



**World Confederation  
for Physical Therapy**

**Direct access and self-referral  
to physical therapy: findings  
from a global survey of WCPT  
member organisations.**

**2013**



# Direct access and self-referral to physical therapy: findings from a global survey of WCPT member organisations.

## Summary

**Background:** Direct access to physical therapy services is advocated for in WCPT's policies, but the extent to which it exists worldwide was unknown.

**Objective:** To map the presence of direct access and self-referral to physical therapy services among WCPT's member organisations in the context of physical therapy practice and health systems.

**Method:** An on-line survey was developed and refined following a workshop in the European region of WCPT in 2010. Data was gathered over a 12 month period from July 2010-July 2011. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics and content analysis was used to analyse open-ended responses to identify themes and patterns. Responses were followed up with member organisations where required.

**Results:** A response rate of 68% was achieved. Direct access and self-referral to physical therapy was reported by 58% of respondents. Entry level education equipped physical therapists for direct access and self-referral in 69% of WCPT's member organisations. When self-referring privately to physical therapy most insurance companies would not provide reimbursement without a physician referral. National physical therapy associations (72%) and the public (84%) were seen to be in support of direct access and self-referral, with less support from policy makers (35%) and physicians (16%). Physical therapists' ability to assess, diagnose and refer on was more prevalent in the presence of direct access and self-referral.

**Conclusions:** Professional legislation, the medical profession, politicians and policy makers can act as both barriers and facilitators for direct access and self-referral. Evidence for clinical and cost effectiveness and examples of good practice, are seen as vital resources that could be shared internationally and professional leadership has an important role in facilitating change and advocacy.

## Tables

The results from across the member organisations have been collated by region and presented in the following tables. Consent from member organisations has been obtained to share this information among WCPT's member organisations. The tables are not for public dissemination.

## Publications

Two papers have been accepted for peer-reviewed publication:

Bury TJ, Stokes EK. A Global View of Direct Access and Patient Self-Referral for Physical Therapy: Implications for the Profession. *Physical Therapy* In Press scheduled for April 2013 issue

Bury TJ, Stokes EK. Direct access and patient/client self-referral to physiotherapy: a review of contemporary practice within the European Union. *Physiotherapy* In Press

Once these are available online details will be made available to member organisations and via the WCPT website on the direct access/self-referral page: <http://wcpt.org/node/34062>

## Enquiries

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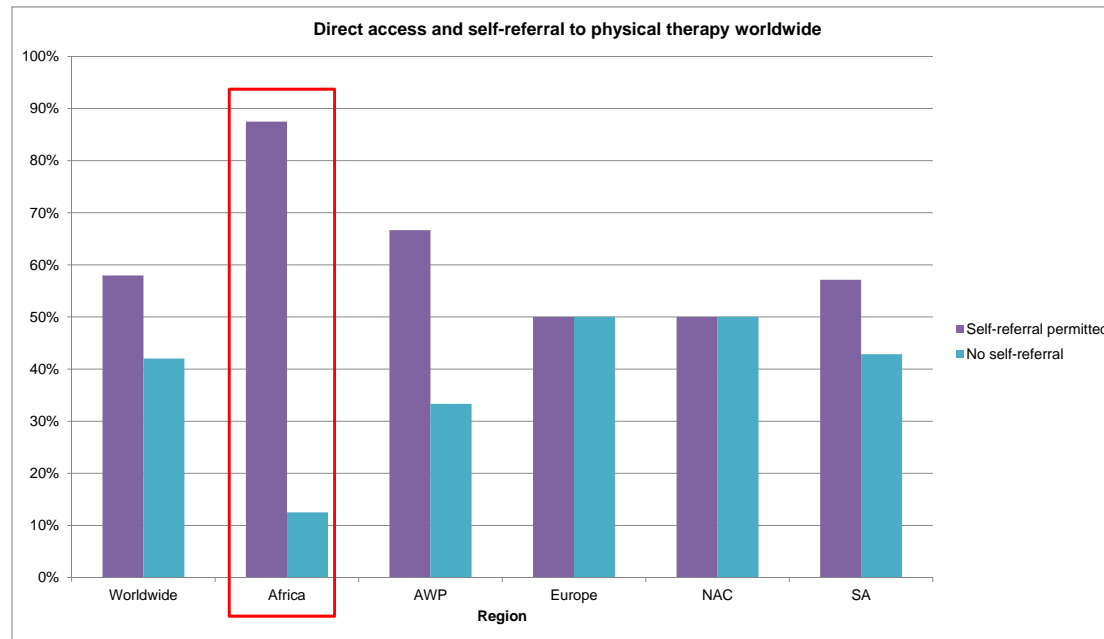
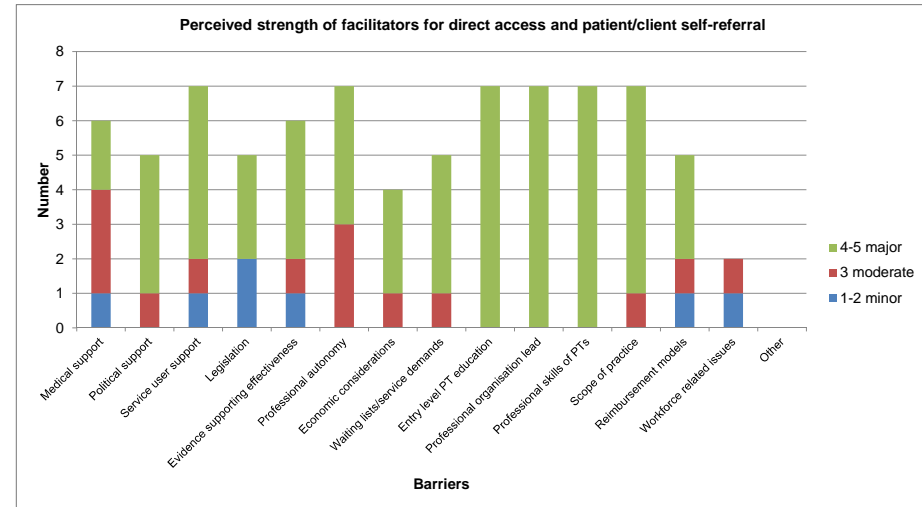
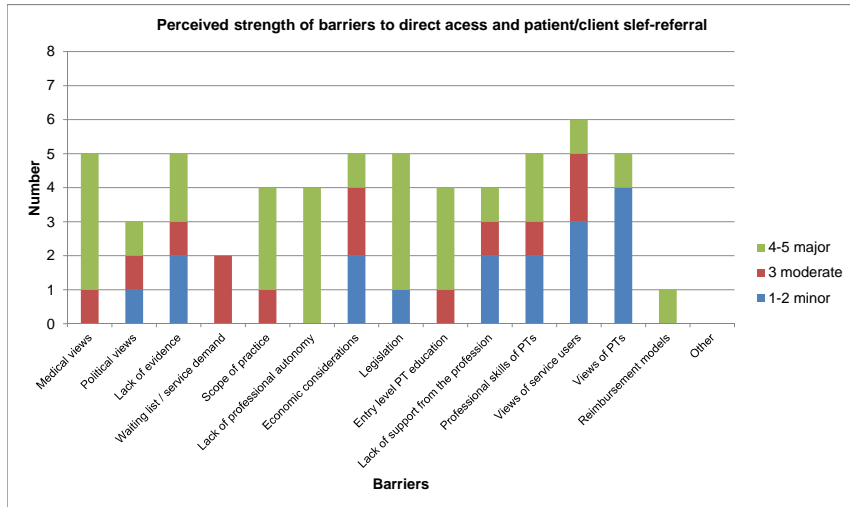


