

The Practice of Physiotherapy in Europe

Introduction

The General Meeting of the European Region of WCPT (ER-WCPT) in 2000 decided that the Report on the Practice of Physiotherapy in the European Union (EU), published in 1996 should be revised.

Purpose - scope

The Executive Committee asked the working groups of the ER-WCPT to review the existing report and make recommendations on the revision of the report. The working groups recommended to concentrate the information in the revised report on issues that are most important and relevant for the profession and that the report should cover all Member Organisations.

Task Force

The report was revised by the Chairmen of the three working groups:

- *Antonio Lopes, Chairman of the Education Working Group*
- *Eckhardt Boehle, Chairman of the Professional Issues Working Group*
- *Sigrún Knútsdóttir, Chairman of the European Union matters Working Group.*

A questionnaire was sent to the 33 Member Organisations (MO's) of the ER - WCPT early in 2004 and again by the end of 2004 for updates.

Results

Answers were received from **31 Member Organisations in 2004** which was **94 %** response rate.

In **2005**, an update was received from **27 Member Organisations (77,1 %)**.

The report is divided into 4 different chapters:

- Regulation of the Profession
- Access to Physiotherapy
- Autonomy of the Profession
- Reimbursement systems of Physiotherapy services

This information is additional to the demographic information that is gathered annually. The information gathered is presented in tables and diagrams.

CHAPTER I REGULATION OF THE PROFESSION

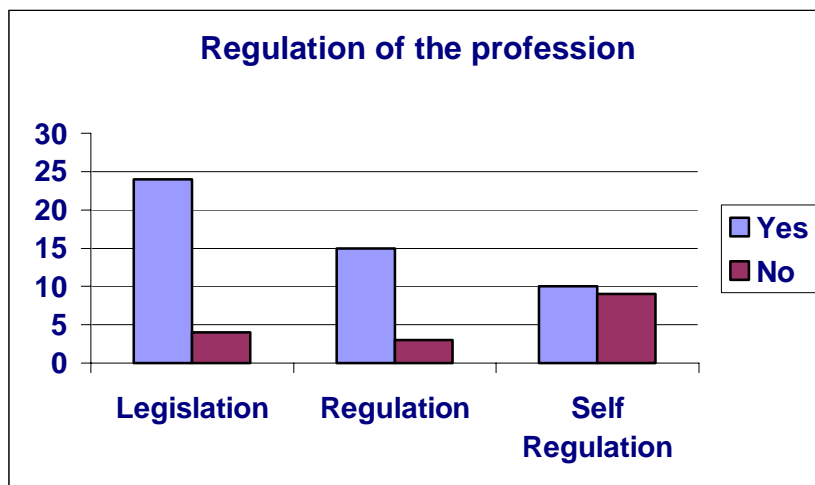
Legislation, regulation or self-regulation of the profession

Question 1:

If you have a regulation of the physiotherapy profession, is the regulation:

- 1.1 By **legislation** set by the authorities?
- 1.2 By **regulation** set by the authorities?
- 1.3 By **self regulation** set by the physiotherapy profession?

Figure 1



Legislation set by the authorities:

Twenty eight answers were received, **86% (24 MO's)** reported that there was legislation on the physiotherapy profession whereas **14% (4 MO's)** reported that there was not.

Regulation set by the authorities:

Eighteen answers were received, **83% (15 MO's)** reported that there was regulation on the physiotherapy profession set by the authorities whereas **17% (3 MO's)** reported that there was not.

12 MO's reported that they had **regulation set by the authorities in addition to legislation**, **3 MO's** had **regulation but not legislation**.

Self-regulation set by the physiotherapy association:

Nineteen answers were received, **53% (10 MO's)** reported that they had self-regulation set by the physiotherapy association. **7 MO's** reported that they had self-regulation **in addition to legislation or regulation set by the authorities**.

Ireland and Estonia had self-regulation but did not have legislation or regulation set by the authorities.

