



VELFERÐARRÁÐUNEYTIÐ

*Ministry of Welfare*

**REGULATION**  
**on the education, rights and obligations of physiotherapists**  
**and criteria for granting of licences and specialist licences,**  
**No. 1127/2012.**

SECTION I  
**General provisions.**

Article 1

*Scope.*

This Regulation applies to physiotherapists holding licences and specialist licences from the Medical Director of Health under Articles 2 and 5.

SECTION II

**Licences.**

Article 2

*Professional title.*

The right to use the professional title of physiotherapist and to practise as such in Iceland is confined to those who have been granted a licence by the Medical Director of Health.

Article 3

*Criteria for granting of a licence.*

A licence under Article 2 may be granted to those who have completed a BS degree in physiotherapy from the Department of Physiotherapy from the Faculty of Medicine in the University of Iceland's School of Health Sciences.

A licence may also be granted on the basis of education from a state within the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland. Recognition of professional qualifications and competence of a physiotherapist who meets the criteria of Directive 2005/36/EC, on the recognition of professional qualifications, with subsequent amendments, is subject to Regulations on recognition of professional qualifications and competence of healthcare practitioners from other EEA states, No. 461/2011, or to Nordic Convention on a common Nordic labour market for certain health professionals and veterinarians, No. 36/1993 (*cf.* Amendment No. 6/2001).

A licence may also be granted to those who have completed a comparable qualification from an educational institution in a state outside the EEA or Switzerland, which is recognised as such by Icelandic health authorities, and by health authorities in the state where the education took place.

Other criteria for the issue of a licence are subject to Article 13.

Article 4

*Opinions.*

Before a licence is granted under Article 2 on the basis of education outside Iceland under the third paragraph of Article 3, the Medical Director of Health shall elicit the opinion of the Department of Physiotherapy in the Faculty of Medicine in the University of Iceland's School of Health Sciences, with regard to whether the applicant fulfils the criteria for education under the first paragraph of Article 3, for granting of a licence.

The Medical Director of Health may elicit opinions from other bodies, as deemed necessary.

SECTION III  
**Specialist licences in physiotherapy.**

Article 5

*Specialist licences.*

The right to use the title of specialist in a specialist clinical field of physiotherapy and to practise as such in Iceland is confined to those granted a licence by the Medical Director of Health.

Article 6

*Criteria for specialist licences.*

Specialist licences may be granted in specialist clinical fields of physiotherapy. This is subject to the criterion that the specialist training of the applicant is defined as being within the specialist field for which he/she applies for a specialist licence. The relevant specialist field shall have a solid theoretical basis, and an equivalent shall exist in a recognised international forum.

A specialist clinical field refers to a field which involves direct interaction patients, as well as prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

In order to be entitled to receive a specialist licence under Article 5 a physiotherapist shall fulfil the following standards:

1. he/she shall be licensed as a physiotherapist in Iceland under Article 2; and
2. he/she shall have completed a master's or doctoral degree in physiotherapy from a recognised university, or hold an equivalent education; and
3. he/she shall have worked as a physiotherapist after graduation under indent 2 for the equivalent of at least two years full-time in the field for which the application for a specialist licence is made, and have received the guidance of a physiotherapist holding a specialist licence in the relevant field. If he/she has worked less than full-time, the duration of employment shall be proportionately longer.

Up to twelve months full-time may be subtracted if the person has been employed in the relevant speciality alongside doctoral studies. A specific field on which the person has focussed within the specialist clinical field may be specified.

Further criteria for the granting of a specialist licence are subject to Article 13.

Article 7

*Specialist fields.*

Specialist licences in physiotherapy may be granted in the following specialist clinical fields:

1. Paediatric physiotherapy.
2. Psychiatric physiotherapy.
3. Intensive care physiotherapy.
4. Diagnosis and treatment of the musculo-skeletal system - Manual therapy.
5. Health care, health promotion and occupational health.
6. Cardiac physiotherapy.
7. Sport physiotherapy.
8. Pulmonary physiotherapy.
9. Gynaecological/obstetric physiotherapy.
10. Musculoskeletal physiotherapy - orthopedic.
11. Musculoskeletal physiotherapy - arthritis.
12. Neurological physiotherapy.
13. Geriatric physiotherapy.

A specific field on which the person has focussed within the clinical specialist field may be specified.

Article 8

*Application and opinions.*

An application for a specialist licence in physiotherapy, together with documents confirming education and professional experience, and other necessary documents, shall be submitted to the Medical Director of Health.

Before a specialist licence is granted under Article 5 the Medical Director of Health shall elicit the opinion of the Department of Physiotherapy in the Faculty of Medicine in the University of Iceland's School of Health Sciences, with regard to whether the applicant fulfils the criteria of Article 6.

The Medical Director of Health may appoint a special committee to evaluate and comment upon applications for specialist licences in physiotherapy.

The Medical Director of Health may elicit opinions from other bodies, as deemed necessary.

#### SECTION IV **Rights and obligations.**

##### Article 9

###### *Professional standards and responsibility.*

A physiotherapist shall show respect for the patient and perform his/her tasks vigilantly and conscientiously and in accordance with the professional standards required of the profession at any time.

