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The Clinical Exercise Physiologist Revolution is Happening Now

The Clinical Exercise Physiologist *revolution* for professional recognition in the United Kingdom (UK) turned a corner recently. On December 14, 2021, the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES) and Clinical Exercise Physiology United Kingdom (CEP-UK) announced a partnership with a stated purpose of promoting the role of clinical exercise physiologists to manage those with chronic and complex medical health conditions who are being treated within the UK healthcare system (1). Worldwide recognition by other allied health professionals and patients has been lacking for those who are trained as a clinical exercise physiologist.

I have written about this in previous issues of this journal. Currently, Australia has arguably advanced the most in both professional and public recognition, as well as integrating clinical exercise physiologists (known Down Under as Accredited Exercise Physiologists) into the healthcare system (2). In Australia these healthcare professionals are recognized by their nationalized healthcare system, which has allowed them to provide services and independently charge for these services. Additionally, and similar to physical therapy clinics in the United States, privately owned exercise physiology clinics in Australia cater to the exercise physiology needs of those with various chronic diseases who are under the care of their physician. Much of the services provided are partially covered by Medicare Australia or private health insurers.

The stated aim of the UK initiative is to “establish and promote the role of Clinical Exercise Physiologists as part of the treatment and management of chronic and complex health conditions within the UK health care system” (1). So, it seems this is a similar goal to what the Australians have

developed. This announcement states that clinical exercise physiologists in the United Kingdom are eligible to receive professional registration with the Registration Council for Clinical Physiologists (RCCP). Those who apply for registration and meet the qualifications will be conferred the title of Clinical Exercise Physiologist, if accepted. The registration is designed to ensure that those conferred as a Clinical Exercise Physiologist “are appropriately trained, meet standards of proficiency, have indemnity insurance, are committed to continued professional development, and are deemed ‘fit to practice’” (1).

It is exciting to see countries recognize the knowledge and abilities of those who are adequately trained clinical exercise physiologists. Efforts such as this in the United Kingdom are the beginnings of carving out a niche for clinical exercise physiologists. Importantly, recognition and acceptance as a partner in multidisciplinary health care teams appears to be a key strategy. Various efforts continue to evolve in the United States (3). And in addition to the countries already mentioned in this article, both New Zealand (4) and Canada (5) recognize clinical exercise physiologists as an important part of their national approach to treating and preventing many chronic diseases. The momentum of the clinical exercise movement is palpable around the world. As part of this process, we need to continue to provide high-quality evidence of the importance of providing clinical exercise services to patients as delivered by clinical exercise physiologists. Solid research is the best ammunition to make the case for clinical exercise physiologists. The *Journal of Clinical Exercise Physiology* stands ready and eager to support the publication of this type of original research, reviews, and expert commentary. The time is now!

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