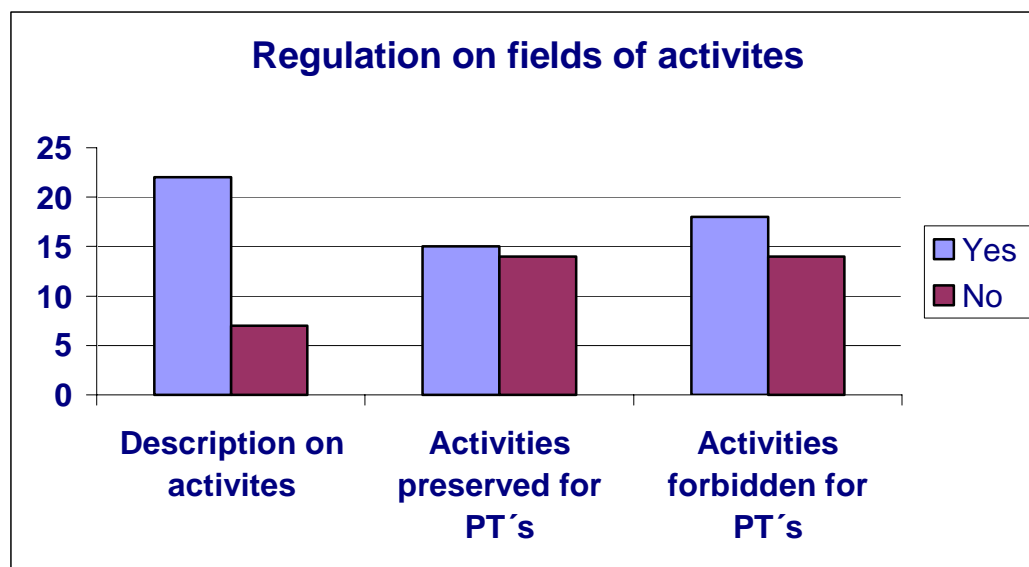
Croatia and Turkey were the only MO's that did not have any regulation of the physiotherapy profession.

Table 1

Legislation, regulation and self - regulation of the physiotherapy profession							
		Qu.1.1		Qu.1.2		Qu.1.3	
		Legislation		Regulation		Self regulation	
	Year	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Austria		1					
Belgium		1		1			1
Bulgaria		1			1		1
Croatia	'04		1		1		1
Cyprus		1					1
Czech Republic		1					
Denmark		1					
Estonia						1	
Finland		1					
France		1		1		1	
Germany		1		1		1	
Greece		1		1		1	
Hungary		1		1			1
Iceland		1					
Ireland						1	
Italy	'04	1					
Latvia			1	1			
Lebanon		1				1	
Liechtenstein		1					
Lithuania							
Luxembourg		1		1			1
Netherlands		1		1		1	
Norway		1					
Poland	'04			1			
Portugal	'04	1		1			
Romania							
Serbia-Montenegro			1	1		1	
Slovenia		1		1			1
Spain		1		1		1	
Sweden		1		1			
Switzerland		1		1			1
Turkey			1		1		1
UK		1				1	
Total		24	4	15	3	10	9
% of answers		86	14	83	17	53	47

Regulation of the fields of activities

Figure 2



Question 2:

If you have a regulation of the physiotherapy profession, does the regulation describe the fields of activities of the profession?

29 MO's answered this question, **76% (22 MO's)** reported that a **regulation** on the profession did **describe the fields of activities** of the profession, whereas **24% (7 MO's)** did not.

Question 3:

Are certain activities preserved only to physiotherapists by regulation, i.e only physiotherapists are allowed to practice certain activities?

29 MO's answered this question, **52% (15 MO'S)** reported that **certain activities were preserved** only to physiotherapists and **48% (14 MO's)** reported that there **was not**.

Question 4:

Are physiotherapists forbidden by legislation to practice certain activities /procedures?

31 MO's answered this question, **58% (18 MO's)** reported that physiotherapists were **forbidden to practice certain activities** whereas **45% (14 MO's)** reported that there were **no such restrictions** by legislation.

1 MO answered the question both with yes and no, so the total percentage exceeds 100%.

Table 2

Regulation on fields of activities							
	Year	Qu.2		Qu.3		Qu.4	
		Description on activities in reg.		Activities preserved for PT's		Activities forbidden for PT's	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Austria				1		1	
Belgium		1		1		1	
Bulgaria		1		1		1	
Croatia	'04						1
Cyprus			1		1		1
Czech Republic		1		1		1	
Denmark		1			1	1	
Estonia		1				1	
Finland			1	1			1
France		1		1		1	
Germany		1			1	1	
Greece		1		1		1	
Hungary		1		1		1	
Iceland			1		1		1
Ireland			1		1		1
Italy	'04	1		1		1	1
Latvia		1		1			1
Lebanon		1		1			1
Liechtenstein		1			1	1	
Lithuania							
Luxembourg		1		1			1
Netherlands		1			1	1	
Norway			1		1		1
Poland	'04	1			1		1
Portugal	'04	1			1		1
Romania							
Serbia-Montenegro		1		1		1	
Slovenia		1		1		1	
Spain		1		1		1	
Sweden		1			1	1	
Switzerland		1			1	1	
Turkey			1		1		1
UK			1		1		1
Total		22	7	15	14	18	14
% of answers		76	24	52	48	58	45

