



**World  
Physiotherapy**  
Europe region

**Position Statement –  
Advanced Practice in Physiotherapy in  
the Europe Region**

**Professional Practice Working Group (PPWG)**

**APPROVED**

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**Riga, Latvia**

## POSITION STATEMENT - ADVANCED PRACTICE IN PHYSIOTHERAPY IN THE EUROPE REGION

### Europe Region

#### Professional Practice Working Group

*This position statement will replace the Europe Region's paper: "Advanced Practice Physiotherapy in the Europe Region- Position Statement" which can be found in [this link](#).*

Advanced Practice Physiotherapy (APP) is a level of practice within the profession that involves advanced knowledge, clinical reasoning, and decision-making skills. In the Europe Region, advanced practice physiotherapy is recognised as a specialised area of physiotherapy practice that requires additional training, experience and education beyond the entry-level physiotherapy education.

Advanced practice physiotherapists have advanced assessment and treatment skills, as well as the ability to manage complex cases, evaluate outcomes and demonstrate clinical leadership. They may work in a variety of healthcare settings, including hospital, private practice, and community, and may specialise in areas such as neurology, musculoskeletal, respiratory and others.

Advanced practice physiotherapy has evolved in response to changes in healthcare, such as an ageing population, increasing chronic disease burden, and a shift towards community-based care. These changes have created a need for physiotherapists to provide more specialised and effective care to patients, while also contributing to the overall advancement of the profession through research, education, and advocacy.

The Europe Region of World Physiotherapy has developed a set of [standards and competencies for Advanced Practice Physiotherapists](#). These standards outline the knowledge, skills, and attributes that advance practice physiotherapists should possess in order to provide high-quality, specialised care.

Clinical reasoning in advanced practice refers to the ability to integrate and apply advanced knowledge and skills in the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of patients with complex health conditions. Leadership and management skills in advanced practice physiotherapy include complex communication, collaboration and problem-solving. Advanced practice physiotherapists contribute to the advancement of the physiotherapy profession through research, education, mentoring and advocacy.

Examples of advanced practice roles in physiotherapy and their cost effectiveness are working alongside medical practitioners in settings such as orthopaedic and rheumatology clinics, and emergency department, to triage patients into appropriate management pathways, including surgical or nonsurgical management options. These have resulted in improved patient satisfaction scores<sup>1</sup>, reduced waiting lists for consultants and waiting times for surgery<sup>2,3</sup>, resulting in lower direct hospital costs<sup>4</sup>. Physiotherapists have also demonstrated similar diagnostic and management decisions when compared with those of medical consultants<sup>5</sup>.

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### Members of the Professional Practice Working Group of the Europe Region of World Physiotherapy - 2022-2024:

Nirit Rotem-Lehrer	(Israel)	
Loredana Gigli	(Italy)	(Lead)
Maria-Louisa Busuttil	(Malta)	
Bogdan – Andrei Vereş	(Romania)	
Guus Meerhoff	(The Netherlands)	
Alex Mackenzie	(United Kingdom)	(Lead)
Esther-Mary D’Arcy	(Chair)	

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