

SPA Work Plan 2010 to 2015: Transforming Today's Physiotherapy for Tomorrow

Endorsed by Council 2010-
12 and Membership of
Singapore Physiotherapy
Association

This document is the blueprint of
the physiotherapy profession in
Singapore. The 4th Visioning
Workshop was held in April 2010,
leaders gathered to discuss and
recommended directions for the
profession to move forward in the
next 5 years.



Singapore Physiotherapy Association

**4th Visioning Workshop
Committee
01/01/2010**

FOREWORD:

A growing and committed leadership team! That was what crossed my mind at last year's 4th Singapore Physiotherapy Association (SPA) Visioning Workshop, which saw an encouraging turnout of more than 150 Physiotherapists. Physiotherapy leaders from both public and private institutions at the 4th SPA Visioning Workshop in April 2010. With a membership of about 500 Physiotherapists, this represents about 30% of the Physiotherapists in Singapore. I am greatly encouraged that these leaders have given their precious time to meet together and help chart the future directions and position statements for the Association and the next council leaders. I am also indebted to A/Prof Chan Yew Weng, SPA's Medical Advisor, Dr Margot Skinner, Regional Executive at the World Confederation of Physical Therapy (WCPT) and Mr. Jonathan Kruger from the Australian Physiotherapy Association, for their much valued advice and guidance on strategic directions for the next five years.

The various focus groups met and decided on the following 3 position statements of the SPA in terms of:

1. Clinical Standards and Services
2. Education & Training
3. Professional Development
4. Health Advocacy & Role of Association

These position statements in the 3 critical areas highlight the challenges faced by the profession not only in Singapore, but also in the Asia Western Pacific Region of the WCPT. It is heartening to know that we are not alone in this professional struggle.

The registration of Physiotherapy as a protected title with the Ministry of Health was one of the key position statements in the earlier 1999 Physio 21 vision statements. With the Registration Bill passed in Jan 2011, we are certainly poised to take the profession to greater heights.

As we mark off the goals achieved in the Physio 21 document, it confirms the importance of the SPA Position statements in providing a blueprint and strategic focus for the future generation of Physiotherapy leaders. It is hoped that these position statements developed by the various focus groups at the 4th Visioning Workshop will serve to provide the goals and directions for the council members and leaders of the Association and profession for the next 5 years or more.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to each and every Physiotherapy leader at the visioning workshop for their contributions and support that has made the profession what it is today. It is my great privilege and honour to serve alongside with you in our quest to take our profession further and higher.

Thank you.

Dr Celia Tan

Chairperson

4th SPA Visioning Workshop

Transforming Today's Physiotherapy for Tomorrow!

Presentation of Visioning Workshop 2010

Areas of Focus

1. Excellence in **Clinical Standards and Services**
2. Excellence in Education & Training
3. Excellence in Professional Development
4. Excellence in Health Advocacy & Role of Association

1. Excellence in **Clinical Standards and Services**

Position statement:

The physiotherapy profession affirms the importance of high standards of care for patients by advocating evidence-based practice, adherence to clinical standards of care described by SPA, endorsing direct access or first contact practice, practice specialization, and extended scope of practice for Physiotherapists.

Goal 1:

Establish evidence-based medicine (EBM) in physiotherapy practice

Actions:

- Organize EBM courses and forums for physiotherapists.
- Adopt currently established evidence-based practices into the specific areas.
- Adopt and benchmark clinical outcomes with those established in evidence-based medicine literature.
- Integrate the use of technology to improve clinical data collection and analysis.
- Improve access to evidence-based practices and methodology for key stakeholders practicing and influencing change in practices in the different sectors.
- Coordinate and seek funding for cross sector evidence-based research, looking at best practices for designated disease conditions.

Deliverables:

- Regular national physiotherapy EBM workshops (eg. how to conduct systematic reviews, funding application, statistical analysis etc)
- Growth of funds for national physiotherapy research.
- Forums for physiotherapy research presentations.
- Forums and research projects on Health economics in physiotherapy practices and services.

