



EUROPE REGION

World Confederation
for Physical Therapy

Report of the Education Matters Working Group of the ER-WCPT for the period 2010-2012

**ADOPTED at the
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St. Julians, Malta**

REPORT OF THE EDUCATION MATTERS WORKING GROUP OF THE ER-WCPT FOR THE PERIOD 2010-2012

European Region of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) European Union Matters WG

Introduction

As Chairman of the Education Matters working group, I would like to thank all members of the group for the appreciated work delivered at this General Meeting.

The main objectives of the Education Matters Working Group are to promote the quality of physiotherapy education in Europe and to contribute to facilitate the reciprocity of recognition of physiotherapy qualifications.

Members

The members of the EU Matters WG appointed in June 2010:

- Sonia Souto, Souto Vice Chairman of the European Region of WCPT as Chairman of the EU Matters Working Group, Spain
- Camilla Wikström-Grotell Finland
- John Xerri de Caro Malta
- Antonio Lopes Portugal
- Charlotte Häger Ross Sweden
- Astrid Schaemann Switzerland
- Emil Igelsboeck - Austria – (Specially appointed to do the liaison with the host association of the 3rd Education Congress, Vienna, Austria – 2012)

The General Secretary of the European Region of the WCPT, David Gorría, worked with the group and attended all the meetings.

Terms of Reference and activities

The terms of reference of the Working Group for the period of 2010 – 2012 were agreed at the general meeting 2010 in Berlin as follows:

1 – Monitor the evolution of physiotherapy education (at all levels) and research activities

1.1. Monitoring entry level education

- To keep updated the inventory on Physiotherapy Entry Level of Education within the ER-WCPT.

1.2. Monitoring education at Master level

- To continue following up Master programmes in Physiotherapy within the ER-WCPT.

1.3. Monitoring CPD and specialisation

- To follow up the activities on Continuous Professional Development within the Member Organisations, and continue to monitor developments in re-registration, re-certification in collaboration with the Professional Issues Working Group.
- To continue the update of the Monitoring report on Specialisation

1.4. Monitor developments in quality assurance of Higher Education

- To gather information on quality assurance measures in Physiotherapy education and monitor the involvement of the Member Organisations in quality assurance activities
- To update the document on Quality Assurance Guidance and develop a tool kit resources to support Quality Assurance process.
- To investigate and monitor the introduction of Ranking process within Higher Education at national and International levels. (In cooperation with ENPHE)

1.5. Monitor Research activities

- To identify priority research issues and monitor possible opportunities for action by the ER-WCPT

2 – Elaborate or revise Policy statements regarding physiotherapy education and research

- To update the Policy Statement on Physiotherapy Education
- To collaborate with the PI WG to create the ER-WCPT Policy on Research
- To align the Policies on Education and Research

3 – To address education issues for Member Organisations in collaboration with the EU WG

4 – To promote the use of Evidence Based Practice in Physiotherapy education at all levels (Life Long Learning) and support efforts to embed EBP in clinical practice

- To promote use of Evidence Based Practice in Physiotherapy education at all levels (Life Long Learning) and support efforts to embed EBP in all aspects of professional practice.

5 – To collect and spread relevant Information on education and research

- To identify information to be included on the ER WCPT website, under the button of education, relating to all education levels, research and EBP.
- Monitor the information about education, displayed at the web pages of the MO's
- To contribute to the completion of the 3rd European Congress on Physiotherapy Education
- To prepare the 4th European Congress on Physiotherapy Education to take place in 2016.

6 – To cooperate with other relevant entities related with physiotherapy education at European level

- To continue facilitating closer links and cooperation with ENPHE.

7 – To maintain the Glossary of key terms of the ER-WCPT

The GM also noted the following suggestions to be considered by the WG during the period 2010 - 2012:

- *The need for a research strategy to orientate the work of the foundation on this field*
- *To pay attention to use in a consistent way the expression “Physiotherapy Entry Level Education” within the EDU WG documents, because the entry level can be at different academic levels in different countries.*
- *To use the European Qualification Framework as tool for reference and comparative studies across Europe.*

Meetings

The Education Matters WG held four meetings over the period 2010 -2012:

- 1 - 3 October 2010, A Coruña, Spain.
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With apologies for absence from Charlotte Hager-Ross and Camille Wikström-Grotell

- February 2011, in Vienna, Austria.

