



Report on the First National Commemoration of World Physiotherapy Day in Somalia

8 September 2026

Somali National University, in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Human Services, hosted the first national commemoration of World Physiotherapy Day in Somalia on 8 September 2026. The theme this year was the role of physiotherapy and physical activity in the prevention, management, and rehabilitation of cardiovascular disease and stroke. As this was the first event of its kind in Somalia, the programme was kept broad rather than narrow, so that the main goal of raising national awareness of physiotherapy and its place in the health system could be met. The event drew approximately five hundred attendees, including government officials, hospital leaders, clinicians, academics, students, and members of the public.

Ahead of the event, a podcast on physiotherapy and its role in health and recovery was produced and shared on the official Facebook page of Somali National University, extending the campaign to a wider public audience. The recording is available at <https://www.facebook.com/share/v/1d6BqrmjVJ/>.



Picture 1. Dr. Fuad Mire Hassan, Vice Rector of Planning and Development at Somali National University

The programme was formally opened by Dr. Fuad Mire Hassan, Vice Rector of Planning and Development at Somali National University. In his opening address, Dr. Fuad emphasized that the role of the physiotherapist is vital to the health and recovery of the population. He further announced a significant milestone for the profession, noting that the country's first cohort of Master

of Physiotherapy students, trained through the partnership between Somali National University and its international university partner, is expected to graduate in 2027. This announcement set an encouraging tone for the day and underscored the university's leadership in advancing physiotherapy education nationally.



Picture 2. Dr. Mohamed Abdullahi Abdulle Director of Medical Services at the Ministry of Health

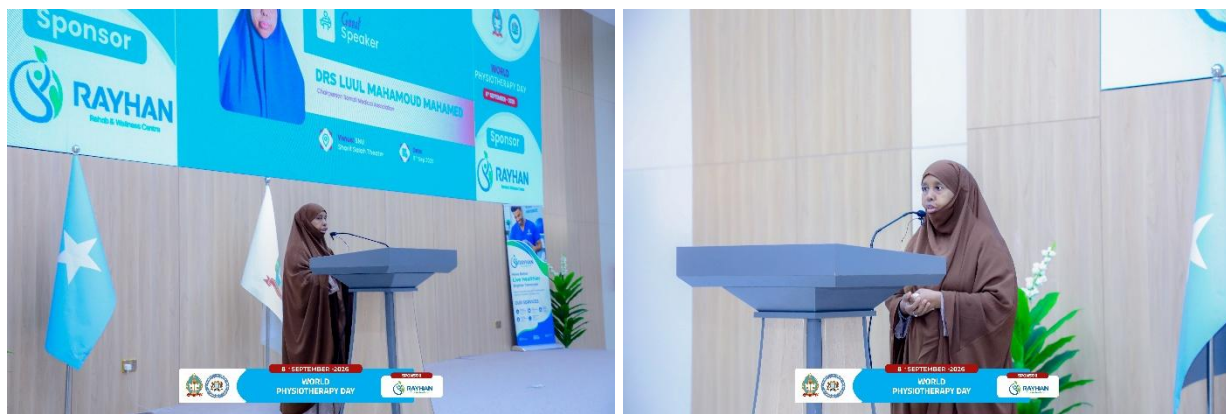
The Director of Medical Services at the Ministry of Health and Human Services then addressed the gathering. He explained that his department includes a dedicated Disability unit that plays a substantial role in advancing physiotherapy and rehabilitation services. He drew particular attention to the groundbreaking ceremony held on the fourth of September for a new physiotherapy center, describing it as evidence of the Ministry's growing commitment. He affirmed that the Ministry of Health is actively working to strengthen the role of physiotherapy within the national health system.



Picture 3. Abdulkadir Ahmed Osman; Operations Manager, Rayhan Rehab & Wellness Centre

The programme also welcomed Rayhan Rehabilitation and Physiotherapy Center, which is scheduled to launch on the tenth of September. The center is expected to become one of Somalia's

largest private providers of physiotherapy services, representing an important expansion of access to rehabilitation care within the private sector.



