***eServices Provision for the Seniors (55+) in the Cross-border eRegion***

***Škofja Loka, 9th April 2019***

14:30 – 16:00**Section Panels II - Networks**

***Physiotherapy Profession for eInclusion in Active Ageing and Silver eConomy***

**The purpose of the panel**

**Physiotherapy Profession for eInclusion in Active Ageing and Silver eConomy**

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* To analyse whether the physiotherapy profession is included in the **active aging** strategy
* Monitoring available physiotherapy e-services for the elderly.
* Suggest possible improvements to e-service providers in physiotherapy.
* Future cross-border cooperation

**Introduction**

Globally aging has changed dramatically and people are living much longer than previous generations. Maintaining health, economic security and contributing to society are a big challenge as people age. Traditional retirement plans are disappearing, the cost of daily living continues to rise, and majority of people aged 65+ are coping with at least one chronic health condition. Taking into account life expectancy and fertility trends in Slovenia the size of the older population will be even more pronounced in the future. We need to create possibilities and opportunities for quality living for all generations, and for dignified ageing. To comprehensively address these challenges, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia has adopted **the Active Ageing Strategy.** This is the concept of active ageing, which emphasises activity and creativity in all periods of life, concern **for health**, and intergenerational cooperation and solidarity. The guidelines also take into consideration that human rights apply equally to all, regardless of age.

Four directions of the necessary adjustments:

1. Employment and education
2. **Independent, healthy and safe living** for all generations (systems of social protection, accessibility of healthcare and long-term care services, concern for health, reducing inequalities in healthcare);
3. Participation in society (intergenerational cooperation, volunteering, **use of ICT in communication**, prevention of discrimination
4. Environment enabling an active life throughout the life course (adjustments to the economy, dwelling conditions and transport systems with the support of ICT and technological solutions).

Implementation of the guidelines will depend on the awareness of the importance of the proposed changes, and on an underlying consensus and commitment from stake­holders in society to fulfil the strategy. The physiotherapy profession has to be present as one of the main stakeholders.

 ***Physiotherapy for older people***

The scope of health issues characteristic of old age (incontinence, frailty and falls, dementia, bone, heart, circulation and respiratory problems, dental diseases) increases with longevity. The prime purpose of physical therapists working with older people is to maintain and/or restore function, activity and independence. This requires a person-centred, collaborative, inter-professional approach to a wide range of conditions affecting this population. The unique knowledge, skills and experience of physiotherapists places them in a pivotal position to influence the health and function of older people. Sharing information throughout international network, facilitates learning based on experience from both developed and developing countries. Physiotherapists are well-trained and well-placed to lead programmes designed to address the long-term consequences of non-communicable diseases. They prescribe adequate exercise programmes which are proper, effective and improve the functional ability of their clients. It is scientifically evidence based that the physiotherapy intervention lowers the healthcare expenditure and can also significantly impact the ability to live independently.

The **Slovenian Association of Physiotherapists – ZFS (**[**www.physio.si**](http://www.physio.si)**)** is a non-profit, nongovernmental organization that represents the physiotherapy profession and the majority of the physiotherapists in Slovenia. To follow the rapid development of the profession ZFS is delivering the quality continuing professional education and promote high standards of physiotherapy practice, education and research. ZFS is the member state organization of the WCPT - World Confederation for Physical Therapy ([www.wcpt.org](http://www.wcpt.org)) and also of the European region of the WCPT ([www.erwcpt](http://www.erwcpt)) which represents 39 states in Europe.

**ZFS vision** is to move physiotherapy forward, so the profession will be recognized nationally for its significant role in improving health and wellbeing. Our mission is to facilitate communication and information exchange among the service users, especially the people 55+ years old, who need them more often. The useful information about physiotherapy everybody can find on ([www.physio.si/za-paciente/](http://www.physio.si/za-paciente/)).