



# PROMINENCE Newsletter

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## Welcome!

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the first edition of the PROMINENCE newsletter that will keep you updated on the busy first ten months of the project and the deliverables.

This newsletter will give you a brief introduction to the PROMINENCE project, including its aims and objectives and the project partners. This year the PROMINENCE consortium met in person in University College Dublin in April for the first transnational event. The newsletter will also present on project progress with current work packages.

We hope you enjoy this project update!



## What is the PROMINENCE project about?

The PROMINENCE (Promoting Obesity and Metabolic Rehabilitation INclusion in EU Entry-level Physiotherapy Curricula) project key aim is to develop the PROMINENCE open education resource to physiotherapy educators in the delivery of evidence-based obesity education. PROMINENCE seeks to promote inter-connected higher education institutions (HEI) and systems by:

- collaborating to enhance obesity education in physiotherapy programmes, aligning with European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
- sharing knowledge, skills, expertise and developing contemporary evidence-based obesity education across the EU.

Working relationships fostered via the PROMINENCE project will drive the development of education and research collaborations related to obesity.

## Meet the project partners

The PROMINENCE Consortium comprises 6 partners from 5 different countries, which gives a multicultural approach to the project. Of these 6 partners, there are 5 academic partners and one non-profit organisation who will bring their expertise and knowledge to the successful development of the PROMINENCE open education resource (OER).

- University College Dublin (Ireland)
- Mälardalen University (Sweden)
- Tampere University of Applied Sciences (Finland)
- Arcada University of Applied Sciences (Finland)
- Hasselt University (Belgium)
- The Europe Region of World Physiotherapy (Belgium)



## Prominence Consortium

Dr Caitriona Cunningham (UCD; Project lead), Prof Catherine Blake (UCD), Dr Gráinne O'Donoghue (UCD), Dr Mary E. Davis (UCD), Dr Cecilia Fridén (MDU), Dr Tiina Pystynen (TAMK), Dr Pipsa Tuominen (TAMK), Dr Camilla Wikström-Grotell (Arcada), Dr Kenneth Verboven (UHasselt), Dr Anouk Agten (UHasselt), Emilia Kosińska (The Europe Region of World Physiotherapy), and Aitor Carpio García (The Europe Region of World Physiotherapy).



University College Dublin  
Ireland's Global University



## University College Dublin

University College Dublin (UCD) is one of Europe's leading research-intensive universities, with a mission to advance knowledge, scholarship, and learning, through a culture of discovery, creativity, and global engagement. The UCD School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (SPHPSS) offers both undergraduate and postgraduate physiotherapy programmes with more than 400 students registered annually. UCD pioneered the first university-level physiotherapy education programme in 1955 and is the largest provider nationally. It is at the cutting edge of physiotherapy education and research and recognised internationally for both. UCD is also a European leader in obesity research.



UCD's research has included the SOPHIA (stratification of obese phenotypes to optimise future obesity therapy) EU project, OSE4ALL (Obesity Stigma Education for ALL), CROSBIE (Core Research Outcomes for Sedentary Behaviour Interventions) and the EXOFFIT (Exercise for Obesity in Females for Increasing Fitness) study. UCD is responsible for Work Package 1 (Project Management).

## **Mälardalen University**

Mälardalen University (MDU) aims to offer education and research of a high international standard and has nearly 20,000 students and 79 programmes at Bachelor's and Master's level (including physiotherapy). MDU has two student intakes of BSc Physiotherapy students each year and the curriculum for this programme is continuously being updated to align with a behaviour medicine approach. MDU's research is also focused on behaviour medicine in Physiotherapy, especially in relation to behaviour change topics, e.g. changing sedentary lifestyles. MDU are the partner responsible for Work Package 5 (Prominence Capacity Building, Communication, Dissemination and Implementation).

## **Tampere University of Applied Sciences**

Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK) is a multidisciplinary, international HEI with approximately 10,000 undergraduate students and 600 staff members. TAMK's research and development portfolio includes successful local, regional, national, and international projects executed in collaboration with public and third sector organizations as well as with companies. TAMK offers a BSc in physiotherapy and has expertise in the problem-based learning pedagogy and well-being entrepreneurship, psychophysical physiotherapy (mind-body connections, mental health problems, body image), sport and exercise physiology, sedentary behaviour and physical activity and behaviour change. TAMK's physiotherapy team have 20 years of expertise and experience in



curriculum design. TAMK are leading Work Package 3 (Obesity Competencies Framework and Learning Outcomes for Physiotherapy Curricula).

## **Arcada University of Applied Sciences**

Arcada is one of the leading international universities in Finland and has 3000 students and 23 programmes in the area of health and welfare, business, technology and media. Arcada's education and research focuses on health promotion and rehabilitation, sustainable and ethical digital (AI) solutions in health care services, health technology and supporting participation in society especially for vulnerable target groups. Arcada's strength in health promotion is multi-professional collaboration and technology as support for increased physical activity in the case of lifestyle-related problems and diseases. Arcada are bringing expertise to the overall project.