SPA Work Plan 2010 to 2015: Transforming Today's Physiotherapy for Tomorrow

2010

Goal 2:

Endorse practice specialization and establish extended scope of practice as part of the Physiotherapy Career and competency pathway

Emergency Department, diagnostic ultrasound, intramuscular injections Dry needling etc

- Establish the different specialization tracks: Clinical, Administration, Research and Education pathways.

Actions:

- Organize national specialist certification accreditation benchmarked against overseas specialist Board and work in collaboration with Singapore's Ministry of Health (MOH) and Heads of Department from both the public and private sectors.
- Develop, implement and endorse standards for specialist practice when applicable.
- Define, establish and promote/lobby for extended scope of practice and Physiotherapy specialisation in Singapore and incorporate these competencies in the career pathway.
- Encourage the recognition and recommendations of extended scope of practice physiotherapists across the various sectors and encourage for buy-in from human resource departments, medical teams, policymakers, heads of department etc.

Deliverables:

- Set up Specialist and Extended scope Practice Task Force or Special Interest groups.
- Establish clinical competency roadmaps and career paths for Advance Competency or extended scope practice and accredited specialist certification
- Establish SPA Clinical standards and job description in extended scope of practice in Singapore e.g. Triage in

Goal 3:

Maintain high level of practice standards especially in the private and community sectors

Actions:

- Advocate strongly for national accreditation of practice standards to ensure high levels of clinical practice for patient's safety.
- Develop, implement and establish accreditation process across different clinical settings especially for the private and community sectors.
- Discuss with private and community practitioners to get buy-in and support for accreditation needs.
- Benchmark accreditation standards with overseas or MOH's standards where applicable.

Deliverables:

- Set up Accreditation Task Force
- Develop accreditation manual with practice standards, and auditing process.

Presentation of Visioning Workshop 2010

Areas of Focus

1. Excellence in Clinical Standards and Services
2. **Excellence in Education & Training**
3. Excellence in Professional Development
4. Excellence in Health Advocacy & Role of Association

2. Excellence in Physiotherapy Education and Training

Position statements:

- i) The physiotherapy profession promotes and recognizes excellence in physiotherapy education to be a 3 or 4 year university-based Bachelors or higher degree to be the entry-professional level, in order to prepare physiotherapists for high quality of patient care.
- ii) The Physiotherapy profession also promotes and recognizes excellence in physiotherapy education at the post-professional level, whether informally as in continuing education, or formally that leads to formal specialization, in order to ensure continuing high standard, state-of-the art and cutting-edge physiotherapy care for patients.

Goal 1:

Upgrade the present entry-level polytechnic diploma course to a university-based degree course.

Current status:

The entry-level physiotherapy education in Singapore continues to be at the Diploma level; however the Ministry of Education (MOE) is considering collaboration with external Universities to provide a 1-year degree conversion certification so that students from Nanyang Polytechnic may graduate with a Bachelor in Physiotherapy from a foreign University.

However, the Singapore Physiotherapy Association argues for a University-based Physiotherapy programme for the following reasons:

The current diploma programme does not have a strong research emphasis in its polytechnic curriculum. Research skills and mindset are taught, learnt and nurtured during the course of training for Physiotherapists to develop an enquiring clinical reasoning mindset, spur innovation and creativity and ensure best practices for the patient.

There is no interprofessional interaction between Physiotherapy students (mainly nursing, Occupational Therapy and Radiography at Nanyang Polytechnic) and other health care students (Pharmacy, Nursing, Speech Therapy and Doctors at the National University of Singapore (NUS)), as is the current educational trend for health care professionals in all first world countries. This is a cause of concern as one of the key benefits of Interprofessional education of health care professionals is to encourage better health care teams and patient safety.

