

Research Priorities NEWS



Practice and Development Unit
www.csp.org.uk

Autumn 2012

In this issue:

- [Editorial](#)
- [The background to the project](#)
- [The next stage](#)
- [Awareness raising and dissemination](#)
 - [Major publications](#)
 - [Resources](#)
- [Analysis of the prioritised research topics](#)
- [Targeted approaches to potential funders:](#)
 - [The CSP Charitable Trust](#)
 - [The Stroke Association](#)
 - [Arthritis Research UK](#)
 - [MS Society](#)
 - [UKRRC](#)
 - [emPOWER](#)
- [Facilitating physiotherapy research in priority areas](#)
- [Your views](#)

Editorial

The Research Priorities project which commenced in 2010 was the latest in a series of projects (following on from 2002 and 2007) designed to identify major priorities for physiotherapy research in the UK.

This rigorous exercise involving hundreds of volunteer clinicians, educators and researchers throughout the profession, plus interested parties from outside the profession such as patient and service representatives, was only the start of an ongoing programme of work

Research Priorities News is produced in electronic format only. It is available via the Research Priorities page of the CSP website www.csp.org.uk/researchpriorities and (for CSP members only) on the InteractiveCSP research network www.csp.org.uk/icsp/research

which is planned to:

- raise awareness of current physiotherapy research in the UK;
- underline the importance of evidence based practice in today's health and social care services;
- help physios make the case for physiotherapy as a clinically and cost effective intervention which provides the best outcomes for patients;
- signpost to sources of funding which might be available for physiotherapy researchers, including MSc students;
- encourage more physios to carry out research around priority topics, for example in their own practice settings.

We hope this project update sparks some new ideas for you on how you could be contributing to the research base for physiotherapy and helping to demonstrate the effectiveness of physiotherapy in maintaining and improving the health and wellbeing of the UK population.

Project background

The aim of the first stage of the Research Priorities project was to identify the areas of physiotherapy practice requiring evidence most urgently, and draw up a list of priorities for the profession in four key clinical areas: musculoskeletal; neurology; cardiorespiratory and medical rehabilitation; and mental and physical health and well being. This was completed in March 2011. The lists of priorities can be viewed at www.csp.org.uk/professional-union/research/priorities/csp-research-priorities-project-2010

Recently an interim evaluation of the project was carried out, and the results were presented to the CSP Research and Development Subcommittee in October 2012. The main points from that evaluation report are summarised below.

The next stage

The second (implementation) stage of the project is currently under way. Its aim is to strategically direct and facilitate the development of the evidence base in the identified areas, as well as to generally disseminate the outputs of the project and its importance to the profession.

Four strands of work were identified:

- A. Promotion of the project and the priorities – awareness raising and dissemination
- B. Further analysis of the prioritised research topics
- C. Targeted approaches to potential funders of research
- D. Facilitating research in the prioritised areas of physiotherapy practice

Achievements in each of these areas are further detailed below.

Awareness-raising and dissemination

All CSP communication channels were used to disseminate the identified priorities, including the CSP website, Frontline, the weekly member e-Bulletin, professional and regional networks, country Boards and groups such as the Allied Health Professionals Research Network (AHPRN), the iCSP online network, newsletters e.g. Public Health News / Students News, flyers, Congress and conferences, etc.

A long term staged programme of promotion of the priorities to stakeholders and the public will continue into 2013.

Major publications

The methodology and outputs of the research priority project were documented in an article in *Physiotherapy* journal, first published online in April 2012 and included in the September 2012 issue:

Rankin G, Rushton A, Olver P, Moore AP. *Chartered Society of Physiotherapy's identification of national research priorities for*

physiotherapy using a modified Delphi technique. *Physiotherapy* 2012. Volume 98 issue 3 pp 260-272.

Full text access to *Physiotherapy* is available to CSP members (login required) via the CSP website at

<http://www.csp.org.uk/professional-union/csp-publications/physiotherapy-journal>

Resources

New targeted resources have been developed by the Research Priorities team to facilitate engagement with the priorities. These include:

- a dissemination resource pack for use by CSP Alliance and Professional Network (A&PN) members, presented to a PN Chairs Forum meeting in June 2012; and
- a shared online tool for Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) running Masters degree programmes, to register and share their interest in developing research questions relating to the priorities for use by their Masters students. This tool went 'live' in September 2012 for the new student intake.