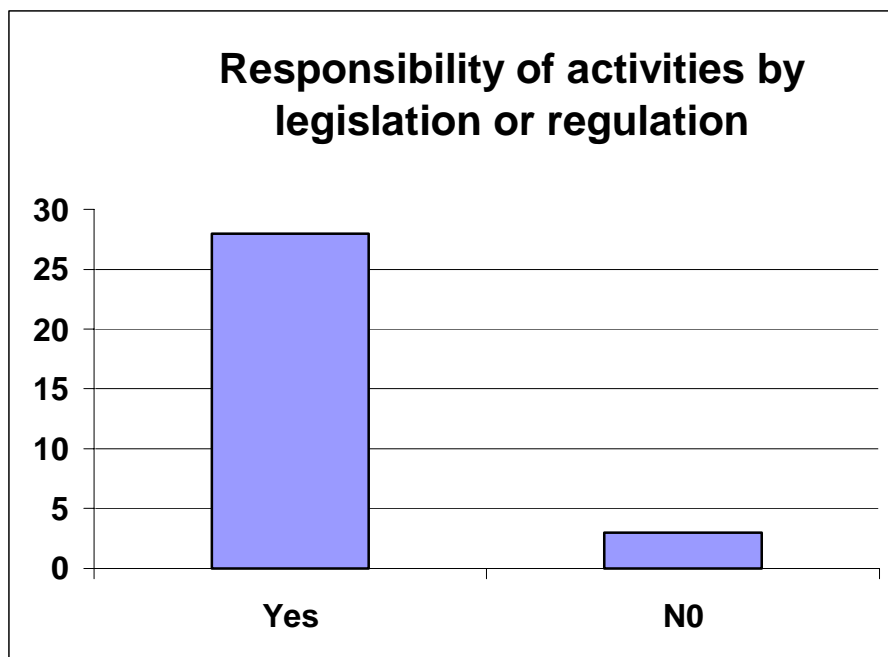
CHAPTER II AUTONOMY – RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility of activities by legislation or regulation

Question 5:

Is the physiotherapist directly responsible for his activities by legislation or regulation?

Figure 3



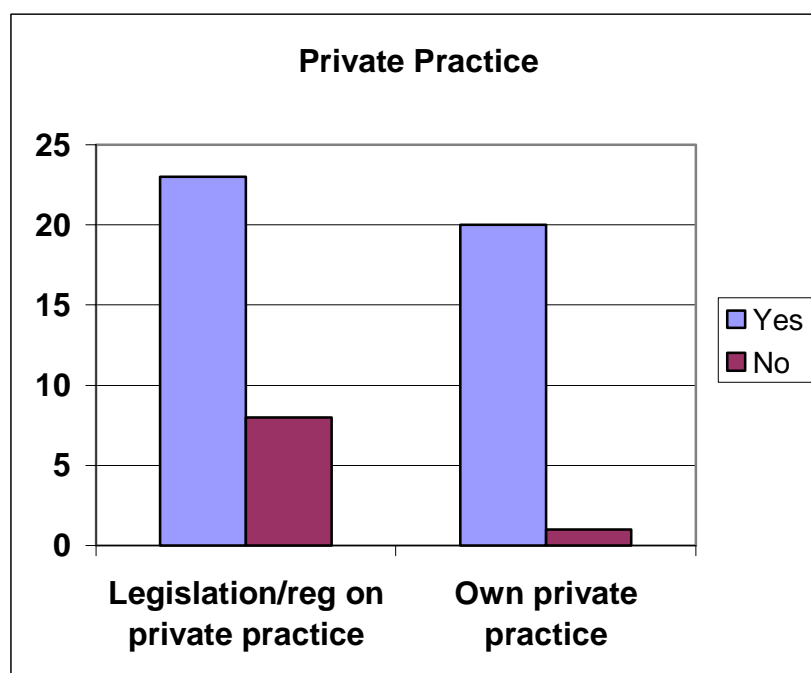
31 MO's answered this question, **90% (28 MO's)** reported that the physiotherapists were **directly responsible for their activities** by legislation or regulation whereas **10% (3 MO's)** reported that **they were not**.

