

Press release

For immediate release

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Annual membership census reveals global state of the physiotherapy profession

Responses to the latest World Physiotherapy annual membership census reveal how the global physiotherapy workforce is developing and how physiotherapists are increasingly involved in health emergency preparedness planning and response.

World Physiotherapy publishes data from its member organisations every year on a range of issues, including professional regulation, practice, education, and the physiotherapy workforce. This data provides a comprehensive and valuable global profile of the profession. At a national level, the AMC data can be used as a powerful advocacy tool to help foster regulatory changes that will improve the profession.

In 2022, the annual membership census also included, for the first time, questions about health emergency preparedness and response, and perceptions of the physiotherapy profession.

The annual membership census date was 30 June 2022.

The most recent data is based on the census completed by 116 of World Physiotherapy's 125 member organisations in mid-2022. The high response rate, 92.8%, is consistent with previous years' response rates and demonstrates strong engagement between World Physiotherapy and its member organisations. The data gives a global snapshot of the physiotherapy profession across the world, showing variations in the density of physiotherapists in different countries/territories and between World Physiotherapy regions. Highlights of the 2022 census include:

- 63% of respondents said membership of their organisation had increased
- 33% of respondents said there was full direct access in their country/territory, where people could go to a physiotherapist without a referral from another health professional
- 63% of physiotherapists around the world are women and 42% of member organisations have women presidents
- 14% of member organisations said their organisation had specific policies or programmes to support women in leadership roles
- in 83% of countries/territories, physiotherapists can deliver services via telehealth.

World Physiotherapy chief executive officer Jonathon Kruger said: “The responses to the surveys from our member organisations are critical to the capacity of World Physiotherapy to provide ongoing support.

“It is good to see the increase in direct access because this means people who need physiotherapist services are able to access this directly from a physiotherapist, without having to go through another healthcare professional.

“Physiotherapy in emergency settings is a growing area of practice and physiotherapists are integral to meeting rehabilitation needs during emergencies. Responses to the AMC show the important role physiotherapists are increasingly playing in health emergency preparedness planning and response.”

The profile maps, which are developed from responses to the annual membership census, allow people to see how the global profession has evolved since 2013. The maps are an interactive resource that can be printed or downloaded and can be accessed [here](#).

Annual membership census 2022:

- [global report](#)
- [Africa region report](#)
- [Asia Western Pacific region report](#)
- [Europe region report](#)
- [North America Caribbean region report](#)
- [South America region report](#)

Feedback from World Physiotherapy member organisations has been overwhelmingly positive:

“The [Physiotherapy Association of Saint Lucia](#) is the smallest member organisation of World Physiotherapy. Although our membership is small, we are a growing organisation and it is useful to visualise our position in comparison to other associations throughout the region and worldwide.

“The data captured by the AMC is very useful and helps us understand our position within the NAC region and World Physiotherapy.”

[Physiotherapy Association of Saint Lucia](#)

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EDITOR'S NOTES

About physiotherapy

Physiotherapists are experts in developing and maintaining people’s ability to move and function throughout their lives. With an advanced understanding of how the body moves and what keeps it from moving well, they promote wellness, mobility and independence. They treat and prevent many problems caused by pain, illness, disability and disease, sport and work related injuries, ageing and inactivity.

Physiotherapists are educated over several years, giving them a full knowledge of the body's systems and the skills to treat a wide range of problems. This education is usually university-based, at a level that allows physiotherapists to practise independently. Continuing education ensures that they keep up to date with the latest advances in research and practice. Many physiotherapists are engaged in research themselves.

About World Physiotherapy

World Physiotherapy is the profession's global body representing over 600,000 physiotherapists from member organisations in 127 countries/territories. More information: www.world.physio