Country: Portugal

Education:
1. How many physiotherapy education programs are in this country?
   Total of 18 (eighteen) Higher Education Institutions
   Seven - Higher Education Institutions from the Public Sector
   Eleven - Higher Education Institutions from the Private Sector

2. Are the education programs accredited by an agency or association?
   a. Is this accreditation specific to physiotherapy?
      Yes. The Agency has a national scope, the accreditation criteria is common to all higher
      education programs, but the accreditation teams for Physiotherapy, always includes
      physiotherapists and one of them is an international expert (foreign country).
      [Links to A3ES website]

3. What is the entry-level degree needed to practice in physiotherapy?
   The entry level degree needed to practice is BSc. Candidates need to have 12 years of
   primary + secondary education to enter the program. The physiotherapy program is part
   of the higher educational institution and has a duration of four academic years (eight
   semesters - 240 ECTS credits).

4. Are there any post-professional degree programs?

5. Please list suggested websites regarding physical therapy education:
   [Links to A3ES website]

Practice:
1. Do patients have direct access or is physiotherapy performed under the direction of a
   physician?
   In 1999, after the integration of the education of Physiotherapy in Higher education at
   the BSc level, the legislation was moved from a need of a “medical prescription”, to a
   “soften” expression of “clinical indication”. The law states that “it is up to them to
   conceive, plan, organize, implement, and assess the work process within their
   profession, with the aim of promoting health, prevention, diagnosis, treatment,
   rehabilitation and reintegration”. Nevertheless, in some contexts of clinical practice, for
   instance in rehabilitation units or public hospitals, there is no direct access since
   patients are allocated to PTs through a medical screening, usually by a Physical Medicine
   and Rehabilitation Specialist. In private practice PTs may have direct access, but some
   insurance companies require a medical referral for reimbursement purposes.
   The BSc students are educated as first contact professionals.
2. How many physiotherapists are licensed in your country?
   12,379 licensed physiotherapists (as of April 2019). This number includes all registered Physiotherapists since the creation of the registration system in 2000. As there is no need for a regular renewal of the registration, this value needs to be considered with caution, as some of them may have already retired from practice or moved to another country.

3. What is the professional designation used by practicing PTs? Is this term protected by legislation?

4. Do you have PTAs or other support personnel? Are they certified/registered/licensed?
   There is tradition in private institutions to have support personnel, they are called auxiliary technicians. Education of this personnel is variable. Many are trained on the job. There are no formal educational programs, nor a legal registration.

5. Name the professional association that advocates for physiotherapy in your country.
   Yes, the association is called “Associação Portuguesa de Fisioterapeutas” and it stands for the Portuguese Association of Physiotherapists. It was founded in 1960 and has been a member of WCPT since 1962.

   http://www.apfisio.pt/

6. Are there standards of practice in your country?

7. Is there a code of conduct in your country?

8. Is any continuing professional development required for re-registration/renewal?
   No.

9. Please list suggested websites regarding physical therapy practice
   http://www.apfisio.pt/

Regulation:

1. What is the regulatory model and model description in the country?
   The Ministry of Health issues a professional identification for all physiotherapists in Portugal and keeps record of all the professionals that hold the Physiotherapy title.
2. **Is registration required to practice? (If so, what organization does a practitioner register with?)**
   Yes. A practitioner must register with the Ministry of Health.

3. **Is licensure necessary to practice in your country?**
   Yes, it is required through the Department of the Ministry of Health. This department issues a professional ID card and keeps a public record of all professionals that can hold this professional title.

   - [http://www.acss.min-saude.pt](http://www.acss.min-saude.pt)

4. **Is there a national examination required prior to practice? (If yes, list the exam agency name and website).**
   No. The professional card is enough to prove that the individual has a certificate and concluded an accredited Portuguese educational program.

5. **Do you have a defined scope of practice and if so who defines the scope?**
   The scope of practice is described by law of the Portuguese Government since 1993 (Decreto-lei 261/93, de 24 de Julho)

   - [https://dre.tretas.org/dre/52126/decreto-lei-261-93-de-24-de-julho](https://dre.tretas.org/dre/52126/decreto-lei-261-93-de-24-de-julho)

6. **What is the website of the organization that represents physiotherapy regulators in your country?**