Table 3

Responsibility of activities by legislation or regulation			
		Qu.5	
	Year	Yes	No
Austria		1	
Belgium		1	
Bulgaria		1	
Croatia	'04	1	
Cyprus			1
Czech Republic		1	
Denmark			1
Estonia		1	
Finland		1	
France		1	
Germany		1	
Greece		1	
Hungary		1	
Iceland		1	
Ireland		1	
Italy	'04	1	
Latvia		1	
Lebanon		1	
Liechtenstein		1	
Lithuania			
Luxembourg		1	
Netherlands		1	
Norway		1	
Poland	'04	1	
Portugal	'04	1	
Romania			
Serbia-Montenegro		1	
Slovenia		1	
Spain		1	
Sweden		1	
Switzerland		1	
Turkey			1
UK		1	
Total		28	3
% of answers		90	10

Private Practice

Figure 4



Question 6.1:

Can physiotherapists establish their own private practice?

21 MO's answered this question. **95% (20 MO's)** reported that **they could establish their own private practice** whereas **5% (1 MO)** reported that it **could not**.

Question 6.2:

Is there a legislation or regulation allowing physiotherapists to establish their own independent private physiotherapy practice within the health care system in your country?

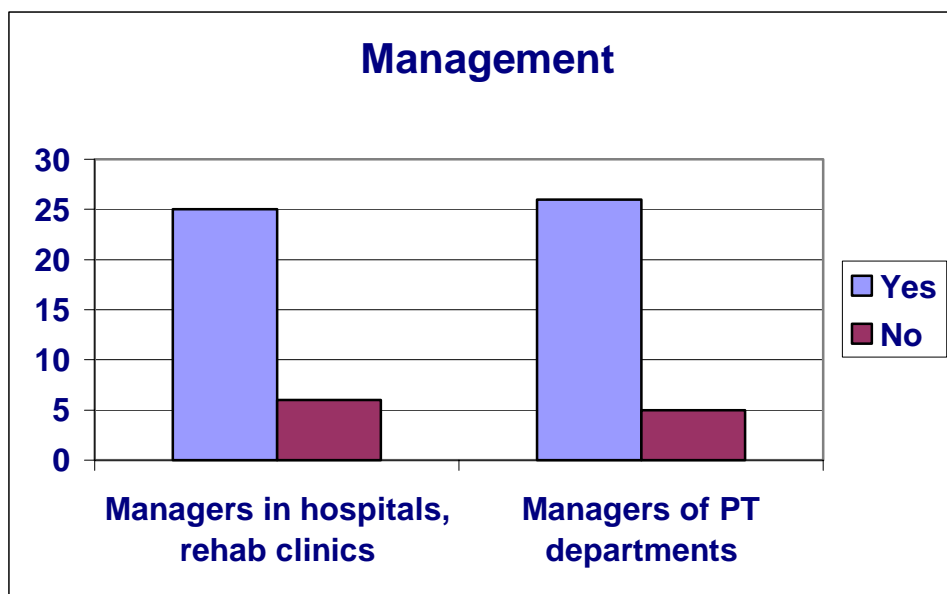
31 MO's answered the question, **74% (23 MO's)** reported that there was a legislation or **regulation on private practice** whereas **26% (8 MO's)** that there **was not**.

8 MO's that had not answered question no. 6.1 that physiotherapists could establish private practice, did however report that there was a legislation or regulation on private practice in their country.

Table 4

Private Practice					
		Own Private Practice		Legislation/regulation on Private Practice	
		Qu.6.1		Qu.6.2	
	Year	Yes	No	Yes	No
Austria		1		1	
Belgium		1			1
Bulgaria					1
Croatia	'04			1	
Cyprus				1	
Czech Republic		1		1	
Denmark				1	
Estonia		1		1	
Finland				1	
France		1		1	
Germany		1		1	
Greece		1			1
Hungary		1		1	
Iceland		1		1	
Ireland		1			1
Italy	'04			1	
Latvia				1	
Lebanon		1		1	
Liechtenstein		1		1	
Lithuania					
Luxembourg		1		1	
Netherlands		1		1	
Norway		1			1
Poland	'04	1		1	
Portugal	'04				1
Romania					
Serbia-Montenegro		1			1
Slovenia		1		1	
Spain		1		1	
Sweden		1		1	
Switzerland				1	
Turkey			1		1
UK				1	
Total		20	1	23	8
% of answers		95	5	74	26

Figure 5



Question 7.1:

Can physiotherapists be employed as managers in hospitals, rehabilitations clinics and other establishments in the health sectors?

