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BUREAU REGIONAL DU PACIFIQUE OCCIDENTAL**

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**STATEMENT BY THE WORLD CONFEDERATION FOR PHYSICAL
THERAPY (WCPT)**

By Ms Pollu Lau

The World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) is acutely aware of the current global health economy and health statistics and in particular the effects of non-communicable diseases on the populations in this region. We all know that non-communicable diseases are largely preventable. Physiotherapists can play a major role in managing populations with cardiovascular disease, stroke, diabetes, obesity, and chronic respiratory problems and in providing preventive education as well as appropriately prescribed and monitored exercise programs for adults and children diagnosed with the conditions.

WCPT submits that having physiotherapists to oversee the prevention and management of physical rehabilitation programmes for these diseases is a cost effective way of contributing to the health of all of our populations. However the WCPT has a major concern for populations in several countries in the Western Pacific Region that have no, or minimal access to physiotherapy services. In particular our concerns relate to:

- Countries that do not have programmes in place to educate physiotherapists
- Countries that educate only small cohorts of physiotherapists such that numbers are woefully inadequate to meet the needs of the population
- Physiotherapy programmes offered that do not meet the international guidelines set by WCPT
- Countries that do not have a robust physiotherapy organization to monitor professional standards
- Countries that do not have physiotherapy regulation or licensure in place for the express purpose of providing protection for the public

Furthermore without the foundation of learning in physiotherapy being at a level adequate to service a population, the profession cannot grow and optimize its contribution to health, through physical rehabilitation and the promotion of physical wellbeing.

WCPT is a strong advocate for the provision of primary health care that is mindful of local cultural, socio-economic and political circumstances and provides equitable access for all to effective services.

WCPT supports an approach that is flexible and innovative in providing models of service delivery that offer care/service developed in response to local needs.

WCPT also embraces the WHO's model of the International Classification of Function and participation in WHO led initiatives such as the international review of Community Based Rehabilitation, the work of the Global Health Workforce Alliance and the Global Initiative for Asthma.

WCPT is willing to consult with Governments, local communities and individual groups to establish:

- entry-level professional physiotherapy education programmes that meet the international standards adopted by WCPT; and
- physiotherapy service delivery, including the planning & implementation The WCPT wishes to express its thanks for the opportunity to address the Sixtieth

Session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Western Pacific and urges governments in the Region to drive support for the establishment of educational programmes that meet international guidelines and for appropriate recognition of physiotherapist practice through statute, licensure, or regulation, so that we can more effectively contribute to the health of the populations in the countries in the Western Pacific Region.