



ALK

Association
Luxembourgeoise des
Kinésithérapeutes



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WORKING TOGETHER TO STRENGTHEN PATIENT CARE IN EUROPE

The German-speaking physiotherapy associations Physio Austria, Physio Deutschland, Physio Lichtenstein, Physio Luxemburg and Physioswiss are members of World Physiotherapy and part of its European Region. They are and closely linked to each other. Still there are major differences in the German-speaking countries in terms of training, payment, remuneration and care responsibility in physiotherapy. For this reason, at this year's meeting in Bern, the associations agreed on three key points for strengthened patient care as part of the healthcare system in all five countries:

1. Establishment of **physiotherapy as an independent science** and possibility of continuous academisation from Bachelor to PhD in the field of physiotherapy.
2. Clear and comparable regulations for **measuring the quality** of physiotherapy at the respective national level.
3. **Anchoring specialization** (e.g. Advanced Physiotherapy Practice) at the respective national level for sustainable and differentiated health care as well as payment and remuneration appropriate to the qualification levels.

The representatives of the five German-speaking countries agree: The framework conditions for physiotherapy should be harmonized throughout Europe in the best possible way. This applies in particular to the areas of training, quality standards in physiotherapeutic care for people and the further development of physiotherapy in the sense of specialisation (e.g. Advanced Physiotherapy Practice), which is increasingly being anchored in law in the EU member states.



The benefits of harmonisation would be international comparability, the associated improved framework conditions for mutual recognition of professions and professional migration within Europe. The population would benefit from this efficient provision of physiotherapy across the respective national borders.

Continuous Academisation and recognition of physiotherapy as an independent science - highest expertise for evidence-based care

Physiotherapy is based on medical principles, but also makes use of other source sciences. The creation of genuine evidence is in the sense of optimal care for the population, both in the sense of prevention and treatment of the sick.

The Bachelor's degree was to be the first academic degree in physiotherapy to be obtained in Europe. For this to happen, teaching content in Europe would have to be uniform or at least comparable. Building on this, publicly funded physiotherapy master's programmes in which specialisation can take place would have to be further developed. In the next step, PhD programs in physiotherapy are needed to advance research in this area, similar to the countries in which physiotherapy is already established as an independent science.

Measuring quality - transparency for the population

Clear quality concepts and indicators for quality assurance and quality development of physiotherapeutic care are an important building block for efficient physiotherapeutic care. As a basis, there must be a registration of physiotherapists, as in Austria, for example, through the publicly accessible health professions register. For quality reasons, this registration must be reviewed after a period to be determined. Quality concepts aim to ensure that physiotherapeutic care is accessible to the population in a transparent and quality-assured manner.

Anchoring specialization - strengthening targeted care

Specialization in specialist areas - Advanced Physiotherapy Practice (APP) at Master's level should be implemented in care in a timely manner so that the expertise of highly specialized physiotherapists is recognizable as a more indispensable part of the healthcare system for referring physicians and patients.



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The APP refers to clinical practice in which physiotherapists make complex decisions in treatment and weigh unpredictable risks with the help of a systematic clinical process.

The APP saves costs in the healthcare system, relieves the burden on doctors, shortens waiting times for care and promotes interprofessional cooperation. This is confirmed by studies from those countries where specialisation in physiotherapy has long been an integral part of modern health care.

References

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