

Protection of title

Policy statement

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Protection of title

World Physiotherapy claims exclusivity to the professional names “physiotherapy” and “physical therapy”. It further asserts that the professional titles “physiotherapist” and “physical therapist” and all abbreviations referring to these titles (eg “PT”, “FT”, “physio”) (1) are the sole preserve of persons who hold qualifications approved by World Physiotherapy’s member organisations and/or regulatory bodies.

The professional title and term used to describe the profession’s practice varies and depends largely on the historical roots of the profession in the country of the World Physiotherapy member organisation. It is World Physiotherapy policy to use the term “physiotherapy” or “physiotherapist” to cover all these titles, but they may be replaced by World Physiotherapy member organisations in favour of those terms officially used by them and their members without any change being implied.

World Physiotherapy believes it is in the public interest to protect the professional names and titles as part of national legislation/regulation/recognition (2). This should ensure that that appropriately qualified and licenced / registered physiotherapists always have the right to practise as physiotherapists. World Physiotherapy calls on its member organisations to work with governments to enact legislation/regulation/recognition, where it does not already exist, to protect the public by limiting the use of these titles to appropriately qualified persons.

Glossary (<https://world.physio/resources/glossary>)

Professional regulation

Protection of title

Regulated profession

Regulatory authority

Approval, review and related policy information	
Date adopted:	First adopted at the 13th General Meeting of WCPT June 1995. Revised and re-adopted at the 16th General Meeting of WCPT June 2007. Revised and approved at the 17th General Meeting of WCPT June 2011. Revised and approved at the 18th General Meeting of WCPT May 2015. Revised and approved at the 19th General Meeting of WCPT May 2019. Revised and re-approved at the 20 th General Meeting of WCPT May 2023.
Date for review:	2027
Related World Physiotherapy policies:	World Physiotherapy policy statements <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Description of physiotherapy• Regulation of the physiotherapy profession• Reciprocity – mutual professional recognition World Physiotherapy guideline: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guideline for the development of a system of legislation/regulation/recognition of physiotherapists

References

1. Physiotherapy W. Policy statement: Regulation of the physiotherapy profession London, UK: World Physiotherapy; 2023 [3 Nov 2023]. Available from: <https://world.physio/policy/ps-regulation>.
2. World Physiotherapy. Guideline: Development of a system for regulation of the physiotherapy profession London, UK: World Physiotherapy; 2021 [3 Nov 2023]. Available from: <https://world.physio/guideline/regulation-legislation>.

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