## Profile of direct access and patient/client self-referral to physical therapy in the Africa Region of WCPT

| WCPT Member Organisation:                               | National legislation present? | Scope of practice  |  |   |                              |                                |                             |  |   | Education  |   | Support for Self-referral   |   |  |  |
|---|-------------------------------|--|--|---|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|---|--|--|
|   |                               | Can service users refer themselves to PT without a medical/physician referral? | Self-referral in public and/or private settings? | In the presence of self-referral are there limitations? | Are PTs permitted to assess? | Are PTs permitted to diagnose? | Are PTs permitted to treat? | Are PTs permitted to refer on to other specialties/services? | Are PTs permitted to offer preventative advice? | Do the expected competencies of graduates from entry level physical therapy programmes prepare them to accept self-referrals on qualification? | Post- entry level education requirements for self-referral  | Degree of support for direct access/self referral to physical therapy from MO | Politicians/policy makers in favour of direct access/self-referral? | Public in favour of direct access/self-referral? | Doctors/physicians in favour of direct access/self-referral? |
| Cameroon: Cameroon Society of Physiotherapy             | Yes                           | Yes  |  |   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   |  |   |   |   |  |  |
| Ethiopia: Ethiopian Physiotherapists Association        | Yes                           | Yes  | Private & public                                 |   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |   | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Yes  | No   |
| Kenya: Kenya Society of Physiotherapists                | No                            | Yes  | Private  |   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | No  | Yes  |   | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Yes  | No   |
| Malawi: Physiotherapy Association of Malawi             | Yes                           | Yes  | Private  |   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         |  | Yes   | No   | Period supervised practice<br>Period CPD<br>Masters level   | Limited support   | Don't know  | Yes  | Don't know   |
| Namibia: Namibian Society of Physiotherapy              | Yes                           | Yes  |  |   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   |  |   |   |   |  |  |
| Nigeria: Nigeria Society of Physiotherapy               | Yes                           | No   | Private *  |   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |   | Is unsure   | Don't know  | Yes  | No   |
| Rwanda: Association of Rwandan Physiotherapy            | Yes                           |  |  |   |                              |                                |                             |  |   |  |   |   |   |  |  |
| South Africa: South African Society of Physiotherapy    | Yes                           | Yes  | Private & public                                 | Public - limited implementation                         | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  | Compulsory community service year on qualifying before they will receive "independant practitioner" status. | Completely supportive   | No  | Yes  | No   |
| Swaziland: Association of Physiotherapists of Swaziland | No                            | Yes  | Private & public                                 |   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |   | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | Yes  |
| Zambia: Zambia Society of Physiotherapy                 | Yes                           | Yes  | Private & public                                 |   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | No   | Period supervised practice<br>Period CPD<br>Masters level   | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | No   |
| Zimbabwe: Zimbabwe Physiotherapy Association            | Yes                           | Yes  | Private & public                                 |   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |   | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | Don't know   |

**NB: Results are presented as submitted by member organisations.**

\* Variations in different settings may reflect differences in the legislation jurisdiction (eg covers public services only), service provision (eg preventative advice only) and/or national limitations as noted

