



EUROPEAN REGION

World Confederation
for Physical Therapy

Report of the Education Matters Working Group of the ER-WCPT for the years 2006- 2008 to the General Meeting 2008

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

Introduction:

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 of the Working Group appointed in July 2006:

- António Lopes, Chairman of the European Region of WCPT as Chairman of the Working Group
- Emil Igelsbock, Austria
- Nina Holten, Denmark
- Sonia Souto, Spain
- Charlotte Hager-Ross, Sweden
- Grahame Pope, UK

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

Terms of reference

The terms of reference of the Working Group for the period of 2006 – 2008 were agreed at the general meeting 2006 as follows:

- Update the European Physiotherapy Benchmark Statement and review the phrasing with special emphasis to specifics of physiotherapy and in order to make it easier to comprehend and reader-friendly. Further, develop an executive summary of the Benchmark Statement and with specific references to the original document. Continue to monitor the implementation of the European Physiotherapy Benchmark Statement Updating of the Policy

Statement on Physiotherapy Education since Education is evolving due to the Bologna Process;

- Continuation of the Project on Specialisation;
- Address education issues for Member Organisations involved in the enlargement process and cooperate with the EU Working Group;
- Monitoring and reacting to issues as they arise from enlargement;
- Identify information to be included on the website under the button of education relating to basic education, post basic education, and research;
- Gather information on Quality Assurance measures in Physiotherapy Education;
- Gather information on Continuous Professional Development activities within the Member Organisations in collaboration with the Professional Issues Working Group Monitor the developments in re-registration, re-certification in all the ER-WCPT countries in collaboration with the Professional Issues Working Group;
- Facilitate closer links and cooperation with ENPHE. Collaborate with ENPHE on definitions and issues related to core competences and curriculum in physiotherapy in Europe;
- Gather information on whether education (at all levels and areas such as basic programmes, specialisation and from a Continuous Professional Development perspective) in physiotherapy is given according to Evidence Based Practice/Physiotherapy;
- Prepare the 2nd European Congress on Physiotherapy Education to take place in 2008.

Meetings

In the years 2006 - 2008, the Working Group had four meetings:

- Stockholm, Sweden, from the 14th to the 17th of September 2006
With the presence of all members
- Oporto, Portugal, from the 16th to the 18th of February 2007
With the presence of all members.
- Stockholm, Sweden, from the 7th to the 9th of September 2007
With apologies for absence from António Lopes
- Madrid, Spain; from the 17th to the 20th of January 2008
With apologies for absence from Nina Holten

Activities for the period 2006-2008

Overview of “projects” and distribution of responsibilities

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

Considering that some of the projects were interlinked and needed some coordination to avoid duplication of work, the various projects were grouped regarding their connections and leaders (underlined) were assigned to each of the groups:

Group A

- Update the European Physiotherapy Benchmark Statement and review the phrasing with special emphasis to specifics of physiotherapy and in order to make it easier to comprehend and reader-friendly. Further, develop an executive summary of the Benchmark Statement and with specific references to the original document. Continue to monitor the implementation of the

European Physiotherapy Benchmark Statement – Grahame Pope and Sonia Souto

- Updating of the Policy Statement on Physiotherapy Education since Education is evolving due to the Bologna Process – Sonia Souto and Grahame Pope
- Gather information on Quality Assurance measures in Physiotherapy Education – Grahame Pope , Sonia Souto, Emil Igelsbock and Charlotte Hager-Ross
- Gather information on whether education (at all levels and areas such as basic programmes, specialisation and from a Continuous Professional Development perspective) in physiotherapy is given according to Evidence Based Practice/Physiotherapy – Charlotte Hager-Ross, Emil Igelsbock and Sonia Souto

Group B

- Continuation of the Project on Specialisation – Emil Igelsbock and Nina Holten
- Gather information on Continuous Professional Development activities within the Member Organisations in collaboration with the Professional Issues Working Group – Nina Holten, Grahame Pope and Emil Igelsbock
- Monitor the developments in re-registration, re-certification in all the ER-WCPT countries in collaboration with the Professional Issues Working Group – Grahame Pope, Emil Igelsbock and Nina Holten

Group C

- Address education issues for Member Organisations involved in the enlargement process and cooperate with the EU Working Group; Monitoring and reacting to issues as they arise from enlargement – Antonio Lopes

Group D

- Identify information to be included on the website under the button of education relating to basic education, post basic education, and research – Sonia Souto, Emil Igelsbock and Antonio Lopes

Group E

- Common Platform and Internal Market Information (IMI) project – Antonio Lopes, Nina Holten and Grahame Pope

Group F

- Facilitate closer links and cooperation with ENPHE. Collaborate with ENPHE on definitions and issues related to core competences and curriculum in physiotherapy in Europe – Antonio Lopes, Nina Holten and Grahame Pope

Group G

- Prepare the 2nd European Congress on Physiotherapy Education to take place in 2008 – Nina Holten, Charlotte Hager-Ross and Antonio Lopes

The Chairman of the WG has been charged to follow up the developments of the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF), recently established by the European Union.

