



International Federation of Physiotherapists
working in
Occupational Health and Ergonomics

IFPOHE Third General meeting (virtual) March 11th 2025

Minutes (23 April 2025)

Executive Committee: Rose Boucaut, Yvonne de Leeuw, Marisa Coetzee, Kjerstin Stigmar, Vasiliki Sakellari, Tracey Atkinson, Beatriz Sanz-Bustillo

Presiding Officer: Gayline Manalang (Philippines)

Returning officer: Augustine A. Acquah (Ghana)

Support: Catherine Wambua (Kenya)

Minute Taker: Tracey Atkinson (UK)

Housekeeping: Marisa Coetzee (South Africa)

Welcome from President Rose Boucaut and introduction to Secretary Marisa Coetzee who shared information about housekeeping and technology to be used in the meeting. Marisa introduced the Presiding Officer Gayline Manalang (Philippines) as Chair of the meeting.

Gayline Manalang started the meeting: Agenda had been sent to all of those who registered to attend the meeting and was posted in the teams chat function. Any other business matters to be raised were to be posted in the chat and to be addressed at the end of the meeting.

Members in the specialty group who helped in the preparations for the general meeting and also in relation to previous activities throughout the year were thanked.

Roll call (conducted by Rose Boucaut)



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Member Organisations, some of whom were represented by attendees at the meeting

Australia Occupational Health Physiotherapy Australia

Brazil National subgroup of the Brazilian Association of Physiotherapy in work

Columbia The Association of Columbia, Columbia, Colombian Association of Physiotherapy

Denmark Danish Society for Physiotherapy in Occupational Health

Estonia Estonian Association of Physiotherapists

Finland The Association of Finnish Physiotherapists in Occupational Health

Ghana Ghana Physiotherapy Association

Greece The Panhellenic Physiotherapists' Association

Iceland The Icelandic Physiotherapy Association

Ireland Chartered Physiotherapists in Occupational Health and Ergonomics

Japan Japanese Society of Physiotherapy in Occupational Health

Kenya Kenya Society of Physiotherapists

The Netherlands Association of Dutch Physiotherapists working in Occupational Health and Ergonomics

New Zealand Occupational Health Physiotherapy Group

Norway Norwegian Physiotherapist Associations' occupational health and ergonomics interest group

Peru Asociación Peruana de Terapeutas Físicos, The [Peruvian Association of Physiotherapy](#)

Philippines Philippine Physical Therapy Association

Portugal Order of Physiotherapists

Slovenia Slovenian Association of physiotherapists

South Africa Occupational Health Special Interest Group

Spain The Spanish Association of Physiotherapists in Occupational Physiotherapy and Ergonomics

Sudan Sudanese Physiotherapy Association

Sweden The Swedish Section of Work health and Ergonomics

Uganda Ugandan Association of Physiotherapy

United Kingdom The Association of Chartered Physiotherapist in Occupational Health and Ergonomics

Associate Member: Canada and Nigeria

Members-elect: Tanzania, Chile and Nigeria.



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Welcome to all

Minutes of the General Meeting 2023, circulated May 2023 were tabled and proposed as correct by Vasiliki Sakellari (Greece), seconded by Beatriz Sanz-Bustillo (Spain).

No objections or comments recorded regarding minutes. Minutes accepted.

Presidents Report (presented by Rose Boucaut)

Reported a busy couple of years since the last general meeting and presented some highlights.

- **Global Standards**

There was a major undertaking to develop professional standards that would apply globally for the practice of physiotherapy within occupational health and ergonomics, and they were released in 2024.

This will be followed up by a questionnaire to ask Member Organisations, first, if they are aware of these Standards existing and secondly, how you might use the standards and whether that would be useful. Rose asked Member Organisations to provide any feedback.

Rose thanked people who were in the northern and southern hemisphere task forces. It was quite hard work putting these Standards together, a lot of consultation, regular meetings, developing friendships and finding about practices in different countries; so well done to the whole team. And thank you for all the work involved.