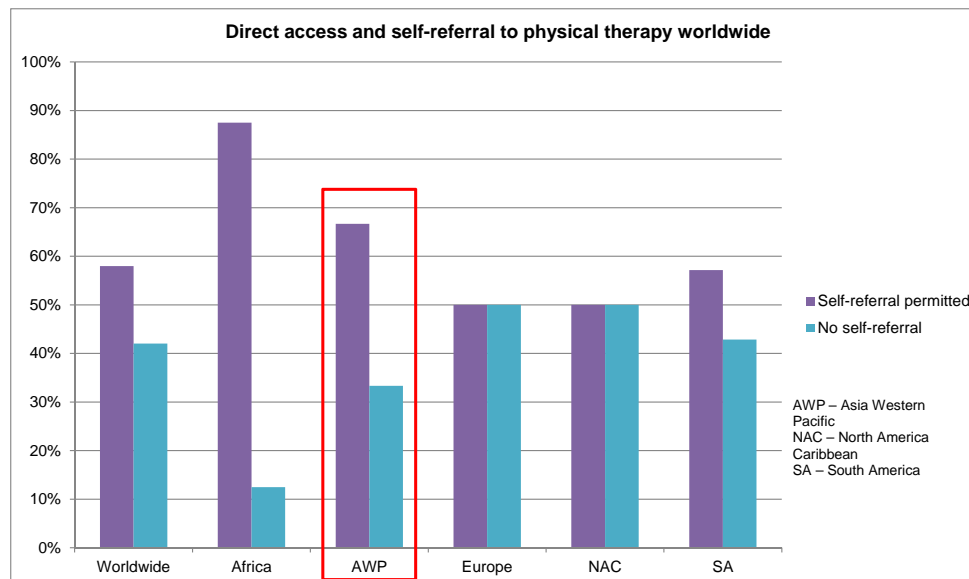
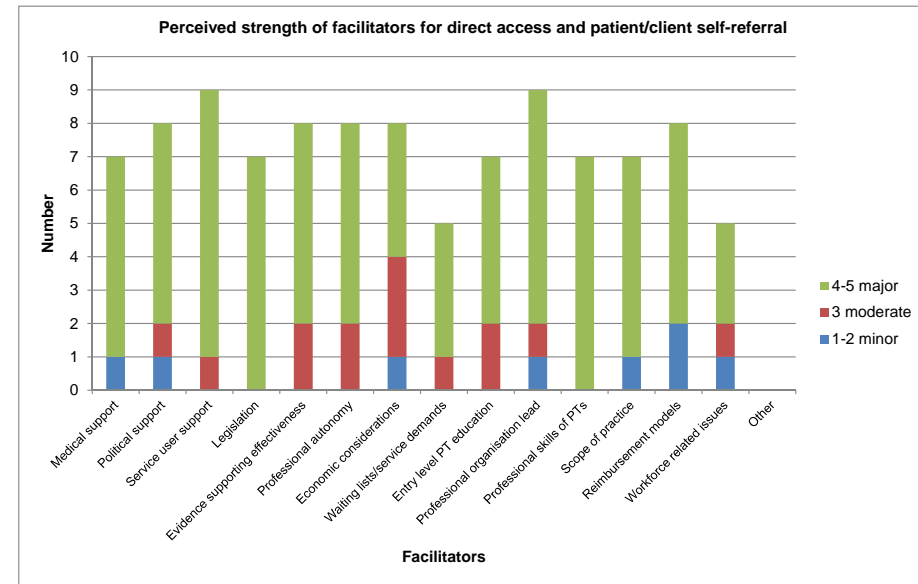
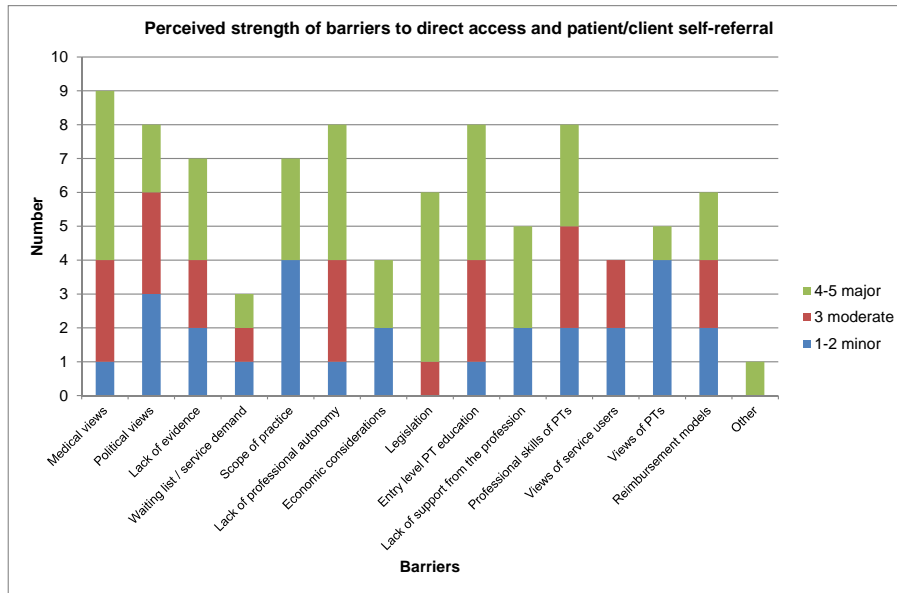


## Profile of direct access and patient/client self-referral to physical therapy in the Asia Western Pacific Region of WCPT

