

Candidate Statement - Dr. Alice B. Aiken, NACR Representative to World Physiotherapy

I am pleased to put forward my name to become the North American and Caribbean Region (NACR) Member on the World Physiotherapy (WP) Board of Directors. I have extensive board experience, both within and outside of physiotherapy professional bodies, and as a physiotherapist and Vice President at a research-intensive university, I have the experience to bring value to the board. I will outline my key experience and my vision for what I can bring to the board.

As a past-president of the Canadian Physiotherapy Association (2008-2009, President-Elect, 2009-2011 President, 2011-2012 Past President), Canada's representative to NACR and WCPT (2009-2011, including being a Canada's voting member at WCPT Congress 2011) and a member of the Board of the Ontario Physiotherapy Association (2005 to 2008), I have broad association board experience that would bring value to WP. I have a deep understanding of and experience in association governance at the provincial, national, and international level. In addition to physiotherapy professional boards, I have been, or am currently a director on 15 other boards of directors. These include national level boards, where I have been appointed by the Federal Government, not-for-profit and charity boards, and academic / scientific boards. I have done extensive training in board governance, including currently completing my Directors Education Program, a year-long certificate program offered through the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Business. This program trains experienced board directors, there is a rigorous application process, in the details of board governance with respect to legal issues, finance, ethics, governance, communications, and many other aspects of board governance. Once completed, I will receive the internationally-recognized designation of ICD.D (Institute for Corporate Directors. Director).

As the Vice President – Research & Innovation (VPRI) at Dalhousie University, one of Canada's U15 group of research-intensive universities, I am the currently the highest-ranking academic physiotherapist in Canada. I am responsible for supporting and growing both the research and the innovation and entrepreneurship portfolios at my university. In the three and a half years since I have been in this position, I have grown the research portfolio by over \$50 million to over \$180 million annually, and developed and implemented a full suite of innovation and entrepreneurship programming across the campus. I am a currently a full Professor in the School of Physiotherapy at Dalhousie.

Before I became an academic, I practiced physiotherapy full time for 12 years, first in the military, then in private practice. I did my Master degree and PhD while working full-time as a physiotherapist. In fact, I did a PhD so I could conduct research on the role of the Advanced Practice Physiotherapist (APP) in Canada. I continue APP research as part of my research portfolio today. My research on APP formed the basis for legislated changes to the scope of practice for physiotherapists in many provinces in Canada. It also allowed me to develop a deep understanding of the scope of physiotherapy practice. I am still involved in discussions and research in Canada and around the world about expanding scope of practice for physiotherapists. Most recently I worked in my home province of Nova Scotia to expand the role of physiotherapists to manage the COVID-19 pandemic. Physiotherapists have been intimately involved in managing hospital procedures in the face of closures, management of testing sites and now management of vaccination clinics. Our province has managed COVID-19 better than many other regions in the world, and physiotherapists have been intimately involved in that.

I have a passion for the NACR region and would be honoured to represent the region on the WP Board. I believe the NACR region has a key role to play in elevating discussions about direct access, expanded

scope of practice, educational requirements and title concerns. We have broad representation and diverse perspectives that can help the profession grow and be recognized in the world. I understand that:

- **30%** of the physiotherapy workforce in the NACR are members of their national physiotherapy association (Canada is at 50%).
- **67%** of World Physiotherapy member organisations in NACR reported a growth in their membership. But there was a decline of 4,096 members across the region. This is mainly due to a decline in membership of the American Physical Therapy Association, which is the largest World Physiotherapy member organisation in the region and the fourth largest World Physiotherapy member organisation. Some countries/territories in the region have seen large percentage increases in their membership growth: St. Lucia (56%), Guyana (41%), Jamaica (33%), Haiti (22%).
- **25%** of World Physiotherapy member organisations in the NACR reported full direct access, 25% reported direct access only for private practice, 50% reported there was no direct access, in any form, in their country/territory. Direct access is one of the priority issues for WP, not just in the NACR.

This represents an outstanding launching pad from which we can learn, grow and inform the world about change and growth in NACR as a model for leading the world. I have been in contact with the current CPA President, Viivi Riis, who has kept me apprised of WP and NACR business and changes. I believe the organization is an optimal position to further the physiotherapy profession and improve global health.

I believe I have the experience, expertise and passion to be an outstanding representative for NACR on the WP Board. I look forward to discussing my candidacy with the Member Organizations and working together to achieving our common goals.