

Infection prevention and control

Policy statement

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Infection prevention and control

The World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) advocates that infection prevention and control is the responsibility of all those involved in health services delivery and should be embedded into everyday practice. This relates to health service acquired infections and those that result from other sources, not just those that are considered high-risk infectious diseases. Early diagnosis, along with strategies to prevent, manage and contain infections, is essential for the wellbeing of patients/clients and all health professionals.

WCPT encourages its member organisations to ensure that:

- physical therapists familiarise themselves with the standards for infection prevention and control at the facility in which they practise and also the standards recommended by their national/provincial/state/local health departments
- physical therapists implement best practice in infection prevention and control in any practice setting
- employers and physical therapists have access to relevant and current information on infection prevention and control
- physical therapists are familiar with the International Health Regulations (IHR) 1 as they relate to infectious diseases
- physical therapists have a safe work environment that provides:
 - guidelines and policies on infection prevention and control
 - appropriate protection (eg vaccinations, equipment and supplies)
 - training to support awareness and good practice in infection prevention and control
 - mechanisms to monitor and review infection prevention and control procedures
 - appropriate care of physical therapists affected as a result of infection or as a consequence of dealing with infections and environments in the practice setting
 - protection from discrimination if they are infected

WCPT member organisations are urged to support national efforts to build, strengthen and maintain the capacities required under the IHR – to prevent, protect against, control and provide public health responses to the international spread of disease and to advocate for the role of physical therapists in the amelioration of the effects of such diseases.

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

Hazard

Wellbeing

Approval, review and related policy information	
Date adopted:	Originally approved as a Position statement: High risk infectious diseases, at the 13 th General Meeting of WCPT, June 1995. Revised and re-approved at the 16th General Meeting of WCPT June 2007. Policy statement 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"> • Description of physical therapy • Occupational health and safety for physical therapists

References

1. World Health Organization. International Health Regulations 2005 2nd Edition. Geneva, Switzerland.: WHO; 2008. www.who.int/ihr/9789241596664/en/index.html (Access date 15 November 2010)

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