| WCPT Member Organisation:  | National legislation present? | Can service users refer themselves to PT without a medical/physician referral? | Self-referral in public and/or private settings? | Scope of practice   |                              |                                |                             |  |   | Education  |  | Support for Self-referral   |   |  |  |
|--|-------------------------------|--|--|---|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|--|--|---|---|--|--|
|  |                               |  |  | In the presence of self-referral are there limitations?   | Are PTs permitted to assess? | Are PTs permitted to diagnose? | Are PTs permitted to treat? | Are PTs permitted to refer on to other specialties/services? | Are PTs permitted to offer preventative advice? | Do the expected competencies of graduates from entry level physical therapy programmes prepare them to accept self-referrals on qualification? | Post- entry level education requirements for self-referral | Degree of support for direct access/self referral to physical therapy from MO | Politicians/policy makers in favour of direct access/self-referral? | Public in favour of direct access/self-referral? | Doctors/physicians in favour of direct access/self-referral? |
| Australia: Australian Physiotherapy Association                            | Yes                           | Yes  | Private & public                                 | Private - some 3rd party providers do require a referral from a physician prior to treatment for full rebates | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | Yes  |
| Cambodia: Cambodian Physical Therapy Association                           | Yes                           | Yes  | No   |   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   |  |  |   |   |  |  |
| Fiji: Fiji Physiotherapy Association                                       | No                            | Yes  | Private & public                                 |   |                              |                                |                             |  |   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | Yes  |
| Japan: Japanese Physical Therapy Association                               | Yes                           | No   | No   |   | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | No   | Yes   |  | Period of CPD  | Completely supportive   |   | Yes  |  |
| Macau: Macau Physical Therapists Association                               | Yes                           | Yes  | Private & public                                 |   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Yes  | Don't know   |
| New Zealand: The New Zealand Society of Physiotherapists                   | Yes                           | Yes  | Private & public                                 |   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  |   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Yes  | Yes  |
| Oman: Omani Physiotherapy Association                                      | Yes                           | No   | Private *  | Not allowed by law but takes place in a few settings - practitioner & client take risk                        | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | No   | Period of CPD Masters level                                | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Yes  | Don't know   |
| Taiwan: The Physical Therapy Association of the Republic of China (Taiwan) | Yes                           | No   | No   |   | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | No  | Yes  | No   |
| Thailand: The Physical Therapy Association of Thailand                     | Yes                           | Yes  | Private & public                                 |   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | No   |
| United Arab Emirates: Emirates Physiotherapy Society                       | No                            | No   | Private *  | Self-referral not covered by insurance payments   |                              |                                |                             |  |   | No   |  | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | Don't know   |

NB: Results are presented as submitted by member organisations.

\* Variations in different settings may reflect differences in the legislation jurisdiction (eg covers public services only), service provision (eg preventative advice only) and/or national limitations as noted