- **Webinars**

A number of webinars have been hosted with a mixed response. Again, we would like to gain feedback from a questionnaire, do you value the webinars that have been put forward? And are they worth attending? A lot of work goes into the webinars and conducting them and some of our attendances have been quite low. In contrast, some of the attendances at other World Physiotherapy Specialty group webinars have been quite high, so maybe there's something regarding advertising, timing or the topic that is not working for members. We would like to hear what we can do to make our webinars attractive to you, the Members, any feedback on that would be valued.



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- **Newsletters**

We hope that you have each been receiving regular IFPOHE Newsletters. They go out to all of the IFPOHE Member Organisations, so if you're not receiving them, we need to hear that. Just so that we can make sure that they are reaching your member organisation and then getting distributed at the Member level. The regular Newsletters tell you what we've been up to.

In the Newsletters we are trying to share information about free and fee-paying webinars that are being conducted by different organisations. By doing this we hope to point our Member Organisations members to interesting research and activities that we're aware of, so we'll keep going with sharing those in the Newsletters. Please let us know if you hear of any events that might be of interest to colleagues and we will add them to the Newsletter.

Annual Report

This year we produced the IFPOHE Annual Report 2023 to 2025 which has been sent to all our Member Organisations. So again, we hope you've received it and had the opportunity to read it. Please share it with membership of your Member Organisation.

- **Elections**

We thank World Physiotherapy for their help in putting together the elections and electronic voting and want to acknowledge all the work that World Physiotherapy did getting out the voting papers and to thank the Returning Officers. Thank you to Augustine Acquah (Ghana), and IFPOHE Executive Committee members, Yvonne de Leeuw (Vice President) and Kjerstin Stigmar, who've were involved in collating information.

- **Meetings & Conferences**

Kjerstin Stigmar from Sweden has initiated regular meetings with the Nordic member organisations of IFPOHE and it sounds like that's been a useful networking session. Other Executive Committee Members are trying to follow her example in our own geographical regions.

Beatriz Sanz-Bustillo has been active with the Spanish and Latin member organisations, for example, in the Peru Conference 2024, she was a guest speaker and obviously speaking Spanish is a great advantage.

A webinar was held recently with Spanish speaking countries which was well attended. Thank you, Beatriz, for getting everybody together and being such a positive force from the Executive Committee.



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In 2023, there was a workshop held in Eldoret, Western Kenya and Yvonne and Rose both attended as guest speakers. Yvonne (virtual) and Rose (in person). This was a basic introductory workshop about working in occupational health. It was well received with about 100 attendees; this might be something that we can repeat in other settings.

A couple of members of the Executive Committee have been attending the World Physiotherapy Leadership Programme. Yvonne, Vice-president and Rose, President have both finished the leadership programme, which was tailored for subgroups. Good to hear what other specialty groups are doing well and things that we might aspire to do. Learnt how important it is to protect the IFPOHE brand amongst other things. World Physiotherapy is conducting another leadership programme this year for national associations which Vasiliki Sakellari Executive Committee Member from Greece is currently undertaking. It runs over 12 months with regular meetings and it's a great way of developing skills and knowledge and bringing it back then to the IFPOHE committee. We are hoping that if World Physiotherapy runs similar programmes in the future, we will be able to nominate other Executive Committee members to undertake the programme.

The other activity that World Physiotherapy has been conducting in the last couple of years is having regular meetings for specialty group leaders. This has been informative to benchmark what we're doing against others and to pick up really good tips from them and to help people who are just starting out on the specialty group pathway.

At the Dubai World Physiotherapy Congress, there were a lot of IFPOHE activities, and they were well delivered by Yvonne and Vasiliki. In 2023, Rose presented about IFPOHE while in Columbia and presentations were well attended. Yvonne went to the Morocco ICOH conference and delivered a paper. In 2024 Rose was fortunate to give some presentations in Spain and to visit Oulu as part of an Erasmus exchange plus attend the Oulu Winter Seminar in Finland, which was a two day occupational health and ergonomics physiotherapy event.



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New Member Organisations

Welcome to Portugal, Order of Physiotherapists/Ordem dos Fisioterapeutas as a member organisation of IFPOHE.