A physiotherapist must be aware of his/her duties and respect ethical rules of the profession, maintain his/her knowledge and professional skill, and master innovations in his/her field of work.

A physiotherapist shall be familiar with legislation and regulations applying to healthcare practitioners and healthcare services, and other legislation and government directives, as applicable.

A physiotherapist is responsible for the preventions, counselling, diagnosis and treatment he/she provides.

A physiotherapist shall recognise his/her professional limitations, and seek assistance or refer the patient to another healthcare practitioner as necessary, for instance if he/she judges that he/she cannot provide the patient with appropriate healthcare service.

##### Article 10

###### *Duty to inform and keeping of medical records.*

The duty of a physiotherapist to provide information to a patient is subject to the provisions of the Patients' Rights Act, No. 74/1997.

The duty of a physiotherapist to provide information to the Medical Director of Health, *inter alia* with respect to monitoring and for the purpose of producing health reports, is subject to the provisions of the Medical Director of Health and Public Health Act, No. 41/2007.

A physiotherapist shall, as appropriate, enter medical records in accordance with the provisions of the Medical Records Act, No. 55/2009, and regulations issued on the basis of the Act.

##### Article 11

###### *Assistants and trainees.*

A physiotherapist is responsible for assistants and trainees working under his/her management having sufficient competence and knowledge, and receiving the necessary guidance and instructions, to carry out tasks which he/she allots to them.

##### Article 12

###### *Confidentiality.*

A physiotherapist shall maintain the utmost confidentiality regarding anything of which he/she becomes aware in his/her work about a patient's health, condition, diagnosis, prognosis and treatment, and other personal information. This does not apply where other provisions are made by law, or where reasonable cause exists to breach confidentiality for reasons of urgent necessity.

A physiotherapist can be released from the obligation of confidentiality by the consent of a patient, or guardian if applicable.

The duty of confidentiality under this Article does not apply to cases in which the physiotherapist has a duty to report under other legal provisions. In such cases, the duty of the physiotherapist is to notify the relevant authority.

A physiotherapist's duty of confidentiality is also subject to the provisions of the Patients' Rights Act, the Medical Records Act and other legislation as applicable.

SECTION V  
**Various provisions.**

Article 13

*Further criteria for granting of licences and specialist licences.*

An applicant for a licence as a physiotherapist under Article 2 and a specialist licence in physiotherapy under Article 5 who is from a state outside the EEA and Switzerland, with which Iceland has not made an agreement on recognition of professional qualifications and competence, shall submit *inter alia* documentary evidence of nationality, content and duration of education, in addition to an examination certificate, a licence if the profession is an authorised profession in the applicant's state of origin, intended employment in Iceland, and any other documents and certificates deemed by the Medical Director of Health to be necessary for the issue of a licence.

Before an application for a licence or a specialist licence is evaluated, a certified copy of an application for residence and work permits must be submitted, together with a signed contract of employment.

A requirement may be made for knowledge of the Icelandic language and Icelandic healthcare legislation, as well as other legislation and government directives, as deemed necessary in the work of a physiotherapist or a physiotherapist with a specialist licence, especially with regard to patients' safety and communication with patients.

Should it not have been demonstrated, in the judgement of the Medical Director of Health, that the applicant's qualification fulfils the criteria under the first paragraph of Article 3 and Article 6, an applicant may be required to submit to a test of competence to demonstrate that he/she possesses the professional knowledge and competence required in a physiotherapist. An appropriate educational institution shall organise the test in consultation with the Medical Director of Health.

Licences and specialist licences are issued when the applicant commences work in Iceland.

Article 14

*Fees.*

Fees for the issue of a licence and specialist licence are subject to Article 10 of the Treasury Supplementary Revenues Act, No. 88/1991.

Fees for all administration undertaken by the Medical Director of Health with regard to applications for licences and specialist licences, in addition to the fee under the first paragraph, and for tests of professional knowledge and competence, are subject to Regulations on fees for applications for healthcare practitioners' licences and specialist licences, No. 951/2012.

Article 15

*General provisions.*

The provisions of the Healthcare Practitioners Act, No. 34/2012, the Medical Director of Health and Public Health Act, No. 41/2007, the Medical Records Act, No. 55/2009, the Health Service Act, No. 40/2007, the Patients' Rights Act, No. 74/1997, and other legislation and government directives apply to physiotherapists as applicable.

Article 16

*Entry into force.*

This Regulation, issued on the basis of Articles 5, 8, 30 and 31 of the Healthcare Practitioners Act, No. 34/2012, takes effect on 1 January 2013. From that time the Regulation on the granting of specialist licences in physiotherapy, No. 145/2003, with subsequent amendments, is abrogated.

**Temporary provision.**

A physiotherapist who has commenced specialist training under Regulation on the granting of specialist licences in physiotherapy, No. 145/2003, on when this Regulation takes effect, may arrange his/her studies according to the provisions of that Regulation. Those commencing specialist training after this Regulation takes effect shall arrange their studies in accordance with the new Regulation.

*Ministry of Welfare, 11 December 2012.*

**Guðbjartur Hannesson.**

*Vilborg Ingólfssdóttir.*

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Published: 19 December 2012

*[This translation is published for information only.  
The original Icelandic text is published in the Law Gazette.  
In case of a possible discrepancy, the original Icelandic text applies.]*