

To: Marco A. Morales Osorio President TMO-Colombia
M. Vicente Mauri Stecca President RIG-Chile
Philippe F. Tadger Viloría President OMT-Venezuela

Copy to: Karim Martina Alvis Gómez, President Asociación Colombiana de Fisioterapia
Leandro Andrés Miret Venegas, President Colegio de Kinesiólogos de Chile
Julio Arvelo La Cruz, President Federación Venezolana de Fisioterapeutas
Jamie Rebollo Vazquez, Chair South America region of WCPT
Gabriela Mallma, WCPT Board member, South America region

6 October 2016

Dear Marco, Vicente and Philippe

WCPT and IFOMPT are replying jointly to your letter of 5 July 2016.

The World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) is the sole international voice for physical therapy, representing more than 350,000 physical therapists worldwide through its 112 member organisations.

The International Federation of Orthopaedic Manipulative Physical Therapists (IFOMPT) represents groups of physical therapists around the world who have completed stringent post-registration/post-graduation specialisation programmes in the field of neuro-musculoskeletal disorders. IFOMPT sets educational and clinical standards in this area of physical therapy. IFOMPT was formed in 1974 and recognised as a subgroup of WCPT in 1978.

WCPT's policy statement on the Description of Physical Therapy clearly sets out what physical therapy is and the changing context and scope of practice that is influenced and defined at a national level. Manual and manipulative therapies are within the scope of practice of physical therapists who have completed a programme of education that would meet the WCPT's guideline for physical therapist professional entry level education.

The application of manual and manipulative therapies is not exclusive to the profession of physical therapy and these interventions are also used by other professions including osteopathy and chiropractic. The three professions are distinct with their own unique history, philosophy and scope of practice, but may share some commonality in the application of manual and manipulative therapies. Whilst, this does not mean that there is a merging of the professions, some physical therapists may choose to undertake post qualifying education programmes to qualify as an osteopath or chiropractor and vice versa.

Protection of the public means that at all times any professional should make it clear what their professional qualification is and not use language that could mislead the public as to their qualifications. Further, both WCPT and IFOMPT support all efforts to ensure protection of the public through appropriate regulatory systems. WCPT recognises that physical therapists may be regulated through a legislated system that includes licensing or registration by the profession or an external regulatory authority. Alternatively, in some countries, the profession is regulated by physical therapists meeting membership criteria for the professional organisation. This should also take account of protection of title. WCPT has a wealth of resources to support initiatives in this regard – please see the resource list provided at the end of this letter.

To demonstrate leadership in manual and manipulative therapy, we strongly encourage and support efforts nationally for special interest groups, recognised by the WCPT member organisation, to work towards membership of IFOMPT through attainment of the educational standards.

We have copied the Presidents of the WCPT member organisations in your countries, along with the regional chair and WCPT Board member for South America so that all are aware of the need to move forward in a strategic way.

Yours sincerely,



Emma K Stokes
WCPT President



Ken Olson
IFOMPT President



Useful resources

WCPT Policy statement: Description of physical therapy: <http://www.wcpt.org/policy/ps-descriptionPT>

WCPT Policy statement: Protection of title: <http://www.wcpt.org/policy/ps-protection-title>

WCPT Policy statement: Regulation of the physical therapy profession: <http://www.wcpt.org/policy/ps-regulation>

WCPT guideline: for physical therapist professional entry level education: <http://www.wcpt.org/guidelines/entry-level-education>

IFOMPT route to membership: <http://www.ifompt.org/Route+to+Membership.html>