

## Professional 'Title' Terminology

Current trends in health care focus on use of correct terminology. This would include proper identification of providers. The ICS Physiotherapy Committee proposes that the ICS recognizes and endorses correct identification of disciplines in scientific abstracts, listing of topics and speakers in educational programs and publications.

Of specific concern is use of the term 'physiotherapy / physiotherapist' or 'physical therapy / physical therapist' (or any of their derivatives). These discipline / professional titles are protected titles by law in most countries where these professionals undertake their training. For instance, in Australia, it is an offense under the Health Professional Regulation National Law Act for a person to use these titles, if they are not registered as a physiotherapist, and substantial fines may be imposed for inappropriate use of these titles. Many states in the USA also have similar laws and penalties.

There may be confusion regarding 'physiotherapy' the profession, and 'physiotherapy-delivered treatments'. Only a physiotherapist can deliver physiotherapy. Physiotherapy is a profession, not a treatment technique. Therefore we suggest this conservative therapy intervention be specifically described using terms other than physiotherapy or physical therapy. For example:

- An intervention which was provided by a physiotherapist may be described as 'physiotherapy-delivered pelvic floor muscle training', or 'physiotherapy-supervised pressure biofeedback', or simply 'TENS treatment provided by a physiotherapist'.
- An intervention which was provided by a health care provider other than a physiotherapist, would describe the actual treatment or techniques provided and avoid using the professional discipline title 'physiotherapy'. For example 'researcher / clinician -supervised pressure biofeedback', or 'the researcher / clinician provided pressure biofeedback'.

This principle would apply in many situations including:

- Clinicians or researchers reporting the details of their intervention
- Educators presenting on conservative therapy interventions, e.g. if a non-physiotherapist was presenting results of physiotherapy studies, or referring to the evidence related to physiotherapy interventions, the title of the talk would be "Pelvic floor muscle training / Conservative therapy for SUI" rather than "Physiotherapy for SUI".

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