With apologies for absence from Sonia Souto. Antonio Lopes acted as chairman.

- 10 September 2011, St. Julians, Malta.

With the presence of all the members

- 2-4 February 2012, in Vienna, Austria.

With the presence of all the members

Activities for the period 2010 - 2012

Overview of “projects” and distribution of responsibilities

At the first meeting, in Coruña, the Working Group discussed the nature and scope of the various projects and decided their distribution among the members of the group. For each project the appropriate goals and actions were identified.

Main outcomes / achievements

As many of the tasks have an on-going nature, some historical notes have been included to facilitate the understanding of the continuity of the actions.

- **Monitor entry-level education. To keep updated the inventory on Physiotherapy Entry Level of Education within the ER-WCPT.**

In Berlin it was approved a first draft of the inventory on Physiotherapy Entry Level of Education within the ER-WCPT. The Education Matters WG has been working during these two years period in order to update the inventory sending a questionnaire to the MOs. 34 of 37 Members have answered the PT entry-level questionnaire. Some answers needed to be clarified before presenting the results to the GM.

In order to have a common position with the Entry level physical therapy education programmes listed on the WCPT website. <http://www.wcpt.org/node/33154>, an since in the inventory we do a reference to WCPT website list of schools in each country for information, an email was sent to the General Secretary of the WCPT with incongruences that have been detected in eight countries of the region (Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Lebanon, Lichtenstein, Lithuania, Slovakia and Ukraine) given the contact person to report about them.

ENPHE has been also informed about the results of this inventory and their national coordinators will also review the results and comment back to ER-WCPT if appropriate.

During the General Meeting it will be presented an update version, with a new introduction and a chart to have an overview of the situation of the countries. MOs will see some points marked in yellow since some responses need to be clarified during the GM.

- **Monitoring education al Master Level. To continue following up Master Programmes in PT within the ER-WCPT.**

As recommended at the 2010 GM and in order to continue the work on Masters, it has been elaborated a document entitled: Discussion paper to continue following up master programmes in PT within the ER-WCPT for discussion at the General Meeting.

The document has the following structure:

- Introduction
- PT master's degree in a future perspective
- Monitoring Master programmes in Physiotherapy
- Conclusion

The documents has key indicators (also quality indicators) that may be considered when addressing issues related to Master level education. This paper aims to open discussion on the future perspective of PT Master level education within the ER-WCPT.

- **Monitor CPD and Specialisation. To follow up the activities on Continuous Professional Development within the MOs, and continue to monitor developments in re-registration, re-certification in collaboration with the Professional Issues Working Group. To continue the update on Monitoring report on Specalisation.**

The first Informative Paper with recommendations on continuing professional development (CPD) was prepared and presented by the Education Matters WG and adopted at the General Meeting (GM) 2006. At the GM 2008 an updated report on CPD was presented by the Professional Issues WG and adopted. During that GM it was recommended that an updated and revised

Informative Paper should be developed including a collection of inspiration material. Accordingly the Informative Paper was updated and revised by the working groups on Professional Issues and Education Matters and presented by the Professional Issues WG during the GM 2010, and adopted. Finally, it was added at the GM 2010 that ER-WCPT should continue monitoring the development of Systematic CPD including registration and re-registration.

Following on the previous work carried out by the previous WGs it was decided, in collaboration with the Professional Issues WG, an to carry on an update on CPD, registration, re-registration and/or specialisation collecting information from the MOs with a particular interest to examine the motivations/barriers towards the implementation of CPD, and also to examine these in the context of registration and specialisation issues. In this sense, the Education Matters WG is presenting for adoption at the 2012 GM a report that summarizes the outcome of the questionnaire circulated among the MOs in 2011, and will be used as the starting point towards the development of a report/statement titled "A European vision for CPD including specialisation", as is stated in the recommendations for the next period of the Education Matters WG.

- **Monitor developments in quality assurance of Higher Education. To gather information on QA measures in PT education and monitor involvements of the MOs in QA activities. To update the document on QA Guidance and develop a tool kit resources to support QA process. To investigate and monitor introduction of Ranking process within Higher Education at national and international levels (in cooperation with ENPHE).**

To continue the work on Quality Assurance measures in Physiotherapy Education, the WG sent again in 2011 the questionnaire, adding a new question in order to collate examples of quality assurance processes that could be used as guidance for all the MOs and to update the 2010 report. Due to the low rate of responses, the WG agreed to include the responses received in 2010 from MOs who has not asked in 2012.