31 MO's answered the question, **81% (25 MO's)** reported that they could be employed as managers whereas **19% (6 MO's)** reported that they could not.

Question 7.2.

Can physiotherapists be employed as managers of physiotherapy departments with responsibility of administration, finances, employment etc.?

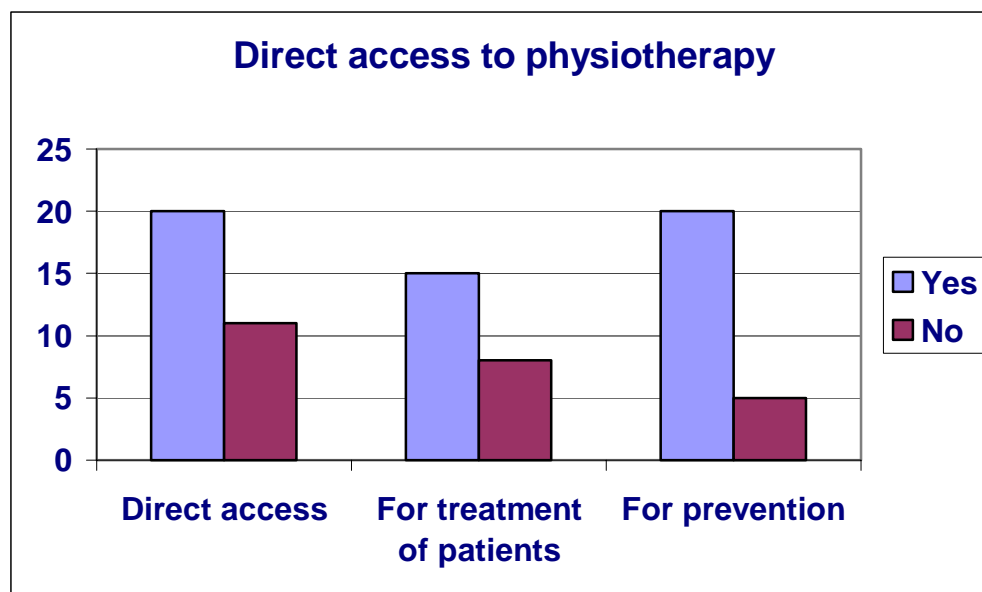
31 MO's answered the question. **84% (26 MO's)** reported that they **could be managers** of physiotherapy departments whereas **16% (5 MO's)** reported that they **could not**.

Table 5

Management					
		Hospitals/rehab		Management in PT departm.	
		Qu. 7.1		Qu. 7.2	
	Year	Yes	No	Yes	No
Austria		1		1	
Belgium		1		1	
Bulgaria			1		1
Croatia	'04		1		1
Cyprus		1		1	
Czech Republic		1		1	
Denmark		1		1	
Estonia		1		1	
Finland		1		1	
France		1		1	
Germany		1		1	
Greece		1			1
Hungary		1		1	
Iceland		1		1	
Ireland		1		1	
Italy	'04	1		1	
Latvia		1		1	
Lebanon		1		1	
Liechtenstein			1		1
Lithuania					
Luxembourg		1		1	
Netherlands		1		1	
Norway		1		1	
Poland		1		1	
Portugal			1	1	
Romania					
Serbia-Montenegro	'04		1		1
Slovenia		1		1	
Spain	'04	1		1	
Sweden		1		1	
Switzerland		1		1	
Turkey			1	1	
UK		1		1	
Total		25	6	26	5
% of answers		81	19	84	16

Access to physiotherapy services

Figure 6



Question 8:

Is there a direct access to physiotherapy services in your country?

31 MO's answered the question, **65% (20 MO's)** reported that there **was a direct access** to physiotherapy services whereas **35% (11 MO's)** reported that there **was not**.

Question 9:

If there is a direct access to physiotherapy services, does it apply for physiotherapy services for?