Analysis of the prioritised research topics

- The CSP research priorities project team has developed a methodology for analysing and preparing topics to submit to the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Health Technology Assessment (HTA) research funding programme. One topic has been submitted so far, and others are in preparation.
- A group of programme leads from the HEIs has volunteered to help develop research questions suitable for Masters students from some of the priority topics.

Targeted approaches to potential funders

The research priorities have provided a platform for closer working relationships to be developed with funding bodies.

Members of the expert panels involved in identifying the priorities were asked to suggest some key research funders in their clinical

area. These were supplemented by the project team and include:

- the NHS NIHR HTA programme (see [Analysis](#) section above)
- the CSP Charitable Trust
- major charities and patient groups, such as the Stroke Association; Arthritis Research UK; the Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society; the UK Respiratory Research Collaborative (UKRRC); emPOWER etc.

Approaches have been made to all these bodies and organisations, and some good long term relationships have been established.

CSP Charitable Trust

CSP Council made the decision to donate additional funds to the Charitable Trust to support research undertaken in the top research priorities.

- Two research topics were selected for Special Award funding in the 2012-13 funding round
- Physiotherapy Research Foundation (PRF) award applicants have been requested to map their applications to research priorities
- Funding has been agreed for a new Dissemination Award, to enable Masters students to prepare their work for further dissemination in publications, at conferences etc.

Stroke Association

- A link to the CSP research priorities is displayed on the Stroke Association website www.stroke.org.uk/research/looking-for-funding
- The Stroke Association are highlighting the research priorities to all applicants for their Junior and Senior Stroke Association Research Fellowship awards 2012–13

Arthritis Research UK (ARUK)

Links have been established with relevant ARUK Clinical Studies Groups (CSGs). As a result:

- The priorities have been presented at several CSG workshops
- The Osteoarthritis CSG's priorities have been modified to include studies of behaviour change and self management
- They have also run a workshop to develop research questions around a 'packages of care' priority

MS Society

The Society are now welcoming applications for their funding awards citing the CSP research priorities.

UK Respiratory Research Collaborative (UKRRC)

CSP respiratory research priority topics were presented at a UKRRC workshop on funding priorities.

There is a possibility of partnership funding in the future.

emPOWER

emPOWER is a disability charities consortium working for people of all ages with complex physical disabilities.

Through the CSP's relationship with emPOWER, a new link has been established with the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign, which will be pursued further in 2013.

Facilitating research in prioritised areas

The aims of this workstream include:

- Promoting the benefits and opportunities of utilising the research priorities in undertaking research at any level
- Promoting funding opportunities
- Facilitating research collaborations in priority areas to maximise the profession's research capacity, and facilitating opportunities to develop high quality proposals
- Promoting opportunities for multi-disciplinary and multi-sector collaboration

Groups approached to engage with this work include the CSP Alliances and Professional Networks (A&PNs); course leaders of Masters physiotherapy programmes; and the Allied Health Professions Research Network.

Work with all these groups is ongoing and will be evaluated in 2013.

Your views

We would be interested to know your views on how the CSP could and should continue

working to provide leadership and support for its members, both in progressing the profession's evidence base, and in strengthening opportunities for research funding and collaboration.

Here are some examples of points for debate:

- Does the profession need to identify research priorities? Why / why not?
- Should priorities be profession-specific or multi-professional? Why?
- Should all areas of practice be investigated? If not, how would the areas for investigation be selected?
- Should prioritisation be on the basis of patient need, or lack of current evidence, or some other criterion? Why?
- Do researchers at all levels engage with research priorities? If not, why not?
- Do funders engage with research priorities? If not, why not?

Please contact us at the address below with any comments or suggestions. We welcome your participation in this very important project.

Editor:

Pat Olver (Research Priorities Administrator)
Practice and Development, CSP
researchpriorities@csp.org.uk