



# IFOMPT Release

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## *IFOMPT, WCPT and the link with Parent Bodies*

*From the President -  
Ken Olson*



IFOMPT is a specialty subgroup of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT). IFOMPT is the largest WCPT subgroup and was the first recognised specialty subgroup of WCPT (1978). WCPT is the sole international voice for physical therapy and represents more than 450,000 physical therapists worldwide through its 109-member organisations. This relationship firmly connects IFOMPT to the larger worldwide physical therapy community. Despite our focus on our specialty area of practice of musculoskeletal and orthopaedic manual physical therapy (OMPT), we are a stronger profession through our national professional organisations and connection to WCPT.

Our national professional organisations represent our collective voices within national regulatory and governmental agencies in our countries that control professional licensure, scope of practice, and in many cases, reimbursement for professional services. If we do not support the professional organisations who are members of WCPT, we do not support the physical therapy profession.

Without strong professional organisations, the profession will wither and die. With strong professional organisations, we can advance our scope of practice and reimbursement toward advancement and prosperity of the profession for the benefit of the patients we serve.

IFOMPT is a supporter and advocate for strong OMPT specialty organisations, and I feel that creating a cooperative, synergistic relationship between the OMPT organisation and the national PT organisation in each country is the best solution to advancement of the profession and OMPT specialty. The OMPT specialists can serve as educators, advocates, and promoters of the physical therapy profession to advance the profession in each country. In my opinion, OMPT organisations can best serve in these cooperative relationships with the national PT organisation as autonomous organisations who maintain control over their finances and implementation of educational standards in OMPT educational programs. The impact of the OMPT specialists and their organisations within a country can be maximised by working cooperatively with the national PT organisation. WCPT specialty subgroups are re-confirmed every four years at the WCPT General Meeting after completion of a review process, which includes documentation of recognition of the IFOMPT

member organisations from their country's WCPT member organisation. So, as we work through the process of updating the IFOMPT records, we appreciate the IFOMPT MOs' cooperation to provide information we may need to complete this review process. The IFOMPT Executive Director requests that current organisational Constitutions are kept on file for all the IFOMPT RIGs and MOs, and yearly membership numbers are reported for each category of membership. As changes are made to Constitutions, membership, or relationships with National PT organisations, the IFOMPT Executive Director also needs to be notified.

WCPT is currently going through a governance review process and has proposed extensive revisions to its Constitution, which will be voted on at the WCPT General Meeting in Geneva in May 2019. The IFOMPT Executive Committee has provided written feedback on the WCPT Constitution revisions that may impact IFOMPT and the other WCPT subgroups. If any delegates are interested in reviewing these proposed revisions, the IFOMPT Executive Director can provide these documents on request. Once the WCPT Constitutional changes are finalised, IFOMPT may need to make revisions to its Constitution to comply, which will take place at the IFOMPT General Meeting in October 2020.

In conclusion, the best way to create a synergistic relationship is to strive for strong OMPT specialty organisations that can stand on their own, but at the same time, seek opportunities to cooperate and work with national and international professional organisations for the advancement of the physical therapy profession.



# Latest IFOMPT Developments

**Three of our IFOMPT MOs (SOMTY - Finland, NZMPA - New Zealand and MACP - UK) are turning 50 - what an amazing milestone!**

## New Zealand - NZMPA Turns 50!

In November 1968, a small group of manual therapists (including Craig Cameron, Rob McKenzie and Brian Mulligan) met for the first time to formalise a special interest group of physiotherapists and manual therapists. Their goal was to lead the way in New Zealand for the promotion of manual and manipulative therapy, to provide ongoing education, to arrange conferences and meetings to disseminate information and learnings, and to liaise and connect with other likeminded international groups. In doing so, this group of pioneers started the *New Zealand Manipulative Therapists Association* (NZMTA), now known as the *New Zealand Manipulative Physiotherapists Association* (NZMPA), which a few years later became the first registered special interest group of *Physiotherapy New Zealand*.

At this same time, Dr Stanley Paris brought back to New Zealand manual therapy and manipulative techniques, that he'd learned in the UK and Europe from some of the forefathers of manual therapy, to educate our local physiotherapists. And so began a very strong and proud history of manual and manipulative therapy in New Zealand.



Brian Mulligan being awarded the Maitland award by Ken Olson at the IFOMPT Conference in 2016

Within NZMPA's history, we have (and have had) many leaders of physiotherapy and manual therapy represented in our membership, including life members such as Brian Mulligan, Robin McKenzie, Ace Neame, Ian Searle, Don McKenzie, Barbara Hetherington, Stanley Paris, Michael Monaghan, Duncan Reid, Mark Laslett, Steve White, Wayne Hing and Margaret Almao. In the past 50 years, NZMPA has achieved many significant milestones including being one of the founding members of IFOMPT, the establishment of a postgraduate programme in manipulative therapy in 1973 (which still

runs today, hosting the 1980 IFOMPT Conference (Christchurch), successfully running a biennial scientific conference attracting world-class keynote speakers, supporting both schools of physiotherapy (Otago and AUT) to moderate their postgraduate musculoskeletal physiotherapy programmes, and remaining the leading advocate for manipulative therapy and musculoskeletal physiotherapy in New Zealand.



New Zealand representatives at IFOMPT Glasgow 2016

It has been an amazing last 50 years, and we anticipate the next 50 years will be equally exciting!

Richard Ellis  
New Zealand MO Delegate, NZMPA

## Finland - SOMTY 50 Years Young

One autumn day in 1969 a group of physiotherapists gathered together to discuss the possibility to establish Finnish association for orthopaedic manual therapy. The need for a Finnish association was evident in their minds - manual therapy was seen as an important part of neuro-musculoskeletal physical therapy, and there was underlying understanding of the importance of further education for physiotherapists in Finland. They felt the need to organise courses in Finland, and to offer common platform for those interested in manual therapy. And with that the idea for Finnish Association of Orthopaedic Manual Therapy, SOMTY, was born.



occasion and began leading the change. She contacted other organisations around the world, drawing influences especially from other Nordic countries. The common term - manual therapy, was translated to Finnish with prefix orthopaedic to underline the connection to physical therapy of neuromusculoskeletal problems. And finally, on 7th of May in 1970, SOMTY was officially established with 17 members.

The road leading from 1969 to today has been long and full of growth. It has been almost 50 years from that first autumn meeting, and a lot has changed. SOMTY has grown from seventeen members to an internationally active organisation of almost a thousand professionals working together towards common goals. We have gone from arranging four courses per year to approximately 70 annual courses, varying from one day lectures to a post-graduation specialisation program of 2,5 years. All this change and growth has been made possible by passionate people offering their time and knowledge for the common good of our association. For this we are forever grateful.

At the same time, thought all these years, some things have stayed the same. SOMTY has always aimed to raise standards of education and practice in the field of Neuromusculoskeletal Physical Therapy, and to facilitate communication and information exchange within the field internationally and with other health professions and the general public. For 50 years we have worked towards promoting orthopaedic manual therapy - and we aim to continue doing so with the same high standards and strong passion. Thank you all for the journey this far, and for the years still ahead - we are grateful to share this journey will all of you.

Vesa Lehtola  
MO Delegate Finland

Congratulations to Finland and New Zealand and we look forward to hearing about the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our UK MO, MACP in the November edition of IFOMPT Release!