Picture 4. Dr. Luul Mohamud Mohamed, Chairman of the Somali Medical Association

Dr. Luul Mohamud Mohamed, Chairman of the Somali Medical Association, delivered a strong message on the standing of the profession. She emphasized that the physiotherapist is a cornerstone of patient care and argued that physiotherapists should be formally recognized among the professionals who provide primary care in Somalia.



Picture 5. panel discussion

A panel discussion formed a central part of the programme and brought together four distinguished voices. The first was the Chairman of the Somali Physiotherapists Association, who spoke on behalf of the profession. The second was a neurologist, who emphasized that physiotherapists are the professionals who bring the work of other clinicians to full completion for the patient. The third was the Chairman of the Somali National Association of Private Hospitals, who announced the encouraging prospect that every hospital in Somalia is set to establish its own physiotherapy center. The fourth was a representative of the Ministry of Health, who reaffirmed the Ministry's

role in strengthening the profession and outlined a long-term vision that includes the new physiotherapy center currently under construction. Together, the panel allowed the audience to appreciate physiotherapy as a shared responsibility across specialties, institutions, and the wider health system.



Picture 6. Members of the audience engaging with the panelists during the question and answer session.

The panel discussion was followed by an active and engaging question and answer session. Members of the audience, including clinicians, students, and members of the public, raised thoughtful questions and shared their perspectives with the panelists. The strong participation reflected the high level of interest in physiotherapy among those present and demonstrated the audience's eagerness to understand the profession's role and its future in Somalia.

Following the panel, a series of clinical case presentations was delivered by physiotherapy practitioners and postgraduate candidates, demonstrating the practical application of physiotherapy across a range of conditions. DPT. Abdikarim Osman of Mogadishu General Hospital presented a case titled "Physiotherapy Rehabilitation Following Open Reduction and

Internal Fixation of a Distal Femur Fracture," describing the structured rehabilitation of a young patient recovering from a complex fracture and the measurable gains achieved in knee mobility, strength, and gait. Samira Mursal Adan, CEO and Founder of Riyo, presented a case titled "From Rolling to Walking: A Physiotherapy Journey for a Child with Cerebral Palsy," illustrating the role of physiotherapy in supporting the developmental progress and independence of a child living with cerebral palsy. Dr. Sayid Omar presented a case titled "From Severe Disability to Functional Independence: A Five-Year Journey," which documented the long term rehabilitation of a patient and the substantial functional recovery achieved over five years. Taken together, these presentations demonstrated the breadth of physiotherapy practice in Somalia and the meaningful improvements that structured, individualized rehabilitation can achieve for patients across different conditions and stages of life.



Picture 7. Presenters delivering their clinical case presentations during the event.



Picture 8. Dr. Abdifatah Abdullahi Jalei the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at Somali National University

The programme was concluded by the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at Somali National University. In his closing remarks, he reflected on the university's role in strengthening physiotherapy education and announced that a Bachelor of Physiotherapy curriculum will be developed in 2027, with the university expecting to enroll its own cohorts of physiotherapy students as soon as possible. His remarks brought the day to a close on a forward-looking note, affirming that the future of the profession in Somalia rests on strong education, institutional commitment, and continued collaboration.



Picture 9. Participants performing a short guided exercise during the session.

As part of the programme, participants took part in a short guided physical exercise session led from the stage. Attendees rose from their seats and performed simple stretching and movement exercises together, bringing to life the day's central message that regular physical activity is essential to health and recovery. The session was met with enthusiasm and energy, and it offered a practical demonstration of the very activity that physiotherapists promote every day.



Picture 10. Wrap up photos

Conclusion

The first national commemoration of World Physiotherapy Day in Somalia was a significant milestone for the profession. By bringing together government, academia, hospitals, clinicians, and the public, the event succeeded in raising national awareness of physiotherapy and its essential role in the health system. The commitments expressed by the Ministry of Health, the university, and the wider health community point to a strong and growing future for the profession in Somalia. Somali National University and the Ministry of Health and Human Services extend their sincere gratitude to all speakers, panelists, presenters, partners, and participants who made this historic day a success.