Main outcomes / achievements

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

- Follow up on the implementation of European Physiotherapy Benchmark Statement in the ER-WCPT Member Organisations.

The European Physiotherapy Benchmark Statement (EPBS) was approved at a General Meeting in Barcelona (2003), with the agreement that its implementation should be monitored by the Education Working Group, and the issue should be kept under discussion at the following General Meetings.

A report on the implementation of the EPBS, based on a questionnaire sent to the MO's, was presented at the General Meeting in May of 2004 (Cyprus), and at the Congress on Physiotherapy Education in Estoril (November,2004) there were

several opportunities to analyse the relevance of the document, at academic and political levels.

A new questionnaire, based on the previous one, was circulated to the MO's, and the correspondent report was prepared by the Working Group, and approved at the General Meeting of 2006 (Croatia).

The same questionnaire was circulated in 2007 and the correspondent report was prepared for discussion and approval at the General Meeting of 2008 (Greece)

- Update the European Physiotherapy Benchmark Statement and develop an executive summary.

Having in consideration the proposal of the GM to *“review the phrasing with special emphasis to specifics of physiotherapy and in order to make it easier to comprehend and reader-friendly”*, the Working Group decided not to pursue with this task as it was considered that a review of the language of the document was not possible without changing its meaning. As the original document has its own “introduction” that can be used as an “executive summary”, the Working Group decided to prepare a “guide presentation” in power point in order to facilitate the access to the Benchmark Statement.

The presentation has been prepared to be circulated with the papers for the GM of 2008, and it is expected that it can be discussed in one of the discussion sessions before its final approval by the GM.

- Update of the Policy Statement on Physiotherapy Education

The Policy Statement on Physiotherapy Education was approved at the General Meeting in May 2004 (Cyprus).

It was considered relevant to monitor the adoption of the document at national level, but it was agreed that the nature of the document should allow for a reasonable period of time for the development of this process.

The Working Group developed and circulated a questionnaire in order to collect information from the MO's regarding the implementation process at national level, and to identify possible changes to be introduced.

At the General Meeting of 2006 (Croatia), a report on the implementation process has been adopted and some amendments have been introduced.

Having in consideration the developments of the Bologna Process and the new declaration of principle on education of the WCPT, the Working Group has prepared a reviewed version to be circulated with the papers for the GM of 2008, for approval.

- Further action on Specialisation for Physiotherapists

The Education WG Members agreed the objective to elaborate a picture-document describing the situation in the Member Organisations, regarding the Specialisation for Physiotherapists.

A questionnaire was developed by the Education Working Group, as survey tool. It was sent out in 2005 to all the Member Organisations (MO), together with the Proposed Model, containing the framework, proposed competencies and agreed core attributes of a specialist.

An interim report on Recommendation on Specialisation for Physiotherapists within the European Region of the WCPT has been approved at the General Meeting of 2006 (Croatia).

A questionnaire has been circulated in 2007 in order to update the information. Based of the collected information a report has been prepared to be included in the papers for the GM of 2008, for approval.

- Continuous Professional Development and Life Long Learning Issues

Monitor the developments of the need for re-registration/re-certification for maintaining Physiotherapy practice in the different countries in Europe

In collaboration with the Professional Issues Working Group a questionnaire has been developed, and a joint report based on the answers received was prepared to be circulated with the papers for the General Meeting of 2008.

Systems of Qualifications

A European Qualifications Framework has been developed in order to encompass all forms of education. This is a relevant tool that can be used to promote a Life Long Learning strategy.

The Working Group considered very important to raise the awareness of the MO's to this document, but as it one more tool that must be understood in line with other systems of qualifications, it has been decided to present to the General Meeting an informative paper, giving an integrated perspective.

- [Quality assurance measures in higher education](#)

In line with the policy document on Quality Assurance in Physiotherapy Education adopted at the General Meeting in 2004, a survey tool was developed by the Education Working Group, and was sent to all Member Organisations (MO's) in 2005.

A report describing the range of measures employed within the European Region of WCPT to carry out Quality Assurance within Higher Education has been presented at the General Meeting of 2006 (Croatia).

A new questionnaire has been circulated in 2007, and a new report has been prepared to be included in papers for the GM of 2008, for approval

Considering the relevance of this issue the Working Group also prepared a document on "Quality Assurance guidance", to be circulated with the papers for the GM 2008, in order to be adopted.