## **Hasselt University**

Hasselt University (UHasselt) is an innovative university in Belgium, having a pronounced international orientation and it stands for excellence in education, top research and active commitment to innovation and entrepreneurship. UHasselt has an internationally recognized profile as a high-quality academic institution, where educational programmes include research-led and evidence-based courses. The Faculty of Rehabilitation Sciences at Hasselt University provides an academic Bachelors and Masters programme in Rehabilitation Sciences and Physiotherapy, a programme which has approximately 850 students. As an interdisciplinary and translational oriented faculty with a close link to local and international clinical partners, UHasselt's Faculty of Rehabilitation Sciences has a strong expertise in the domains of pediatric, geriatric, neurologic and musculoskeletal rehabilitation, biomechanics, rehabilitation technology, health psychology, mental health care and rehabilitation of internal



diseases. UHasselt's team have specialization in clinical and molecular obesity exercise physiology and in rehabilitation of obesity. UHasselt's research includes the development of the EXercise Prescription in Everyday practice and Rehabilitative Training (EXPERT) tool, a system which assists healthcare professionals in choosing/adopting optimal exercise interventions in patients with cardiometabolic risk factors or diseases. UHasselt are the lead for Work Package 2 (Obesity Education for Physiotherapists: Needs Assessment).

## **The Europe Region of World Physiotherapy**

The Europe Region of World Physiotherapy is the only non-Higher Education Institution (HEI) partner within the PROMINENCE Consortium with a profile critical to the project as a non-profit and non-governmental organisation representing the physiotherapy profession at the European level. With the membership of 37 Physiotherapy Associations, one from each of the European countries, including all the EU Member States, EEA countries, and all the EU applicant countries, the Europe Region of World Physiotherapy represents approximately 194.619 physiotherapists in the European region. In addition, it has an extensive network within physiotherapy education institutions which will be leveraged to help ensure PROMINENCE project deliverables map to Physiotherapy educator needs and to optimise overall project impact. The Europe Region of World Physiotherapy is the lead for Work Package 4 (Prominence Obesity Open Education Resource for Physiotherapy).



## Transnational event in Dublin

The first transnational event of the PROMINENCE Consortium was successfully hosted by University College Dublin, Ireland. The event was held across 2 days dedicated to enhancing Obesity Education for Physiotherapists with all project partners coming together to progress the important work of the PROMINENCE Consortium.

Professor Catherine Blake (Head of School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science, UCD) welcomed attendees to UCD. PROMINENCE Project Lead Caitriona Cunningham from UCD kicked off the day by presenting on the project's mission, goals and overall work plans.



### Day one:

- Included a needs assessment workshop that pinpointed the critical learning needs for physiotherapists.
- Aitor Carpio García (General Secretary, Europe Region of World Physiotherapy) and Emilia Kosińska (Project Manager, Europe Region





of World Physiotherapy) provided a clear vision on their role in delivering on the PROMINENCE OER (Open Education Resource).

- Dr Kenneth Verboven's (Hasselt University), presented on the scoping review by being conducted as part of the Project Needs analysis
- Saswati Ghosh's (UCD) presented an overview of the proposed systematic website search.
- Dr Gráinne O'Donoghue led an engaging workshop with representatives from the Irish Coalition for People Living with Obesity that provided critical insights to facilitate development of education resources which will support inclusive and equitable healthcare for people living with obesity.
- Dr Tiina Pystynen and Dr Pipsa Tuominen (Tampere University) presented their plans for development of the PROMINENCE obesity competency framework for Physiotherapists.

### **Day two:**

- Opened with a review and forward-planning session by Dr Caitriona Cunningham (UCD).
- Dr Cecilia Fridén (MDU) introduced a strategic communication plan essential for the successful impact of the project.
- There were then discussions on resource management and project coordination involving the various leads across partner organisations.

This event not only underscored the collaborative effort required in creating impactful educational resources but also set the stage for the next phases of the project, emphasising innovation and accessibility in education.



## The Scoping Review

Obesity Competencies for Healthcare Professionals  
- A Scoping Review of the Literature to inform  
Education Programmes

In parallel, the PROMINENCE team is working on a scoping review of the literature to explore the nature of obesity education research focusing on achievement of healthcare professional competencies relating to obesity. This review will identify key obesity related competencies for healthcare professionals to inform the development of the PROMINENCE Obesity Competency Framework for Physiotherapists.

A formal and systematic search of the literature has been conducted, which yielded 1,291 unique papers across three different databases. The review team, composed of colleagues from all participating higher education institutions, has independently selected 141 potentially relevant papers, with full-text screening currently ongoing. The PROMINENCE team will publish the findings from this Scoping Review, which will inform the project's work and act as a valuable resource for healthcare professional educators.

## Higher Education Institution Survey

In the first phase of the PROMINENCE project, the Europe Region of World Physiotherapy distributed the Higher Education Institution (HEI) survey (Q2 this year). This survey aimed to collect information from physiotherapy educators regarding 'obesity education' in entry-level physiotherapy programmes at HEIs in Europe. This international survey will inform the development of the PROMINENCE Open Education Resource. The survey was distributed to 40 countries in the European region, including non-EU countries, with responses from 31 countries. This wide reach was possible



thanks to the broad membership of the Europe Region of World Physiotherapy.

## PROMINENCE Introductory Video



For World Physiotherapy Day on September 8<sup>th</sup> 2024, Camilla Wikström-Grotell (Arcada) put together an introductory video to promote the PROMINENCE project and provide an overview of the project aims and partners.

Check out the video [here](#) today.

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