



## Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists make a positive contribution to health and well being in the older population, promoting active ageing

**Occupational therapists** promote health and well-being through active participation in daily occupations. The core aim of occupational therapy is to enable people to participate in the everyday activities they choose to do in self care, productivity and leisure. Occupational therapists achieve this outcome by advising, training or adapting the performance of daily occupations which will enhance their ability to participate. Occupational therapy may also be directed to changing the physical, social, attitudinal or legislative aspects of the environment to reduce limitations.

Ageing process causes physical, mental, social and contextual changes which alter everyday occupational performance. Occupational therapists have expert skills and knowledge to work collaboratively with individuals or groups of people who have an impairment of body structure or function due to a physical or mental health condition or ageing and who experience barriers to participation. As health and social care professionals they enable individuals and groups aged 65+ to live their lives to the full and they practice in a variety of settings including hospitals, health centres, (retirement) homes, community and specialist housing, depending on individual needs of the ageing population. Clients are at the centre of the therapeutic process, and outcomes of occupational therapy are diverse, client-driven and measured in terms of participation or satisfaction derived from participation in individually chosen daily occupations.

COTEC represents the occupational therapy profession at European level and the Council believes that by active participation in the EU dialogue we can offer our knowledge and practical solutions to crucial EU issue in active ageing.

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**Physiotherapists** have an important role advising and assisting the older population to use physical activity to keep active and keep healthy. Their specific knowledge of function, movement, specific exercise and activation with knowledge of the effect of disease and disability on function is central. Physiotherapists have a comprehensive understanding of the concept of physical activity and use physical activity in various ways, at different levels and within diverse work areas.

Physiotherapists are experts in developing and maintaining people's ability to move and function throughout their lives. With an advanced understanding of the mechanisms of mobility, what prevents the body from moving well, they promote wellness, mobility and independence. As exercise experts, especially in the treatment of long term and chronic conditions, physiotherapists provide services for a wide range of people to optimise their physical activity. They prescribe exercise as part of a structured, safe and effective programme.

Reducing inactivity and passivity is a major health challenge in which physiotherapists can play an important role by using physical activity as one of several measures in health promotion, prevention and rehabilitation.

The ER-WCPT, representing the physiotherapy profession at European Level, believes that it has much to offer by active participation in the EU dialogue.

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