

## **University education required for entry level physiotherapists in Germany**

Prof. Dr. Karl Lauterbach  
Federal Minister of Health of Germany  
Mauerstraße 29, 10117 Berlin (Germany)

Dear Prof. Dr. Karl Lauterbach,

The Europe Region of World Physiotherapy, organisation based in Brussels representing the physiotherapy profession at European level, is writing in support of Physio Deutschland / Deutscher Verband für Physiotherapie (ZVK).

**The reform of physiotherapy education in Germany should be aligned with the European and the profession's standards in which the competencies required by a qualified physiotherapist should be acquired at university level.**

Physiotherapy is an autonomous and independent health profession whose practitioners work in an open and equal professional relationship with medical doctors and other health professionals. They work in both the public and the private sectors, in hospitals, rehabilitation centres, residential care facilities, clinics, schools and workplace settings. Physiotherapists are directly responsible for their practice, from assessment, through treatment planning and implementation to evaluation and re-evaluation of interventions.

The Europe Region Policy on Education states that the first professional qualification should be completion of a physiotherapy curriculum that qualifies the physiotherapist for practice as an independent and autonomous professional. In all the countries of the European Union physiotherapists have generally moved from dependence on prescribing by medical practitioners to autonomous practice.

At entry level, the competencies need to be acquired at least at a level 6, according to the European Qualification Framework (EQF, 2017), which includes problem solving, evidence-based practice and effective professional practice. This should be based on university level and be congruent with entry level standards and recommendations at a minimum of Bachelor level (World Physiotherapy 2019). In addition, and as based on the mutual evaluation exercise of the physiotherapy profession led by the EU Commission, most of the European Union Member States either have moved, or are moving, to 4-year university education.

A proper clinical education is key to improving the quality of physiotherapy services for the benefit of the patients, the national health systems and as cost-effectiveness measure. At the same time, aligning with the rest of the EU countries to abolish obstacles and to ensure free mobility of persons

within EU borders is in the spirit of the Treaties of the European Union and one of the main reasons for its existence.

The Europe Region of World Physiotherapy is at the disposal of the German authorities and Physio Deutschland / Deutscher Verband für Physiotherapie (ZVK) to establish a group of experts from across Europe to support you in building a university curriculum for entry-level physiotherapists and to encourage the actions that will fulfil the criteria established by the global professional organisation and the EU.

Thank you for your work and I look forward to hearing from you.

Most respectfully on behalf of the Europe Region of World Physiotherapy

Aitor Carpio García  
General Secretary Europe Region World Physiotherapy



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*The Europe Region World Physiotherapy is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation that represents the physiotherapy profession at European Level. The Organisation has a membership of Physiotherapy Associations in 37 countries, representing around 200,000 physiotherapists in Europe.*