The final version of the document includes further recommendations of work in relation to this: To review the topic of quality assurance procedures in physiotherapy education and consider possible actions, including exploring the role of international accreditation as well as considering the development of European guidelines and improve the existing tool kit resources to support Quality Assurance process.

The Ranking process within Higher Education at national and International levels, was discussed at the meetings with ENPHE. The ENPHE EU Directives focus group has finalised its work on Ranking and would send the results to ER-WCPT. ENPHE has not developed any ranking system for Physiotherapy universities but will discuss with their members about it. ER-WCPT will be reported about the ENPHE projects on this matter.

Rankings of Higher Education Institutions and programs are becoming a global phenomenon. The internationalization process and this “institutional diversity” extend the possibility of choosing the country and university to study, the degree or programme to take, and the institution for work or research. So, in an increasing number of countries, the interested people – students and their families, lectures, researches, enterprises, professionals, etc. – went to a series of *ranking* looking for orientation in their decision making process. There is a need for instruments that can help to improve transparency and present information on the diversity of institutional activities in a meaningful and concise way. Ranking and performance assessment have become an important aspect of contemporary higher education and research policies. In this sense, the Region as an observatory, could be interested in knowing if there is an international ranking (at European level or world level) involving PT universities/schools, and at national level in which countries there is a ranking system involving PT universities/schools. The next step will be to know more about the main characteristics of the existing rankings, mainly about their objectives (including who is behind) and about the dimensions/indicators they value and use.

It will also be important to know if any MO has already a formal statement/position regarding the issue. Future work to monitor the ranking process will be done by the Education Matters WG.

- **Monitor research activities. To collaborate with the PI WG to create the ER-WCPT Policy on Research. To identify priority research issues and monitor possible opportunities for action by the ER-WCPT.**

The Education Matters WG started in 2008 the development of a Policy recommendation regarding the role of the ER-WCPT and the MOs in promoting and supporting physiotherapy research, research careers and development of the profession. During the General Meeting in Berlin, a Discussion Group took place in relation to this topic in order to have feedback from the MOs. During this meeting, it

was proposed to continue this work in collaboration with the Professional Issues WG, in order to present a proposal at the 2012 GM. Also, the need of consultation of relevant key informants was underlined.

The research document from the Education WG was presented to the Joint meeting of the 3 WGs for discussion in Malta, September 2011. The Education Matters WG welcomed the suggestions and agreed with the suggested changes. The updated version of the document, after the joint meeting, was circulated among the WGs members for further possible comments by October 2011. Also, the consolidated version was sent to the MOs for comments, with the other two Joint meeting documents from the EU and Professional WGs with a deadline fixed on December 2011. The comments gathered were presented at the fourth WG meeting and added as appropriate.

A final version of the document entitled “Promoting research and research careers within physiotherapy in Europe. (Briefing paper)” is presented to the 2012 GM for approval.

- **Elaborate or revise statement regarding PT education and research. To update the Policy Statement on Physiotherapy Education. To align the policies on Education and Research.**

The WG has recommended to the Executive Committee to review the format of the ER-WCPT statements and policies according to new approved strategy and briefing papers developed by the Region.

- **To promote the use of Evidence Based Practice in PT education at all levels (Life Long Learning) and support efforts to embed EBP in clinical practice. To collect and spread relevant information on education and research.**

The WG has reviewed the information under the button named Evidence Best Practice on the ER-WCPT website to promote the use of EBP and agreed to update the wording and content of the information on the ER-WCPT and also refer to the information on the WCPT website on this matter.

The Education Matters WG has also prepared a report on the home page of the Member Organisations, updating the report approved at the 2010 GM. The MO have been reminded about the adopted decision regarding this issue at the 2004 GM in

Cyprus: (...) *Information regarding specific education issues of each country should be located on the website of each Member Organisation (MO), available in English, in a common format. Furthermore each MO should be responsible for the accuracy and update of that information.*

The updated report on the home page of the Member Organisations and recommendations to them is presented at the 2012 GM for adoption.