### Profile of direct access and patient/client self-referral to physical therapy in the European Region of WCPT

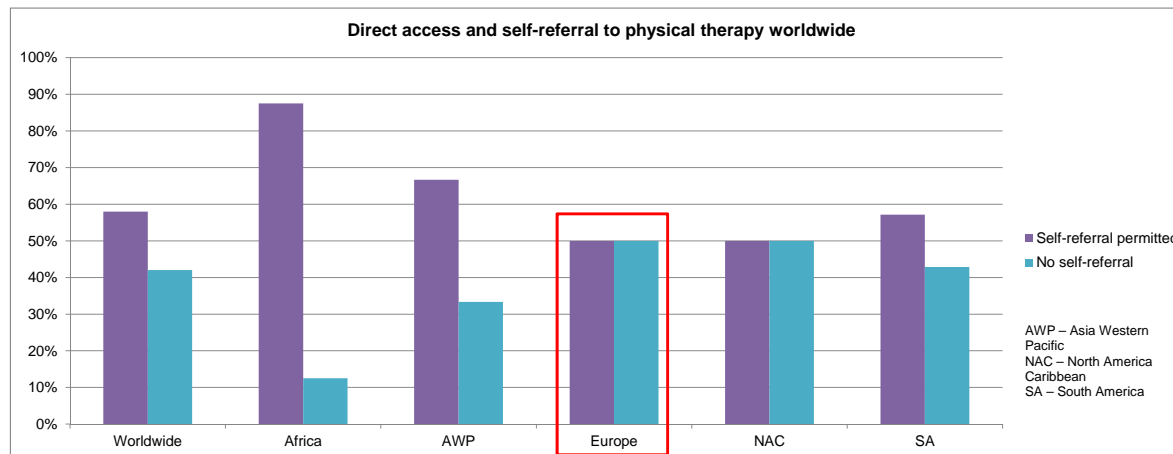
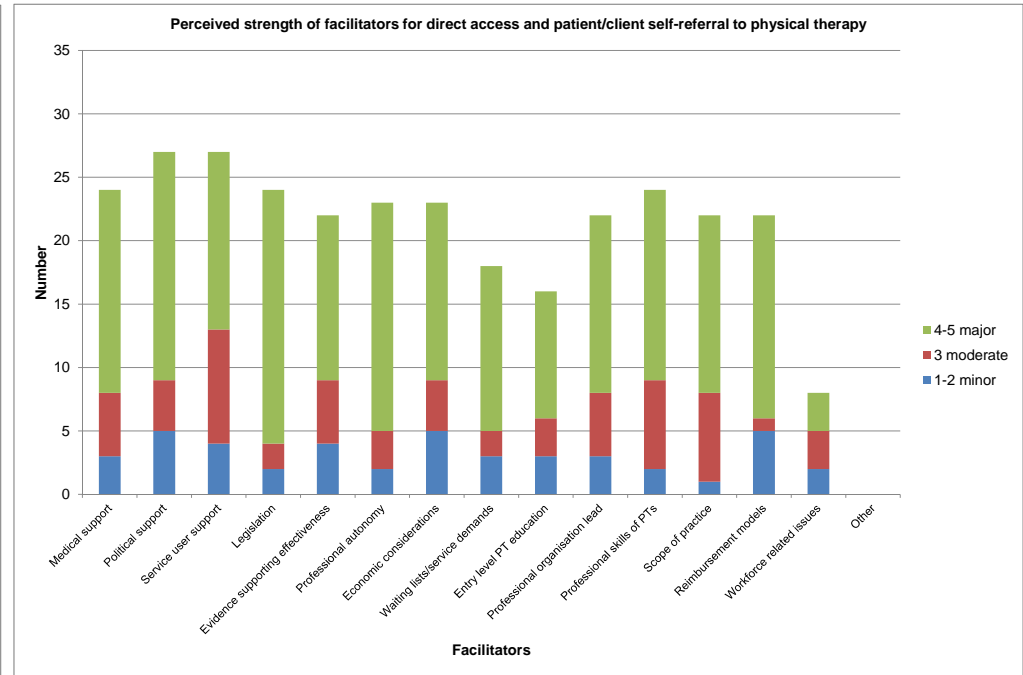
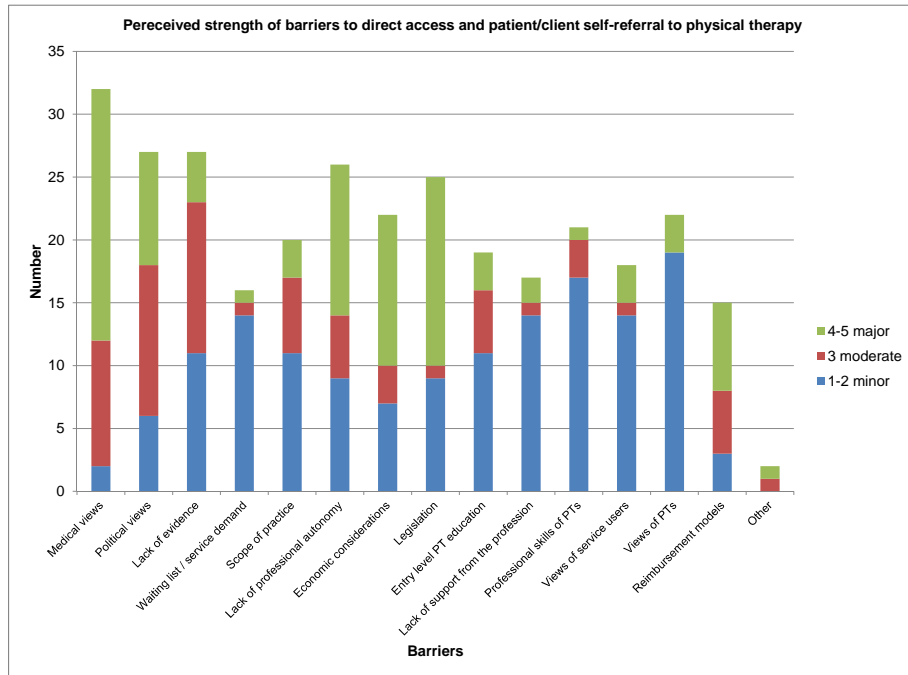
| WCPT Member Organisation:  | National legislation present? | Scope of practice  |  |  |                              |                                |                             |  |   | Education  |  | Support for Self-referral   |   |  |  |
|--|-------------------------------|--|--|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|--|--|---|---|--|--|
|  |                               | Can service users refer themselves to PT without a medical/physician referral? | Self-referral in public and/or private settings? | In the presence of self-referral are there limitations?  | Are PTs permitted to assess? | Are PTs permitted to diagnose? | Are PTs permitted to treat? | Are PTs permitted to refer on to other specialties/services? | Are PTs permitted to offer preventative advice? | Do the expected competencies of graduates from entry level physical therapy programmes prepare them to accept self-referrals on qualification? | Post- entry level education requirements for self-referral | Degree of support for direct access/self referral to physical therapy from MO | Politicians/policy makers in favour of direct access/self-referral? | Public in favour of direct access/self-referral? | Doctors/physicians in favour of direct access/self-referral? |
| Austria: Austrian Physiotherapy Association                                      | Yes                           | No   | No   |  | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | No  | Don't know                                       | No   |
| Belgium: Axxon, Physical Therapy in Belgium                                      | Yes                           | No   | No   |  | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Don't know                                       | Don't know   |
| Croatia: Croatian Council of Physiotherapists                                    | Yes                           | Yes  | Private  | Private - patients have to be self-funding   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | No  | Yes  | No   |
| Czech Republic: Union of Physiotherapists of the Czech Republic                  | Yes                           | No   | Private *  | Private - prevention only  | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |  | Is unsure   | No  | Don't know                                       | No   |
| Denmark: The Association of Danish Physiotherapists                              | Yes                           | Yes  | Private  |  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         |  | Yes   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Yes  | No   |
| Estonia: Estonian Association of Physiotherapists                                | Yes                           | No   | No   |  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | No   | Period of supervised practice<br>Period of CPD             | Completely supportive   | No  | Yes  | Yes  |
| Finland: Finnish Association of Physiotherapists                                 | Yes                           | Yes  | Private & public                                 | Private - any conditions treated, but no reimbursement from national social or private insurance<br>Public - specialised medical care and occupational health require a physician referral | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Don't know                                       | Don't know   |
| France: Federation Francaise des Masseurs Kinesitherapeutes Reeducateurs (FFMKR) | Yes                           | Yes  | Private  | Private - restricted to prevention, health education, comfort massages, osteopathy   | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |  | Limited support   | No  | Yes  | No   |
| Germany: Deutscher Verband fuer Physiotherapie                                   | Yes                           | No   | No   |  | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | No   | Period of CPD  | Completely supportive   | No  | Yes  | No   |
| Greece: Panhellenic Physical Therapy Association                                 | Yes                           | No   | No   |  | Yes                          | No                             |                             | Yes  | Yes   | No   | Period of supervised practice<br>Period of CPD             | Is unsure   | Don't know  | Don't know                                       | No   |
| Hungary: Association of Hungarian Physiotherapists                               | Yes                           | No   | Private *  |  | No                           | No                             | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Yes  | No   |
| Iceland: Association of Icelandic Physiotherapists                               | Yes                           | No   | No   |  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Don't know                                       | Don't know   |
| Ireland: Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists                             | Yes                           | Yes  | Private  |  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | Yes  |
| Israel: Israeli Association of Physiotherapists                                  | Yes                           | Yes  | Private & public                                 |  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | No   | Period of supervised practice                              | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Yes  | No   |
| Italy: Associazione Italiana Fisioterapisti (AIFI)                               | Yes                           | Yes  | Private  |  | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | No   | Period of CPD  | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | No   |
| Lebanon: Order of Physiotherapists in Lebanon                                    | Yes                           | No   | No   |  | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | No   |  | Not supportive  | Don't know  | Yes  | No   |
| Liechtenstein: Physiotherapeuten Verband Furstentum Liechtenstein                | Yes                           | Yes  | Private  | Private - not for pregnant women, accident victims and electrophysical therapies   | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | No   | No  | No   | Period of supervised practice<br>Period of CPD             | Completely supportive   | No  | Yes  | No   |
| Lithuania: Lithuanian Kinezitherapy Association                                  | Yes                           | Yes  | Private & public                                 |  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Yes  | No   |
| Luxembourg: Association Luxembourgeoise Des Kinesitherapeutes                    | Yes                           | No   | Private *  |  | No                           | No                             | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | No   | Masters level  | Limited support   | No  | Don't know                                       | No   |
| Malta: Malta Association of Physiotherapists                                     | No                            | Yes  | Private  |  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | Don't know   |
| Montenegro: Physiotherapists' Association of Montenegro                          | No                            | No   | No   |  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |  | Limited support   | Don't know  | Yes  | No   |
| Netherlands: Koninklijk Nederlands Genootschap Voor Fysiotherapie                | Yes                           | Yes  | Private  |  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |  | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | Yes  |
| Norway: Norwegian Physiotherapist Association                                    | Yes                           | Yes  | Private  |  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | No   | Period of supervised practice                              | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | No   |