9.1. *Treatment of patients?*

9.2. *Primary prevention and health promotion that is not a part of treatment of patients?*

23 MO's answered question 9.1, **65% (15 MO's)** reported that there **was a direct access** for treatment of patients, **35% (8 MO's)** reported that there **was not**. **1 MO** answered the question both with yes and no. The total percentage does therefore exceed 100%. This indicates that there is more than one rule for physiotherapy services in these countries.

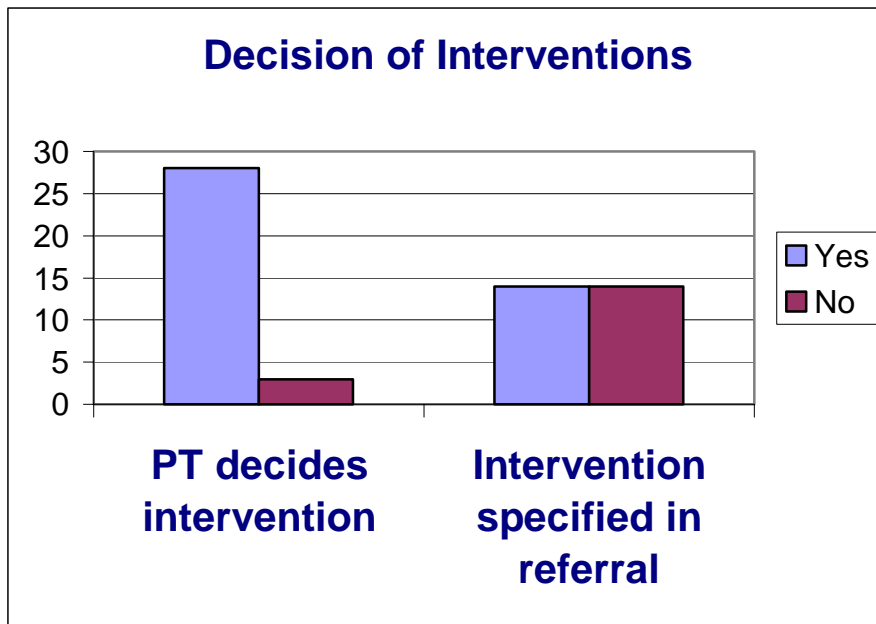
25 MO's answered question 9.2, **80% (20 MO's)** reported that there **was a direct access for prevention and health promotion** that was not a part of treatment of patients whereas **20% (5 MO's)** reported that there **was not**.

Table 6

Direct access to physiotherapy services							
	Year	Qu. 8		Qu. 9.1		Qu. 9.2	
		Direct access		For treatment		For Prevention	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Austria		1			1	1	
Belgium			1				1
Bulgaria			1		1		1
Croatia	'04		1				
Cyprus			1				1
Czech Republic			1				
Denmark		1		1	1	1	
Estonia		1		1		1	
Finland		1		1		1	
France		1		1		1	
Germany		1			1		1
Greece			1				
Hungary			1		1		1
Iceland		1			1	1	
Ireland		1		1		1	
Italy	'04	1		1		1	
Latvia		1				1	
Lebanon		1		1		1	
Lithuania							
Liechtenstein		1			1	1	
Luxembourg			1				
Netherlands		1		1		1	
Norway		1		1		1	
Poland	'04	1		1		1	
Portugal	'04		1				
Romania							
Serbia-Montenegro		1		1		1	
Slovenia		1		1		1	
Spain		1		1		1	
Sweden		1		1		1	
Switzerland			1		1	1	
Turkey			1				
UK		1		1		1	
Total		20	11	15	8	20	5
% of answers		65	35	65	35	80	20

Decision of intervention

Table 7



Question 10

If a referral from a medical doctor is needed for treating patients:

10.1. *Is the physiotherapist free to decide intervention?*

10.2. *Will the referral specify the intervention modalities to be carried out by the physiotherapist?*

31 Mo's answered question 10.1, **90% (28 MO's)** reported that they were free to choose intervention but **10% (3 MO's)** that they were not.