The current GCE A-level entry Diploma programme is inappropriately sited in a polytechnic that admits GCE O-level applicants to Diploma programmes in a polytechnic. Such an anomaly cannot be corrected by simply attaching a one-year curriculum from a foreign

university to ensure that the students graduating with a Bachelor have similar skills, competency and mindset as those graduating from a 3 or 4 -Year University based programme. The caliber of the faculty, the teaching dynamics and student interaction as well as professional curriculum is different for a start.

Actions:

- To continue submitting justification papers to relevant authorities (e.g. MOH, MOE and NUS and Physiotherapy HODs) concerning the critical need for undergraduate/even graduate entry-level physiotherapy education for Singapore.
- To explore strategic alliance with overseas universities to set up private physiotherapy degree course.

Deliverables:

- Submission of justification papers to relevant authorities (MOH, MOE and NUS).

Goal 2:

Encourage and facilitate the development of postgraduate education and/or specialization courses in Singapore.

Current status:

School of Physiotherapy Curtin University of Technology from Australia has started the first Masters in Manual Therapy at Curtin University Singapore Campus.

Actions:

- To initiate masters or post-graduate courses in the relevant faculties in the local or overseas universities.
- To publish directory of physiotherapists with post-graduate certifications.

Deliverables:

- Master and post-graduate programme(s) in local universities or institutions.
- List of recognized post-graduate options for physiotherapists in Singapore.
- Directory of Physiotherapists with post-graduate certifications.

SPA Work Plan 2010 to 2015: Transforming Today's Physiotherapy for Tomorrow

2010

Goal 3:

Encourage continuing education among physiotherapists.

Current status:

Continuing education programme is provided by most restructured hospitals and the SPA. With the impending registration of Physiotherapists, continuing education will be an important re-registration requirement; hence the Association must ensure there are ample opportunities for Physiotherapists from all work environments to fulfill their continuing professional points.

Actions:

- To ensure there is sufficient continuing education courses and programmes available for both public and private physiotherapists.

Deliverables:

- Provide a listing of all Physiotherapy educational programmes.
- Provide regular continuing education programmes from SPA.

Presentation of Visioning Workshop 2010

Areas of Focus

1. Excellence in Clinical Standards and Services
2. Excellence in Education & Training
3. **Excellence in Professional Development**
4. Excellence in Health Advocacy & Role of Association

3. Excellence in **Professional Development**

Position statement:

The Physiotherapy profession aims to promote professional cohesiveness among different sectors of physiotherapy practice and to develop professional ownership for development, clinical excellence and social outreach.

Goal 1:

Bridging community sectors and primary care sectors physiotherapists' clinical standards and professional networks.

Actions:

- Advocate sharing and implementation of national accredited practice standards among primary cares and community sectors.
- Develop, implement and establish clinical mentoring program.
- Develop and implement exchange program for both primary cares and community sectors physiotherapists to hardness and develop clinical and management skills in both set ups.

Deliverables:

- Set up Mentoring Task Force
- Develop clinical exchange program

Goal 2:

Develop excellence professional networking and development among private practitioners.

Actions:

- Advocate sharing and implementation of national accredited practice standards among private practitioners.
- Develop, implement and establish avenues for professional networking.
- Develop and implement clinical and professional interest program.

Deliverables:

- Set up private practitioner's charter.
- Develop clinical and professional interest groups.

Presentation of Visioning Workshop 2010

Areas of Focus

1. Excellence in Clinical Standards and Services
 2. Excellence in Education & Training
 3. Excellence in Professional Development
 4. **Excellence in Health Advocacy & Role of Association**
4. Excellence in **Health Advocacy & Role of Association**

Position Statement:

To be an advocate for the public by providing physiotherapy inputs to government and other institutions on physiotherapy standards of practice, career paths, advanced practice

standards, health care policy and funding policy to optimize the health of the nation.

Current Status:

With aging and chronic lifestyle diseases on an increasing trend in Singapore and also in other countries, the public's perception of what physiotherapists can do to alleviate the disabilities and assist in optimising health is still limited.

Goal 1

Engage in disease prevention, health promotion and education of the public

Actions:

- To educate physiotherapists on the importance and the ways of providing health education and promotion.
- To participate and co-organize public health education events in the community.