Chile is interested in joining IFPOHE. Tanzania, with paperwork nearly complete. Nigeria has flagged initial interest via their newly appointed associate member.

Voting results announced by Yvonne de Leeuw, with thanks in collaboration to our Returning officer Augustine A. Acquah, Heidi Kosakowski from World Physiotherapy and Kjerstin Stigmar IFPOHE Executive Committee member

1. Executive Committee Members re-elected

One committee member stood for re-election having completed their four-year term

Re-election of

Vasiliki Sakellari (Greece) – 4-year term

2. New Executive Committee Members elected

Shane Meys, Occupational Health Physiotherapy Group, New Zealand – 2-year term

Claudia Rojas Silva, Colombian Association of Physiotherapy– 4-year term

Rosimeire Simprini Padula, Brazilian Association of Physiotherapists in Work– 4-year term

We congratulate and welcome our returning member Vasiliki and welcome new Executive Committee Members.

New committee member Shane Meys introduced himself, Claudia Rojas Silva was unable to attend in person and Tracey Atkinson introduced her; Rosimeire Simprini Padula who was unable to attend sent a pre-recording to introduce herself.



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3. Acknowledge past committee members

- Daijo Shiratsuchi from Japan. Daijo was elected in the 2023 ballot, and we enjoyed having him on the committee, but he had conflicting activities with family health. Thank you Daijo.
- Kjerstin Stigmar from Sweden who started working towards subgroup formation in 2015 at the Singapore Congress, which was prior to IFPTOHE formation in Geneva in 2019. She has provided great wisdom and support to the committee for a decade and will be greatly missed. We thank her for her outstanding and ongoing contribution over the years.

Upcoming events- introduced by Vasiliki Sakellari and Yvonne de Leeuw

Tokyo WP Congress 2025

- IFPOHE subgroup working together business meeting (Members)
- Networking session- networking session offers a chance for all attendees to connect, to share knowledge
- Provides an informal space for exchanging ideas, best practises and experiences in occupational health and ergonomics.
- Posters & ePoster sessions will showcase research and advancement in occupational health and physiotherapy, covering topics like Workplace Wellness, ergonomics and rehabilitation. The IFPOHE Booth will serve as a centre meeting point for members to engage with activities network and with colleges and assess valuable resources.
- Members are encouraged to actively participate in Tokyo 2025 through both activities, networking sessions and educational sessions. If interested in helping out, please contact Vasiliki before mid-May 2025.

Future Events

Premus 2025 in Germany in September, which is focused on work related musculoskeletal disorders preventing them.

Also, the European Region of World Physiotherapy will celebrate a Congress in Spain, Madrid, in 2026

and then World Physiotherapy Congress will be in Mexico in 2027.

Please continue to share any other relevant events with IFPOHE and we will forward it to the membership.



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Any Other Business –

Member asked for Global standards to be shared, these were shared in the chat function. And can be found on IFPOHE website <https://ifpoheworldphysiot.wixsite.com/ifpohe/education>.

Kjerstin Stigmar was asked to speak as she leaves the Executive Committee after a decade of service:

I would like to say that I am very thankful for having the opportunity to serve on the IFPOHE committee and I have done it for several years. It started in Singapore in 2015. I have learnt so much from talented and dedicated colleagues and I have learnt so much about collaboration and communication. Learning about different cultures and how physiotherapy works all over the globe. I'm deeply thankful for being part of this and all my fantastic, amazing colleagues in the committee. I know I do not only consider you as colleagues, but also friends, lifelong friends. Thank you very much.

Gayline thanked Kjerstin again on behalf of the committee and members.

Gayline also requested if IFPOHE would consider promoting World Day of Safety and Health at work, which is promoted every April 28th by the ILO, so there's already a web page dedicated for the 2025 World Day for Safety and Health at Work and this was shared in the chat function.

Would IFPOHE consider strengthen this advocacy and make it one of their regular activities as much as we do for the World Health Day and the World Physiotherapy Day?

Meeting closed by Rose Boucaut with thanks to all for attending and Gayline for being the Presiding Officer.