

Press release

For immediate release

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Physiotherapy's highest global honour awarded to Margot Skinner

New Zealand physiotherapist **Margot Skinner** has been awarded World Physiotherapy's highest honour for her outstanding contribution to the physiotherapy profession as a clinician, teacher, and researcher.

After announcing the **Mildred Elson award** at the 20th General Meeting in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, on 31 May 2023, Margot's contribution was recognised before more than 2,000 physiotherapists at the World Physiotherapy Congress 2023 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Margot's career as a physiotherapist, clinician, educator, and researcher spans more than 50 years. She was World Physiotherapy vice president, 2015-2019, regional executive board member for the Asia Western Pacific (AWP) region, 2007-2015, and was chair of AWP region, 2003-2007. She also served two terms as president of [Physiotherapy New Zealand](#).

Margot has always been a strong advocate for the physiotherapy profession to be in a position to control its own body of research. This requires opportunities to develop degree-based entry level education and postgraduate programmes. In the early 1990s, Margot led the drive for degree-based education to become a reality at the University of Otago in her home city of Dunedin, New Zealand. She has since worked with colleagues in many other countries/territories, particularly in the AWP region, to support the development of entry level physiotherapy education and for the education to meet international guidelines. The concept of an accreditation process was developed while Margot was World Physiotherapy vice president and she was the inaugural chair of the accreditation committee.

Other awards

The Mildred Elson Award was one of a range of honours presented in Dubai to physiotherapists who have made an outstanding contribution to their profession at an international level.

Valerie Taylor is the founder and coordinator at the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP), Savar, Bangladesh and a fellow of the [Chartered Society of Physiotherapy](#). Valerie was presented with a **World Physiotherapy Humanitarian Service** award 2023.

Yoshifumi Kobayashi is a physiotherapist specialising in the treatment of people who are highly dependent on medical care, for example those requiring ventilators, and he also specialises in community rehabilitation in developing countries. Yoshifumi was presented with a **World Physiotherapy Leadership in Rehabilitation award 2023**.

World Physiotherapy international service awards in the fields of education, management and administration, practice, research have also been awarded to:

Education

- **Ajediran Idowu Bello**, member of [Ghana Physiotherapy Association](#)
- **Feroz Kabir**, member of [Bangladesh Physiotherapy Association](#)
- **Hans Hobbelen**, member of [Royal Dutch Association of Physical Therapists](#)

Management and administration

- **Claire F O'Reilly**, member of [Irish Society of the Chartered Physiotherapists](#)
- **Genhee Lee**, member of [Korean Physical Therapy Association](#)
- **Kazuto Handa**, member of [Japanese Physical Therapy Association](#)
- **Nicola Phillips**, member of [Chartered Society of Physiotherapy](#)

Practice

- **Darren Brown**, member of [Chartered Society of Physiotherapy](#)
- **Vincent Babatunde Nwuga**, posthumous award

Research

- **Brona Fullen**, member of [Irish Society of the Chartered Physiotherapists](#)
- **César Fernández de las Peñas**, member of [Spanish Association of Physiotherapists](#)
- **Marco Pang**, member of [Hong Kong Physiotherapy Association](#)
- **Mario Bizzini**, member of [physioswiss](#)

Watch a recording of the awards presentation: [WP2023 \(world.physio\)](#)

Find out more about the awards recipients: [2023 award recipients | World Physiotherapy](#)

About the World Physiotherapy awards

The World Physiotherapy awards programme recognises outstanding contributions by physiotherapists to the profession and/or global health at an international level. There are several categories of award, all presented every four years at the time of the general meeting.

About the 20th General Meeting and World Physiotherapy Congress 2023

The 20th General Meeting took place on 30 and 31 May, and the World Physiotherapy Congress 2023 took place 2-4 June. More than 2,000 physiotherapists from 127 countries/territories are attended the World Physiotherapy Congress 2023.

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Contact Freya Rodger: frodger@world.physio

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 129 countries. More information: www.world.physio