Deliverables:

- Work with Health Promotion Board (HPB) on short seminars/ courses for physiotherapists to educate on health prevention and promotion.
- Annual Physiotherapy Day to serve as a community outreach to reinforce the importance of healthy living and the role of physiotherapy.
- Participate in other events such as World Diabetes Day, World Osteoporosis Day and publish related physiotherapy articles.

Goal 2

To advocate and support health promotion initiatives from the Government such as the Ministry of Health or Health Promotion Board

Actions:

- To discuss with government and policy institutions on the strategic ways that Physiotherapist can assist in health promotion and disease prevention.
- To promote physiotherapists as experts in exercise physiology to promote health and fitness.
- To collaborate with the Government bodies on the establishment and the reinforcement of health initiatives with the involvement of physiotherapists.

Deliverables:

- Provide evidence on our website on exercise and physiotherapy programmes to promote health and prevent disease and disability.
- To release position statements on our website based on relevant guidelines or position statements from MOH in relation to health promotion and disease prevention.
- To participate in relevant workgroups in MOH or HPB on health initiatives.

**Focus Group Committee
members**

**1. Excellence in Clinical
Standards and Services**

Ms Loy Fong Ling

Principal Physiotherapist

Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Ms. Rachel Soh Tzer Shiang

Senior Physiotherapist

Tan Tock Seng Hospital

**2. Excellence in Education &
Training**

Dr Celia Tan Ia Choo

Deputy Director, Allied Health

Singapore General Hospital

Mr. Abdul Rashid Jailani

Manager, Physiotherapy Dept

School of Health Sciences

Nanyang Polytechnic

Mr. Abdul Kaffar Sheik Abdullah

Lecturer

School of Health Sciences

Nanyang Polytechnic

3. Excellence in Professional Development

Mr. Michael Chan

Physiotherapist

Ergonomic Specialist (AP)

Chevron International Pte. Ltd

Mr. Ng Chong Ching

Manual Physiotherapist

Manual Circles

4. Excellence in Health Advocacy & Role of Association

Mr. Tan Kim Guan Derek

Executive,

Agency of Integrated Care – Care Integration
Division

Ms. Lee Sin Yi

Senior Physiotherapist,

Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Focus Group participants

Barron Soh

Chen Yuchan

Chng Chye Tuan

Chooi Sue Ling

Christina Shi

Chua Peishan

Daniel Evangelista

Duraimanickam Ramadas

Elaine Gomez

Elizabeth Baysa

Er Beng Siong

Ethel Soh

Ezora

Faezah Ghazali

Grace Lim

Huimin

Jeremy Lim

Joy Tan Meiling

Kannan

Kelvin

Koh Ang Hong

Kung Beng

Loo Yin Peng

M.Saminathan

Manimala

Manohar

Mina Lim

Ms Sharon Lim

Ng Keat Hwee

Ngo Xueting

Nicolas Setiabudi

Qamal

Ramkumar

Shruthi Sankaran Krishnamurth

Sivasankari

Sundresan A R

Tan Bee Yee

Tan Siang Yin

Teo Seow Yee

Thanakkan Gowri

Toh Siao Hui

Victor Khoo

Wendy Lim (AH)

**4th Visioning Workshop
Committee**

Dr Celia Tan la Choo

Chairperson

Deputy Director, Allied Health

Singapore General Hospital

Ms Mahadevi Barathi

Vice Chairperson

Principal Physiotherapist,

Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Secretariat

Ms. Choo Ying Ying Roselyn

Senior Physiotherapist,

Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Organising Members

Mr. Tan Kim Guan Derek

Executive,

Agency of Integrated Care – Care Integration
Division

Ms. Lee Sin Yi

Senior Physiotherapist,

Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Administrators

Ms. Pramalatha G

Administrative Executive

Singapore Physiotherapy Association

Ms. Maureen Loh

Finance Manager

Singapore Physiotherapy Association