Profile of direct access and patient/client self-referral to physical therapy in the European Region of WCPT

| WCPT Member Organisation:                              | National legislation present? | Scope of practice  |  |   |                              |                                |                             |  |   | Education  |   | Support for Self-referral   |   |  |  |
|--|-------------------------------|--|--|---|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|---|--|--|
|  |                               | Can service users refer themselves to PT without a medical/physician referral? | Self-referral in public and/or private settings? | In the presence of self-referral are there limitations?   | Are PTs permitted to assess? | Are PTs permitted to diagnose? | Are PTs permitted to treat? | Are PTs permitted to refer on to other specialties/services? | Are PTs permitted to offer preventative advice? | Do the expected competencies of graduates from entry level physical therapy programmes prepare them to accept self-referrals on qualification? | Post-entry level education requirements for self-referral       | Degree of support for direct access/self-referral to physical therapy from MO | Politicians/policy makers in favour of direct access/self-referral? | Public in favour of direct access/self-referral? | Doctors/physicians in favour of direct access/self-referral? |
| Poland: Polish Society of Physiotherapy                | Yes                           | No   | Private *  |   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | No   | Masters level Specialisation                                    | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | Don't know   |
| Portugal: Associação Portuguesa de Fisioterapeutas     | Yes                           | Yes  | Private  |   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |   | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Yes  | No   |
| Romania: Roumanian Federation for Physiotherapy (FRAK) | No                            | Yes  | Private & public                                 |   | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |   | Is unsure   | Don't know  | Yes  | No   |
| Serbia: Association of Physiotherapists of Serbia      | No                            | No   | No   |   | Yes                          | No                             | No                          | No   | Yes   | No   | Period of supervised practice                                   | Limited support   | Don't know  | Don't know                                       | No   |
| Slovenia: Slovenian Association of Physiotherapists    | Yes                           | Yes  | Private  |   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         |  | Yes   | Yes  |   | Limited support   | Don't know  | Yes  | No   |
| Spain: Asociación Española de Fisioterapeutas          | Yes                           | No   | Private *  | Private - insurance companies require medical referral  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |   | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Yes  | No   |
| Sweden: Legitimerade Sjukgymnasters Riksförbund        | Yes                           | Yes  | Private & public                                 | Public - not to hospital and special care settings - this requires referral   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |   | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | Don't know   |
| Switzerland: Schweizer Physiotherapie Verband          | Yes                           | No   | Private *  |   | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |   | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Yes  | Don't know   |
| Syria: Syrian Physical Therapy Association             | Yes                           | Yes  | Private  |   | Yes                          |                                | Yes                         |  | Yes   | No   | Period of supervised practice<br>Period of CPD<br>Masters level | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Yes  | No   |
| Turkey: Turkish Physiotherapy Association              | No                            | No   | No   |   | No                           | No                             | Yes                         | No   | No  | Yes  |   | Limited support   | Yes   | Yes  | Yes  |
| United Kingdom: Chartered Society of Physiotherapy     | Yes                           | Yes  | Private & public                                 | Private - insurance companies still require medical referral for reimbursement<br>Public - in theory no, but local issues eg commissioning determine clinical areas covered | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |   | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | Yes  |

NB: Results are presented as submitted by member organisations.

\* Variations in different settings may reflect differences in the legislation jurisdiction (eg covers public services only), service provision (eg preventative advice only) and/or national limitations as noted