- [Monitoring of the accessing / enlargement countries](#)

The Education WG, in collaboration with the EU Matters WG, has been an adviser to the Executive Committee on this item.

- [Collect data from the Member Organisations regarding Information on Education](#)

The Education WG has worked with the General Secretary in order to elaborate and to update a database of information related to Physiotherapy education.

The members of the Education WG involved on the new project to build a “Common Platform” have contributed to identify new areas and new sources of information.

The WG has also prepared a report to identify the MO's that have implemented the recommendation adopted at the General Meeting in 2004, regarding the display in English, on the home page of the Member Organisations, of the relevant information about physiotherapy education.

The report was presented at the General Meeting 2006 (Croatia).

A similar report has been prepared to be presented at the General Meeting 2008 (Greece).

- [ER-WCPT Website – Education button](#)

The Education Working Group has supported the General Secretary and monitored the information displayed.

- [European Congress on Physiotherapy Education \(ECPE\)](#)

The Working Group has been highly involved in the conception and organisation of the first congress (Estoril, 2004) and as well in the Post Congress Seminar to evaluate the results and approve the main conclusions.

The first congress was considered a great success, and the conclusions approved at the Post Congress Seminar have already been circulated.

The Working Group has given continuity to this work with the preparation of the second congress to be held in 2008

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

The Working Group held two meetings in Stockholm (September 2006 and September 2007) in order to facilitate the contact with the hosts, and offer an international advice.

By appointment of the Executive Committee of the European Region of WCPT the Working Group has updated the documentation needed to developed a provisional bid for the organisation of a 3rd ECPE.

- Relationship with ENPHE

By decision of the Executive Committee, a meeting on future collaboration between the European Region of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (ER-WCPT) and the European Network of Physiotherapy in Higher Education (ENPHE) took place on the 6th of July 2005, and another in April 2006, both in Brussels

The Education WG has appointed Nina Holten and Graham Pope to support António Lopes in this task.

As proposed by the Education Working Group to the GM 2006, the terms of reference of the WG for the period 2006-2008 included the item “Facilitate closer links and cooperation with ENPHE”.

This envisaged allowing for the development of the following projects among others:

- To make both organisations visible to their members ;
- To collaborate on two databases: one on PT educational institutions and one on description of PT education within the National Educational System;
- To cooperate with ENPHE on future conferences and on the implementation of the European Physiotherapy Benchmark Statement;
- Follow-up the Bologna Process (e.g. diploma supplement)
- To join forces in supporting members (like “letters of support”)

In general terms it was agreed that the differences between both organisations should be used for a constructive relationship.

Contacts between the two organisations and the two chairmen's have been maintained, but because of difficulties in the agenda of both organisations no further meetings took place in this period.

ER-WCPT has supported the candidature of HENPHE for a Thematic Network under the SOCRATES/ERASMUS Programme. In 2006 and 2007 the candidatures have not been successful. The results of the candidature for 2008 are not available at this stage.

The Chairman of the ER-WCPT attended the ENPHE Conference, on 26-28 October 2006, in Brussels, Belgium. The theme of the Conference was: *Competence-based physiotherapy education: the stepping stone to international education and improved mobility?* The Chairman was a key note speaker on migration.

The Chairman of the ER-WCPT was invited by ENPHE to participate in a Conference of the TUNNING program, in June 2007, in Brussels, Belgium.

HENPHE is collaborating partner in the development of the 2nd ECPE.

The Working Group considers relevant the continuity and development of the cooperation between the two organisations.

- [Establishment of a Common Platform / IMI Project](#)

In 2005, the Executive Committee appointed a Task Force to make recommendations on the establishment of a Common Platform.

From the Education Working Group three members have been involved in the work, António Lopes, Nina Holten and Grahame Pope.

These members have also collaborated at the activities of the IMI project.

Please see the separated reports on these issues, for details..

- [Exploring the use of Evidence Based Practice in Physiotherapy Education](#)

The Working Group has developed a button on EBP at the web site of the Region. The subject will continue to be considered at the next period.

- Glossary of terms

A discussion about the terminology as part of the task to review the language of the European Physiotherapy Benchmark Statement raised the need for a more global exercise to include all the documents produced by the Region, in order to identify possible incoherencies and contradictions. This will need a further step to include documents from the WCPT.

This ended in a proposal of a first version to be presented at the General Meeting 2008, as a draft document needing to be updated continuously.

Closing remarks

The Working Group has done the best efforts to address all the activities recommended by the General Meeting in 2006, and to follow the priorities decided by the Executive Committee.

Some of the activities are ongoing projects and will be proposed for continuity. But new ones have been identified and will 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 Gorria, for their work, commitment and friendship, and stress my pleasure to work with this team.

António M. F. Lopes

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