World Physiotherapy
Europe region

Call to Action – Implementation of Physiotherapy in Cancer Care

Professional Practice Working Group (PPWG)

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CALL TO ACTION - IMPLEMENTATION OF PHYSIOTHERAPY IN CANCER CARE

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Recognising the crucial role of physiotherapy in cancer care and guided by the work of the Cancer Working Group, the Europe Region of World Physiotherapy declares its commitment to advancing physiotherapy in oncology across the continuum of care following diagnosis.

Physiotherapists possess the expertise to address significant physical and functional challenges that contribute both to quality of life and survivorship of patients with and beyond cancer. However, the access to physiotherapy and its integration into cancer care is inconsistent across European healthcare systems.

The Europe Region of World Physiotherapy calls on Member Organisations and physiotherapists to adopt these commitments and the actions that arise from them.

PROFESSIONAL COMMITTMENT

1. **Advocate for Physiotherapy Professional Role -** Promoting recognition of physiotherapy as essential in multidisciplinary cancer care.
2. **Uphold Evidence-Based Practice -** Integrating current research into clinical decision-making for patients with cancer and survivors.
3. **Advocate for Patient Access -** Working to ensure all patients with cancer and survivors can access timely and appropriate physiotherapy services.
4. **Collaborate Interprofessionally -** Fostering effective cooperation and communication with healthcare professionals and wider networks of care.

ACTIONS FOR MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

Professional organisations and associations, educational institutions and advocacy groups will:

1. **Strengthen Professional Recognition** of physiotherapy for patients with cancer and survivors.
2. **Establish Education Competencies** starting from entry-level to advanced training.
3. **Foster Research** by establishing networks and securing funding opportunities.
4. **Build Partnerships** with cancer care related organisations and patient advocacy groups.
5. **Drive Policy Change** with relevant authorities to include physiotherapy in cancer care pathways and funding mechanisms.

ACTIONS FOR PHYSIOTHERAPISTS

Individual physiotherapists will:

1. **Maintain Up-to-date Knowledge** on best practice in cancer care.
2. **Apply Comprehensive Assessment** using validated outcome measures, including those specific to oncology.
3. **Deliver Tailored Interventions** addressing each patient's unique needs across the cancer care continuum.
4. **Document Outcomes and Record Data systematically** to demonstrate effectiveness and contribute to the evidence base.
5. **Inform Patients and Caregivers** about physiotherapy benefits.
6. **Empower Patients and Caregivers** to implement self-management strategies.

The Europe Region recommends implementing these actions through:

1. **Education** to enhance knowledge and competency among physiotherapists.
2. **Communities of Practice** to share knowledge and best practices.
3. **Public Awareness Campaigns** about physiotherapy's role in cancer care.
4. **Interdisciplinary Education** to enhance understanding of physiotherapy's contribution.
5. **Resource Development** for clinical tools and patient education materials.
6. **Implementation Research** to overcome integration challenges.
7. **Develop Partnerships** to drive policy changes and improve access to physiotherapy services.

KEY IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

1. **Education and Training -** Implement established education pathways and continuous professional development.
2. **Clinical Implementation and Collaboration -** Strengthen multidisciplinary teamwork and implement best practice.
3. **Patient-Centred Care -** Ensure accessibility, educate and empower patients and caregivers.
4. **Research and Data Integration -** Establish research networks and encourage systematic data collection.
5. **Policy and Funding Advocacy -** Secure inclusion in cancer care guidelines and advocate for funding of physiotherapy care.
6. **Advocacy and Awareness -** Promote physiotherapy's role in oncology care through stakeholder engagement and campaigns.
7. **Monitoring and Evaluation -** Track progress, assess impact, and adapt strategies as needed.

Collective action and commitment to these principles are essential to advancing physiotherapy in cancer care across Europe, improving rehabilitation and optimising treatment for people affected by cancer.

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