 2004.
<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/43060> (Access date 30 August 2019)
2. World Health Organization. Rehabilitation 2030: A Call for Action 2019 [Available from: www.who.int/disabilities/care/rehab-2030/en/].
3. United Nations. Sustainable Development Goals New York, USA2018 [Available from: www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/].
4. World Health Organization. Community-based rehabilitation guidelines. Geneva, Switzerland: WHO; 2010.
www.who.int/disabilities/cbr/guidelines/en/ (Access date 30 August 2019)

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