- **Education congresses:**

- To contribute to the completion of the 3rd European Congress on Physiotherapy Education to take place in 2012.**

The Working Group has been highly involved in the conception and organisation of the third congress (Vienna, 2012), taking into consideration the conclusions approved at the Post Congress Seminar of the second Congress (Stockholm 2008).

Together with the Chairman of the WG, that will maintain the liaison with the Executive Committee of the European Region, Emil Igelsböck and Charlotte Hager-Ross were appointed by the WG as the members responsible for this issue. Emil Igelsböck has been working with the Organising Committee and Charlotte Hager-Ross with the Scientific Committee.

The Working Group held two meetings in Vienna, February 2011 and 2012, in order to facilitate the contact with the host organisation, and offer an international advice. At the meetings were reviewed and discussed items related to the promotion of the Congress (newsletters, press information, etc), the Scientific Committee actions (scientific programme, speakers, call for abstracts, reviewer process, platform presentations and poster discussions, chairman sessions, etc), Organising Committee actions (congress facilitates, bids registration, budget, etc) and ENPHE collaboration.

As Chairman of the Education WG I would like to thank the colleagues from Physio Austria and those involved in the preparation of the Congress for their hospitality and excellent work.

To prepare the 4th European Congress on Physiotherapy Education to take place in 2016.

An invitation for bids to host the 4th European Congress on Physiotherapy Education of the European Region of the WCPT in 2016 was sent to the MOs in September 2011. There were received bids from three MOs: Denmark, Italy and the UK. Congress venue would be confirmed at the end of the 3rd Education Congress 2012.

The Executive, Education WG and MOs, will discuss after the 3rd Education Congress the objectives and aims of the 4th Congress. The Post-congress seminar will be used for that taking into consideration the congress's conclusions.

- **To cooperate with other relevant entities related with physiotherapy education at European Level. Continue facilitating closer links and cooperation with ENPHE.**

The cooperation with the European Network of Physiotherapy in Higher Education has continued, and the delegations of the two organisations have met three times, - 2010 (Coruña), 2011 (Estoril) and 2012 (Vienna) -, to plan and develop further common activities.

The following topics were discussed at the meetings:

- Database ENPHE – An overview of education programmes in Europe and schools
- Database ER-WCPT – Physiotherapy Education Entry Level
- ENPHE Conferences 2011 and 2012
- Collaboration of ENPHE in 3rd ER-WCPT Congress on Physiotherapy Education, Austria 2012
- Ranking
- Migration Information for Students and recent graduates – Info tool for students of both organisations

- **To maintain Glossary of key terms of the ER-WCPT.**

Keeping update the Glossary of terms of the ER-WCPT is always an evolving process. The EU Matters WG has sent new additions and some editorial changes to ER-WCPT Glossary of terms for the consideration of the Education WG.

The EU WG also listed terms, which are in conflict with the WCPT glossary of terms and terms from the WCPT glossary not included in the ER-WCPT. The EU WG recommended that where there was conflict between ER-WCPT and the WCPT glossaries, ER-WCPT would need to take the definition of WCPT unless the meaning

for the term is different in Europe. For those WCPT terms that the ER-WCPT glossary did not have, the EU WG suggested that if we have not required these terms to date so we do not need to add them to the regional glossary document.

The Education WG would like to thank the EU Matters WG for their comments, which has been included as appropriate, always taking into consideration the aim of the ER-WCPT of avoiding inconsistencies between the terms listed in the different documents that have been produced by the region.

The updated version of the Glossary of terms has been presented at the 2012 GM for adoption.

- **Informative paper on the different systems on qualifications.**

An updated version of the document entitled: *European Qualifications Framework and its relations to the Bologna Cycles and Directive on Recognition of Professionals Qualification* has been developed by the WG for adoption at the 2012 GM. The new version includes the new ISCED classification that has been adopted in November 2011.

Closing remarks

The Working Group has done its best efforts to address all the activities recommended by the General Meeting in 2010, and to follow the priorities decided by the Executive Committee.

Some of the activities are on-going projects and will be proposed for continuity. But new ones have been identified and will also be proposed to the General Meeting to be included for the next period of action.

As chairman of the group I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the members of the Working Group, and as well to the General Secretary, David Gorría, for their work, commitment and friendship, and stress my pleasure to work with this team.

Sonia Souto

Chairman of the Education Matters Working Group of the European Region of the WCPT