



## The Legal Aspect of Physiotherapy Titles

To legally use the title 'Physiotherapist' within human practice, an individual must be registered with the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC). In order to be registered with the HCPC, an individual must hold a Bachelor of Science Honours Degree in Physiotherapy from an accredited University. The HCPC is the regulatory body of health and care professionals in the UK which acts to protect public safety by ensuring that all health care professionals practise in a safe, effective and professional manner. A register is held by the HCPC of health care professionals who meet their expected standard of knowledge, skills, training and professionalism. Individuals on the register are regularly audited to ensure that they maintain the expected standards for their profession and are held accountable for their professional actions. The HCPC provide Standards of Conduct, Performance & Ethics and Standards of Proficiency for Physiotherapists which all individuals must adhere to throughout their practice.

Members of the HCPC can register with the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP), allowing them to legally use the title 'Chartered Physiotherapist'. The CSP is the professional, educational and trade union body for physiotherapy which operates to support members in all matters relating to their professional practice. The CSP holds their own set of values which members must adhere to when working as a 'Chartered Physiotherapist'.

The Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Animal Therapy (ACPAT) is a specialist clinical group within the CSP for those chartered physiotherapists who have proceeded to complete an accredited Master's of Science degree in Veterinary Physiotherapy. This means that all ACPAT accredited veterinary physiotherapists are also qualified human physiotherapists.

In veterinary practice, the title 'Veterinary Physiotherapist' is not protected unlike in human practice, meaning that anybody can call themselves the title regardless of their qualifications. Since, ACPAT accredited veterinary physiotherapists require qualifications that are accepted by the HCPC and CSP, using an ACPAT accredited veterinary physiotherapist ensures the individual is competent to provide safe and professional care for your animal. As a result, many insurance companies now



stipulate that a veterinary physiotherapist must be ACPAT accredited in order for the insurance claim to be valid.

The Register of Animal Musculoskeletal Practitioners (RAMP) is a voluntary and independent professional register which professionals who are deemed to demonstrate high standards of proficiency and professionalism are able to join. The register aims to inform the public of competent professionals within animal physiotherapy, osteopathy and chiropractic services. RAMP is currently working with ACPAT and the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons with the aim to become a regulatory body for animal musculoskeletal practitioners including veterinary physiotherapists, essentially operating as the equivalent in veterinary practice as the HCPC does in human practice.

## Links

HCPC: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/>

CSP: <https://www.csp.org.uk/>

ACPAT: <https://acpat.org/>

RAMP: <https://www.rampregister.org/>