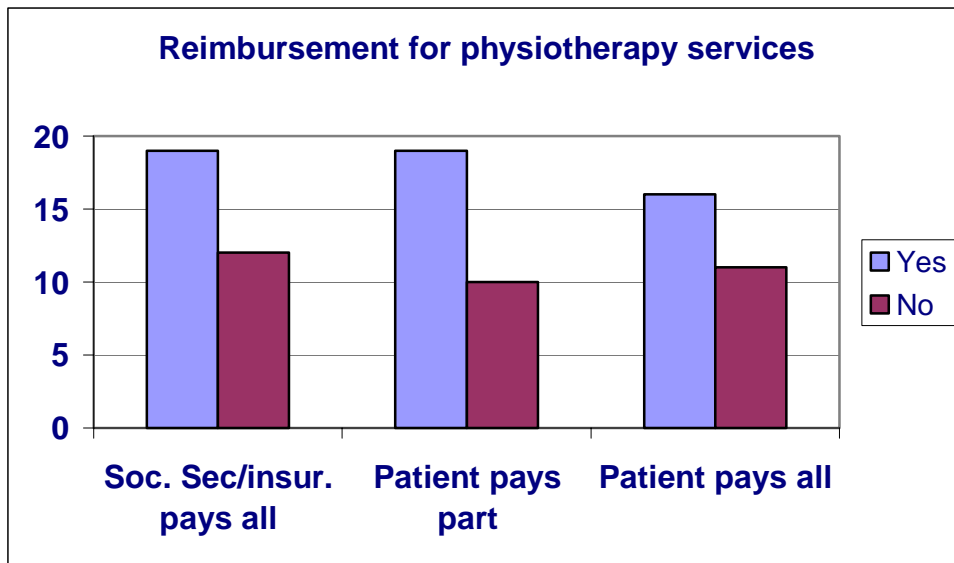
28 MO's answered question 10.2, **50% (14 MO's)** reported that the **referral would specify the intervention modalities** whereas **50% (14 MO's)** that it **would not**. This indicates that those who refer a patient to physiotherapy often specify the intervention modalities even though the physiotherapist is free to decide the intervention.

Table 7

Decision of intervention					
	Year	PT decides intervention		Intervention specified in referral	
		Qu. 10.1		Qu. 10.2	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
Austria		1		1	
Belgium		1		1	
Bulgaria		1		1	
Croatia	'04		1	1	
Cyprus		1			1
Czech Republic		1			1
Denmark		1		1	
Estonia		1		1	
Finland		1			1
France		1			1
Germany		1			1
Greece		1		1	
Hungary		1		1	
Iceland		1			1
Ireland		1			
Italy	'04	1		1	
Latvia		1			
Lebanon		1			1
Liechtenstein		1			1
Lithuania					
Luxembourg		1		1	
Netherlands		1			1
Norway		1			1
Poland	'04	1			
Portugal	'04	1			1
Romania					
Serbia-Montenegro			1	1	
Slovenia		1		1	
Spain		1		1	
Sweden		1			1
Switzerland		1			1
Turkey			1	1	
UK		1			1
Total		28	3	14	14
% of answers		90	10	50	50

Reimbursement for physiotherapy services

Figure 8



Question 11.

*Who pays for the physiotherapy services for **outpatients**/clients?*

*11.1 Does the social security system/insurance system pay **100%** for the cost of physiotherapy services?*

31 MO's answered this question, **61 % (19 MO's)** reported that the social security system/the insurance system/the National Health System (UK) **pay all the cost** of physiotherapy services whereas **39 % (12 MO's)** reported that it **did not**.

*11.2. Does the social security system/insurance system pay a **part of** the cost of physiotherapy services and the patient pays a **part of** the cost of the physiotherapy services?*

29 MO's answered this question, **66% (19 MO's)** reported that the **patients pay a part** of the physiotherapy services but **34% (10 MO'S)** reported that they **did not**.

*11.3. Does the **patient pay 100%** for the cost of the physiotherapy services?*

