



Nineteenth World Confederation for Physical Therapy Congress

In my last report, I reflected on the activities of the International Organization of Physical Therapists in Women's Health (IOPTWH) at the 2017 World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) Congress. Our attention is now focused on the 2019 event, which will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, on 10–13 May 2019 (Fig. 1). Details are available online (WCPT 2018).

The programme will take shape throughout 2018, and online registration will open in July 2018 and remain open until April 2019. I would urge you to register for e-mail updates. I can also guarantee that there will be plenty on the programme to satisfy POGP members, including focused symposia, seminars, discussion groups, networking sessions, platform and poster presentations, and pre- and post-Congress courses.

The IOPTWH has submitted the following proposals to the WCPT, and we will know whether these have been successful later this year.

Focused symposia

“Physical therapists’ role using support pessaries for pelvic organ prolapse.” This targeted symposium will explore the ability of women's health physical therapists (WHPTs) globally to respond to the needs of the 40% of women with pelvic organ prolapse (POP) by providing

conservative management with support pessaries to augment pelvic floor muscle training. Specialists from Australia, Israel and Nepal will address the challenges involved in training WHPTs, safe service delivery, negotiating acceptance by urogynaecologists and gynaecologists, and demonstrating cost-benefits as we extend the scope of physiotherapy practice.

“Pregnancy, childbirth, and pelvic floor damage: prevention and management.” Maternity care and birth outcomes vary widely in different nations, with low-income countries experiencing the poorest outcomes. On a global scale, many women do not have access to physiotherapy services. This session will promote physiotherapy involvement in maternity care by focusing on pregnancy, birth, and the immediate postpartum prevention and management of pelvic floor trauma. Two physiotherapists, a midwife and urogynecologist, will present recent evidence and discuss controversies about management, providing a unique and integrated perspective. Attendees will gain new insights and strategies to support their involvement in maternity care in their local context.

Pre- or post-Congress course: *“The pelvis and female athletes/sportswomen”*

In collaboration with Pelvisuisse, the Swiss pelvic physiotherapy group, the IOPTWH was invited to organize this course, which addresses a topic of ongoing concern and much debate. International experts Kari Bø (Norway), Paul Hodges (Australia), Patricia Mota (Portugal), and Jacqueline de Jong and Helena Luginbühl (Switzerland) will discuss topics such as: raising awareness of the importance of the pelvic floor among trainers and the female athletes themselves; the effect of different types of exercise on the pelvic floor; appropriate training, and “good” and “bad” exercises or exercise technique; pregnancy and postpartum; and ageing. We hope that the programme – a mix of presentations and workshops – will appeal not only



Figure 1. Logo of the 2019 World Confederation for Physical Therapy Congress.

to women's health and pelvic physiotherapists, but also those working in musculoskeletal and sports practice.

Change of name consultation

In the January 2018 edition of the *IOPTWH Newsletter* (IOPTWH 2018a), we offered a selection of delegates and founding president Jill Boissonnault an opportunity to explain their views on the proposal to change our current name (Boissonnault *et al.* 2018). If you have not read these opinions already, I would encourage you to do so by accessing the relevant section of the website (www.wcpt.org/iptwh/newsletters). The IOPTWH Executive Committee is committed to making a decision by the time that we meet at the 2019 WCPT Congress.

Kuwait

I had the honour of representing both IOPTWH and POGP at the 2nd Kuwait International Physical Therapy Conference in Kuwait City, Kuwait, on 25–27 March 2018. In addition to a keynote presentation, “Women's health physiotherapy around the world: results of a survey of IOPTWH members”, I ran a workshop for 27 physiotherapists from Kuwait and nearby countries, “Understanding Pelvic Organ Prolapse, and Continued Development of Women's Health and Pelvic Physiotherapy”. This included the POGP pelvic organ prolapse workshop, and discussions about the broader topic of women's health physiotherapy. The 3 days were tiring but enjoyable, and the physiotherapists whom I met were very friendly, knowledgeable and engaged.

Female genital mutilation

More than 10 years ago, the IOPTWH wrote a position statement concerning female genital mutilation that was presented at the 2007 WCPT Congress (IOPTWH 2018b), and this resulted in the Confederation's policy statement on the subject (WCPT 2007). In early 2018, IOPTWH vice-president Darija Šćepanović led a review and update of the Organization's document which you can access online (IOPTWH 2018c).

Gill Brook

IOPTWH President

References

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