

Physical therapy services for older people

Policy statement

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The World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) advocates for member organisations to work with legislative and regulatory bodies and service providers to incorporate the following principles into their national planning and programmes for older people.¹

- Physical therapists with appropriate knowledge and experience should be actively involved in developing policy and planning relating to services for older people at local, national and international levels.
- Prompt and coordinated services, including promotion, prevention, treatment/intervention and rehabilitation, provided by physical therapists should be available and accessible to older people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, limitations in their ability to function optimally.
- Physical therapy services for older people through primary health care, including services delivered in the community, care homes or out-patient clinics.
- Physical therapy services should be available for all older people regardless of their circumstances. Particular regard should be shown to those who do not have direct access to conventional services, for example older people in rural areas.
- Services for older people should be extended to people with characteristics of ageing acquired at a chronologically earlier age than the general population, regardless of the age at which “older person” is defined.

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

Equity

Inclusion

Practice settings

Approval, review and related policy information	
Date adopted:	Originally approved at the 13th General Meeting of WCPT, June 1995. 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">• Specialisation

References

1. World Health Organization. Definition of an older or elderly person. Geneva, Switzerland: WHO; 2010. www.who.int/healthinfo/survey/ageingdefnolder/en/index.html (Access date 29 August 2019)

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