A Scoping Review to Define Advance Practice in Physiotherapy (APP)

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Background

• First developed after the Vietnam war
• Mainly in orthopedic and MSK practice
• Usually involved an advanced role e.g. triaging, diagnostic imaging, laboratory request and interpretation, injection therapy and prescription medication.
Specialization and advanced practice are two distinct but complementary processes although they share competencies such as advanced clinical skills, professional judgment and clinical reasoning. These practices are not mutually exclusive nor are they in competition: one enhances the other. Both are on the continuum of physiotherapy practice, however the APPs role includes competencies that require training from disciplines beyond physiotherapy.
Purpose

To identify similarities and differences among national organisations on the use of the **title**, **definition**, **roles**, **scope**, **competencies** and **regulation** surrounding APP.
Methods

**Scoping Review**
- Search strategy
- Published and grey literature
- CINAHL, Medline, Web of Science
- 2 independent reviewers

**Inclusion criteria**
- Advanced practice in physiotherapy
- No restriction on country
- All study methodologies

**Survey**
- Online survey
- 114 WCPT member organizations
- Questions advanced practice within each member organization
- 11 questions
- Likert Scale
- Comments section
**Results**

**Review**
- 1503 studies identified
- 985 Title and abstracts
- 270 Full text
- 170 studies included

**Survey**
- 83 Responses (72%)
- **65%** Formal APP & **35%** No APP
- 24% APP
- 10% ESP
- 16% Consultant
- **50%** others
Definition

- Difficult to define due to diverse roles
- Advanced level Clinical skills
- Complex decision making
- Leadership roles
- Clinical Research/KT & Scholarship
- Professional development
- Education
Title usage
APP Roles

• Managing complex, unpredictable and high risk workload (triage)
• Request and interpret diagnostic imaging
• Invasive treatment such as Injection therapy
• Requesting and interpreting Laboratory investigations
• Independent Prescribing (De-prescribing)
• Pre/post arthroplasty review clinics
APP Title and Scope

- Canada - **Provincial** directives and regulation
  APP - **outside scope**

- Australia – **APP** is **within** the scope. **Extended scope practitioner** is **outside** the scope

- UK Four **Pillars** of Physiotherapy
  - Massage
  - Exercise and movement
  - Electrotherapy
  - **Kindred** methods of treatment* **(APP falls within the scope)**
Regulation of APP

- **Legal** - Case Law (UK)
- **Regulatory** – Colleges (Canada)
- **Organizational** – Hospitals (Canada)
- **Professional framework** – Associations (WCPT)
APP Competencies

• Different models
• Formal graduate and post-graduate level education
• In-house training and assessment (Residency)
• Competency Framework
Conclusion

• No single **universally accepted framework** to describe Advanced Practice

• Developed based the needs of the healthcare within the jurisdiction

• Inconsistency and confusion among practitioners, patients, employers and government organizations
Recommendations

• A **unifying policy document** on APP (supported by WCPT)

• An agreed upon **universal framework** (supported by member organizations).

• Jurisdictions can then modify the framework to suit their needs

• Help patients, employers and regulators better understand the roles
THANK YOU!!!