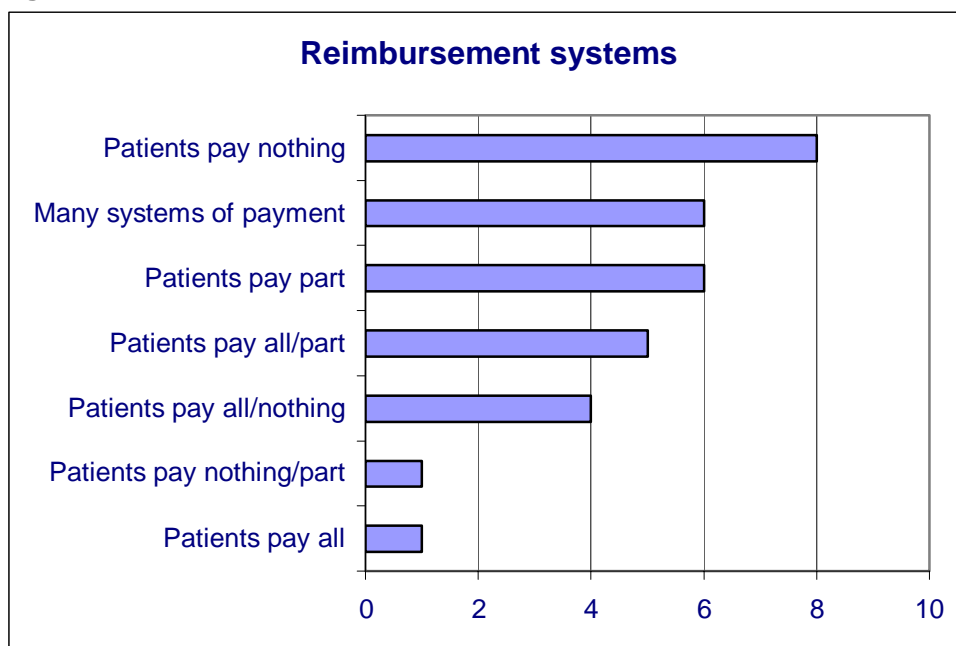
27 Mo's answered this question, **59% (16 MO's)** answered that **the patients pay all** whereas **41% (11 MO's)** answered that they **did not**.

The answers to question 11 about the reimbursement for physiotherapy services indicate that there is more than one system of reimbursement in some of the countries.

Table 8

Reimbursement of physiotherapy services							
	Year	Soc. Sec./NHS Insurance pays all		patient pays part		Patient pays all	
		Qu. 11.1		Qu. 11.2		Qu. 11.3	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Austria		1		1		1	
Belgium			1	1		1	
Bulgaria		1			1		1
Croatia	'04		1	1			1
Cyprus			1		1	1	
Czech Republic		1			1	1	
Denmark			1	1			1
Estonia		1		1		1	
Finland			1	1		1	
France		1		1		1	
Germany			1	1			1
Greece		1					
Hungary		1			1		1
Iceland			1	1			1
Ireland			1	1		1	
Italy	'04	1		1		1	
Latvia		1			1	1	
Lebanon			1	1		1	
Lithuania							
Liechtenstein		1			1		1
Luxembourg		1		1		1	
Netherlands			1	1			
Norway		1		1		1	
Poland	'04	1		1			
Romania	'04						
Portugal		1		1			
Serbia-Montenegro		1			1		1
Slovenia		1			1	1	
Spain		1			1	1	
Sweden			1	1			1
Switzerland			1	1			1
Turkey		1				1	
UK		1			1		1
Total		19	12	19	10	16	11
% of answers		61	39	66	34	59	41

Figure 9



- In 8 MO's (26%) the patients pay nothing for physiotherapy services
- In 6 MO's (19%) there is a system of different possibilities of payment for physiotherapy services (the patients pay all, part or nothing)
- In 6 MO's (19%) the patients pay part of the services
- In 5 MO's (16%) the patients pay all or a part of the services
- In 4 MO's (13%) the patients pay all or nothing
- In 1 MO (3%) the patients pay nothing or part of the services
- In 1 MO (3%) the patients pay all

Table 9

Reimbursement systems								
		Soc.Sec. Insur. pays all	Patient pays part	Patient pays part or nothing	Patient pays all or part	Patient pays all or nothing	Patient pays all	Combination of systems
Austria								1
Belgium					1			
Bulgaria		1						
Croatia	'04		1					
Cyprus							1	
Czech Republic						1		
Denmark			1					
Estonia								1
Finland					1			
France								1
Germany			1					
Greece		1						
Hungary		1						
Iceland			1					
Ireland					1			
Italy	'04							1
Latvia		1						
Lebanon					1			
Liechtenstein		1						
Lithuania								
Luxembourg								1
Netherlands					1			
Norway								1
Poland	'04	1						
Portugal	'04			1				
Romania								
Serbia-Montenegro		1						
Slovenia						1		
Spain						1		
Sweden			1					
Switzerland			1					
Turkey						1		
UK		1						
Total		8	6	1	5	4	1	6
%		26	19	3	16	13	3	19