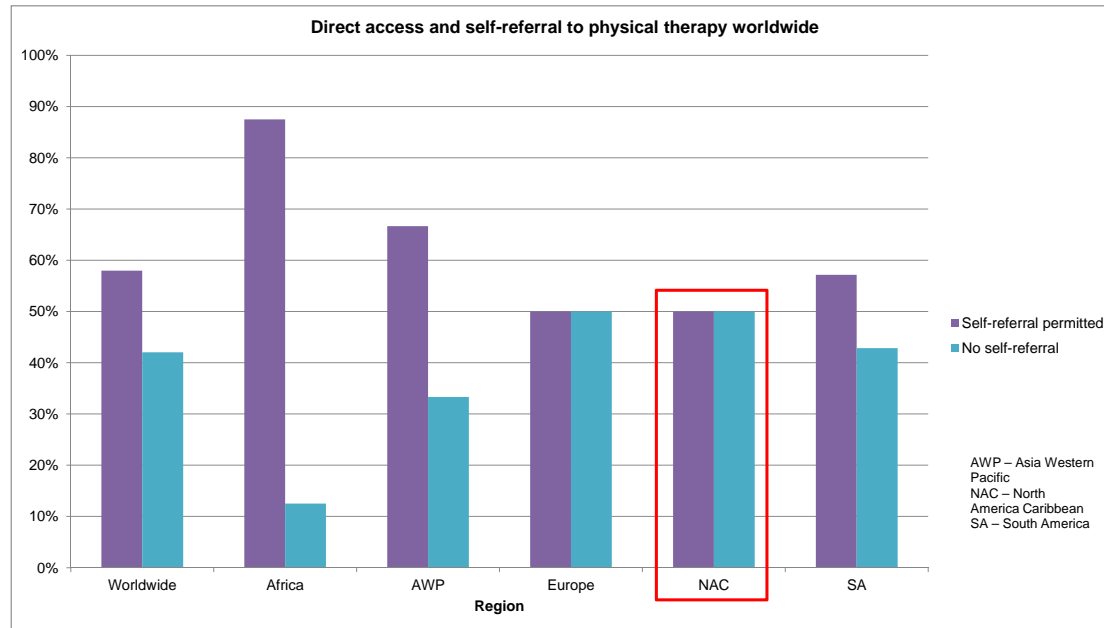
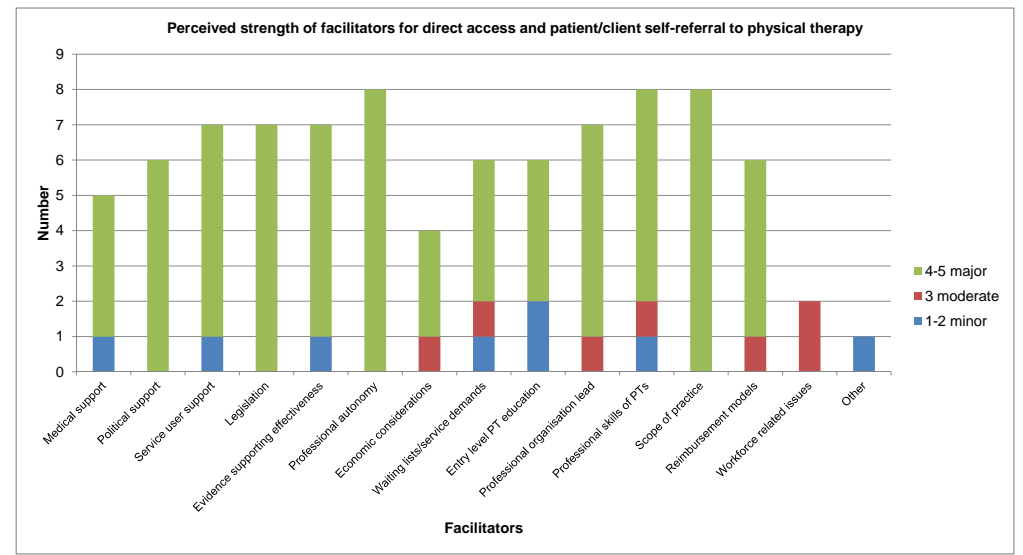
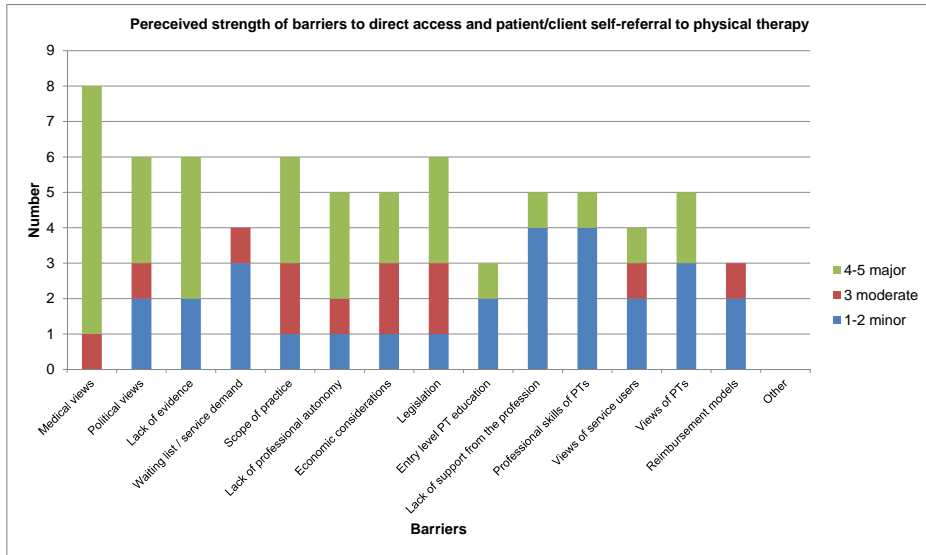


