

## CHALLENGES TO PHYSICAL THERAPY IN PAKISTAN

Seema Gul<sup>1</sup>, Haider Darain<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Khyber Medical University, Peshawar Address for correspondence: KMU-IPMR Hayatabad Phase V Peshawar

Working as a physical therapist can be a rewarding experience. They have the opportunities to explore their skills in so many fields like teaching/education, clinical practice, sports, preventive health, administration, public health, research. However, there are some of the most common challenges therapists are facing nowadays. A lot of physical therapy colleges are being opened day by day and number of colleges exceeds the number of seats available for physical therapists in both public and private sectors. Huge number of students is graduated from physical therapy institutes every year. Therefore, it's difficult to accommodate these graduates in hospitals and academic institutions. This mismanagement will create problems for DPT graduates in coming future as, in a country like Pakistan, where unemployment is the main existing issue then such condition is very crucial and could lead to emotional and psychological stress for the graduates as well. However, the need & scope of physical therapy cannot be denied.

The present situation of our tertiary care hospitals & DHQs in KP, where we see a huge number of patients coming to OPD and IPD, a lot of them need aggressive physical therapy care. Unfortunately very less number of staff almost 2-3 physical therapists per tertiary care hospital are found to cope with such a huge need.

Lack of equipment, modalities and custom-built infrastructure in accordance to physical therapy treatment is another challenge to practice physical therapy. Further, majority of practicing clinical physical therapists hardly believe in Evidence based practice, blaming unavailability of access to up to dates journals. As part of multidisciplinary team where we aim towards holistic management of patient, physical therapists face problems in referral system as well. Enormous amount of conditions are there which need physical therapy treatment but a very poor referral can be traced in such conditions. Further physical therapist has its own approach towards patient's health in terms of examination, diagnosis, treatment and prognosis making him/ her an independent practitioner. Pakistan Physical Therapy Association (PPTA) is working for physical therapy promotion in Pakistan. The main focus of PPTA is to promote quality education and set standards for future physical therapy institutes and education systems in Pakistan. Recently, PPTA has demanded for forming a regulatory body at national level and the case has will be presented at the national assembly of the country. Achieving this goal will definitely help in promotion of physical therapy in the country and will regulate further mushrooming.