Physiotherapy Regulation in Nepal

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Acknowledgement
Content

• Brief history of physiotherapy in Nepal
• Physiotherapy regulating body
• Current Code of Ethics and revision
• Physiotherapy education
• Minimum requirement for BPT
• Challenges of physiotherapy profession
• Positive steps
Nepal and physiotherapists

• Area = 885 X 193 km.
• Population ~ 29 million.
• 14 zones, 75 districts.
• 1,500 Registered PTs.
• 1 PT per 20,000 people
Physiotherapy (PT) in Nepal – Brief History

- Nurses and health professional were trained in a Government Hospital of Nepal.

- Certificate/Diploma course (CPT)
  - 1983 – 1990 (*Tribhuvan University*)

- CPT upgraded to Bachelor of Physiotherapy in 2010 in KU.
Physiotherapy (PT) in Nepal – Brief History

• Increased awareness of physiotherapy after the 2015 earthquake.

• More job positions in Government hospitals.

• Many proposals to start CPT and BPT courses.

• KU planning to start Master of Physiotherapy.
Regulatory Board

Ministry of Health and Population

Nepal Health Professional Council

Nepal Physiotherapy Association

Physiotherapist
Nepal Health Professional Council (NHPC)

- 1 Chairman, 1 Registrar, 9 Board members (1 PT representative).
- Part time / Extra time work (except registrar = secretary).
- 29 different subjects/ professions including physiotherapy.
- 29 sub-committees for every discipline.
- Total 70 000+ registered members.
How are physios registered in Nepal?

• Tribhuvan University equivalence for BPT, MPT.
• Completion of online form.
• 20 – 40 US Dollars registration charge.
• Document review.
  • Review duration ~ 1 month.
  • Reviewed by 4 Physiotherapists.
• Certificate issue time ~ 1 month.
Challenges in registration process

• Fake universities → distance education= no clinical placements.
• One university has 100 affiliated PT schools.
• Internship training that cannot be trusted.
• **Solution**: assessment of knowledge and skills.
Upgrading to license exam

• One examination for 29 specialties under NHPC.

• Separate exams for Certificate/ Diploma level, Bachelor and Master of Physiotherapy.

• Skills/ practical examination?
## Upgrading to license exam: BPT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>Weightage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Musculoskeletal physiotherapy</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neurology (Including mental health)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiopulmonary and multisystem disorder</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethics, management and evidence based practice</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physiotherapy across life span and across genders (Geriatrics, pediatrics, women’s/ men’s health)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Based Rehabilitation and Health Promotion (Including Exercise prescription)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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# Upgrading to license exam: MPT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-topics</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Part 1</strong> (50 Marks)</td>
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<td>Elective: Specialty subject</td>
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<td><strong>Part 2</strong> (50 Marks)</td>
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<td>Evidence based practice and Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethics and management</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Topics in Physiotherapy</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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</table>
Current Code of Ethics for Physiotherapy

• A brief document developed in 2005.

• Mentions the roles of different levels of physiotherapy professional.
  • Level A – Bachelor of Physiotherapy and above (12 + 4.5 years)
  • Level B – Certificate level / Diploma (10 + 3 years)
  • Level C – Physiotherapy Aid (10 + 1 year)

• No significant difference between the level A and B.
Code of Ethics Proposed Revision

- Role of the council
- Definitions of physiotherapy professionals
- Core competencies
- Code of ethics
- Distinct scopes of practice: Level A, B and C
- Registration process and re-registration
- License examination
- Continuing Professional Development activities
Ethical Principles: Revision

1. Respect and dignity
2. Respect for client autonomy
3. Beneficence
4. Non-maleficence
5. Justice
6. Responsibility
7. Trustworthiness and integrity
8. Professionalism
Ethical Principles: Revision

- Ethical versus unethical practice
- Providing good care
- Autonomy of client and client-centred approach
- Informed consent
- Standards of physiotherapy practice
- Record keeping and confidentiality
- Involvement in research

- Minimizing risk and ensuring practitioner’s health
- Maintaining professional performance and ongoing learning
- Professional behavior and practice
- Teaching, supervising and assessing
- Pre-information about service
Physiotherapy Education in Nepal

• Kathmandu University runs the only course - 4.5 years BPT.

• Focus on Research and Evidence Based Practice.

• PT students can learn cultural traits of Nepalese that may contribute to health problems.
Physiotherapy Education: Clinical Placements and Internship

- Outpatient physiotherapy department
- Cardiac, pulmonary rehabilitation
- Intensive care units: CCU, NICU, PICU
- Neuro-rehabilitation including Spinal cord injury
- Surgery: Orthopedic, Cardiac, Neuro and General
- Community based rehabilitation
- Women’s health and pediatrics
Minimum requirement to start Bachelor of Physiotherapy

• Revised in 2016 and sent for approval to the council
• Hard to keep balance between high standards and feasibility to start a course
• Unavailability of Professors, Assistant/assistant professors
Current challenges

• Getting physiotherapists’ voice to the board
• Keeping physiotherapy as a priority at the council
• Approving documents of physiotherapy; e.g., code of ethics
• Controlling malpractices
• PT’s working beyond the scope of physiotherapy practice
• Conducting license exam
• Controlling students enrollment in fake universities/ institution
Current challenges

• Title – Physiotherapist versus Doctor
• Questions – independent council versus a separate council
• Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities
  • Collaborating with other experts (high cost associated)
• Decentralizing PT’s outside of Kathmandu
• Retaining PTs within the country
  • Pay $60 – 350 dollars per month
  • Not enough Government jobs
Positive steps so far….

- Review of the current code of ethics
- Review of minimum standards for starting BPT
- Planned License exam
- Plans for starting Master of Physiotherapy
- More job positions facilitated after Nepal Earthquake 2015
Summary

• Good progress in physiotherapy education and physiotherapy regulation plans.

• Long way to go.

• Dangers of exponential rise in number of physiotherapists.

• Revision of code of ethics, minimum requirement.

• License examination should start soon.

• Need strong implementation plans.
Thank you

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