Profile of direct access and patient/client self-referral to physical therapy in the North America Caribbean Region of WCPT

| WCPT Member Organisation:   | National legislation present? | Scope of practice  |  |  |                              |                                |                             |  |   | Education  |   | Support for Self-referral   |   |  |  |
|---|-------------------------------|--|--|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|---|--|--|
|   |                               | Can service users can refer themselves to PT without a medical/physician referral? | Self-referral in public and/or private settings? | In the presence of self-referral are there limitations?  | Are PTs permitted to assess? | Are PTs permitted to diagnose? | Are PTs permitted to treat? | Are PTs permitted to refer on to other specialties/services? | Are PTs permitted to offer preventative advice? | Do the expected competencies of graduates from entry level physical therapy programmes prepare them to accept self-referrals on qualification? | Post- entry level education requirements for self-referral      | Degree of support for direct access/self referral to physical therapy from MO | Politicians/policy makers in favour of direct access/self-referral? | Public in favour of direct access/self-referral? | Doctors/physicians in favour of direct access/self-referral? |
| Bahamas: Bahamas Association of Physiotherapists                      | Yes                           | No   |  |  | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | No   | No  | No   | Period of supervised practice<br>Period of CPD<br>Masters level | Limited support   | Don't know  | Don't know                                       | Don't know   |
| Canada: Canadian Physiotherapy Association                            | No                            | Yes  | Private  | Private - limitations relate primarily to reimbursement from insurance companies. Although there is no legislation restricting direct access, it is primarily people with musculoskeletal conditions or injuries that present themselves to PT directly. Individuals with other PT issues continue to be primarily referred through physician referral.<br>Public - Canada Health Act positions physicians as the lead on patient care, including referral to PT services in the public system. There are some exceptions which relate more to the hospital rules, rather than legislation.  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |   | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Yes  | Don't know   |
| Guatemala: Asociacion Nacional de Fisioterapistas de Guatemala        | No                            | Yes  | Private  |  | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |   | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | No   |
| Jamaica: Jamaica Physiotherapy Association                            | Yes                           | No   | Private  | Private - service users can self-refer to PTs, but neither the profession's Code of Ethics nor the law permits "treatment". PTs who perform ergonomic assessments and who offer preventative advice are allowed to do so without a referral as the law does not precisely define that in the scope of treatment.   | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |   | Limited support   | Don't know  | Yes  | Don't know   |
| Puerto Rico: Asociacion Puertorriquena de Fisioterapia                | Yes                           | No   |  |  | No                           | No                             | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |   | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Yes  | Yes  |
| Suriname: Surinaamse Vereniging Voor Fysiotherapie                    | Yes                           | Yes  | Private & public                                 | Private - limitations on the number of treatments someone can receive in a year  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | No   | Period of supervised practice<br>Period of CPD                  | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Yes  | No   |
| Trinidad and Tobago: Physiotherapy Association of Trinidad and Tobago | Yes                           | No   | Private *  |  | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |   | Limited support   | No  | Yes  | No   |
| United States of America: American Physical Therapy Association       | Yes                           | Yes  | Private & public                                 | Private/public - majority of states allow legal recognition of self-referral to PTs in all settings, including in private practice. Insurance programs, both private and public, have varied degrees of recognition of self-referral for the purpose of payment of services. A few states prohibit self-referral for certain physical therapist interventions (manipulation, sharp debridement). Other limitations are prohibition of medical diagnosis, direct access for a limited time frame, mandated referral to a physician when patient presents outside the scope of physical therapy practice. All institutions in which PTs practice can have institution-based procedures that restrict self-referral to PT such as hospital by-laws. PTs can serve on primary care teams and serve as a primary entry into the health care delivery system; the US Department of Defense is one of the primary examples. | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |   | Completely supportive   | Yes   | Don't know                                       | Don't know   |

NB: Results are presented as submitted by member organisations.

\* Variations in different settings may reflect differences in the legislation jurisdiction (eg covers public services only), service provision (eg preventative advice only) and/or national limitations as noted



| WCPT Member Organisation:                                       | National legislation present? | Scope of practice  |  |  |                              |                                |                             |  |   | Education  |   | Support for Self-referral   |   |  |  |
|---|-------------------------------|--|--|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|---|--|--|
|   |                               | Can service users refer themselves to PT without a medical/physician referral? | Self-referral in public and/or private settings? | In the presence of self-referral are there limitations?  | Are PTs permitted to assess? | Are PTs permitted to diagnose? | Are PTs permitted to treat? | Are PTs permitted to refer on to other specialties/services? | Are PTs permitted to offer preventative advice? | Do the expected competencies of graduates from entry level physical therapy programmes prepare them to accept self-referrals on qualification? | Post-entry level education requirements for self-referral | Degree of support for direct access/self-referral to physical therapy from MO | Politicians/policy makers in favour of direct access/self-referral? | Public in favour of direct access/self-referral? | Doctors/physicians in favour of direct access/self-referral? |
| Brazil: Associacao de Fisioterapeutas do Brasil                 | Yes                           | Yes  | Private & public                                 | Private - insurance companies may set limits on sessions<br>Public- varies across regions                              | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |   | Completely supportive   | No  | Yes  | Don't know   |
| Chile: Colegio de Kinesiologos de Chile                         | Yes                           | No   |  |  | Yes                          | No                             | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |   | Not supportive  | Yes   | Yes  | No   |
| Colombia: Asociacion Colombiana de Fisioterapia                 | Yes                           | Yes  |  |  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | No   | Yes   |  |   |   |   |  |  |
| Mexico: Asociaci3n Mexicana de Fisioterapia                     | Yes                           | Yes  | Private  | Private - insurance companies don't allow patients to go directly to physical therapy treatment, they need a referral. | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |   | Completely supportive   | Don't know  | Yes  | No   |
| Peru: Asociacion Peruana De Terapistas Fisicos                  | No                            | No   | Private *  |  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | Yes  |   | Limited support   | Yes   | Yes  | No   |
| Uruguay: Asociacion de Fisioterapeutas del Uruguay              | No                            | Yes  | Private  |  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | Yes  | Yes   | Yes  |   |   |   |  |  |
| Venezuela: Federacion Venezolana de Colegios de Fisioterapeutas | Yes                           | No   |  |  | Yes                          | Yes                            | Yes                         | No   | Yes   | No   | Period of supervised practice                             | Not supportive  | Don't know  | Yes  | No   |

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