



## CONCRETE POLICY IS REQUIRED FOR PHYSICAL THERAPY OR PHYSIOTHERAPY, EDUCATION PROFESSION AND PROFESSIONALS IN PAKISTAN.

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Physical therapy or Physiotherapy is considered worldwide an independent health care profession but in Pakistan it is still a dependent one, mostly depends upon the referral of patients from physician, surgeons and other medical doctors/consultants. Most of the medical health professionals refer the patient little bit late to physiotherapists.<sup>1</sup>

The first school of Physiotherapy in Pakistan was started by the Federal Government, Ministry of Health & Social Welfare with the aid of World Health Organization (WHO) at Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Center premises in 1956 with the introduction of 2-year diploma course.<sup>2</sup> But in last couple of decades the level of physiotherapy profession education has increased and now candidates can do PhD in physical therapy from some of the universities.<sup>2,3</sup>

There is an unexpected surge in the number of physiotherapy colleges all over Pakistan in last one decade; with this enrollment of students has increased to an alarming level.

<sup>2</sup> At present more than 100 universities in Pakistan have been offering the physiotherapy degree program both in public and private sector. Besides their own school/college/institute of physiotherapy; there are number of schools of physiotherapy in private sector affiliated with these universities enrolling students for physiotherapy degree program.<sup>4</sup>

According to group of physiotherapy students from three institutes of Rawalpindi/Islamabad there are limited job opportunities and limited education facilities in the institutes. One of the reasons of their stress is career insecurity and inadequate training.<sup>5</sup> Also, physiotherapists have been facing lot of barriers in doing evidence-based practice

both at individual and organizational level.<sup>6</sup>

Higher Education Commission seems to be active as evident from curriculum of Doctor of Physical Therapy revised in 2016.<sup>7</sup> But, there is no existence of council or board for the registration of physiotherapists in Pakistan. Association of Physiotherapist exists but not appropriately functioning.<sup>1</sup> It's exactly not known how many physiotherapists with basic physiotherapy degree are required to cater the physical therapy and rehabilitation care need of current Pakistani population and for the population projected for year 2030. And, also exact data is not known about the number physiotherapy graduate are available at this point in time and produced in a year and how many of them are employed or take the job of physiotherapy especially women.

It is high time for the authorities in Pakistan to develop concrete policy for Physical therapy or Physiotherapy education, profession and professionals with involvement of all stakeholders to alleviate the anxiety of stakeholders and public at large.

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**How to cite this article:** Piryani RM<sup>1</sup>, Piryani S<sup>2</sup>. **CONCRETE POLICY IS REQUIRED FOR PHYSICAL THERAPY OR PHYSIOTHERAPY, EDUCATION, PROFESSION AND PROFESSIONALS IN PAKISTAN.** *JPUMHS*; 2022:12:03, 1-2. <http://doi.org/10.46536/jpumhs/2022/12.03.357>

*Received august 09 2022, Accepted On 15 september 2022, Published On 30 september 2022.*



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