

Statement: Fair remuneration for physiotherapists in Greece

The Europe Region of World Physiotherapy, which represents the physiotherapy profession at a European level, strongly supports the call of the Panhellenic Physiotherapists' Association for the removal of the clawback and rebate scheme applied by Greece in the health sector.

Other relevant health organisations, such as the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME), are also supporting the removal of this clawback and rebate scheme which was introduced as a temporary cost-containment measure in the context of the measures Greece had agreed with the Troika in 2013 in order to address its economic crisis at that time.

The Europe Region is concerned that the E.O.P.Y.Y. budget for physiotherapy services (set by Ministerial Decision EALE/G.P. 21886/2024) is too low to meet the needs of the Greek population and physiotherapists. The European Commission has recognised this situation by stating that in Greece *“health spending (...) is still relatively low compared to most other EU countries (...). The share of public financing for healthcare (...) ranks the lowest among EU Member States”*¹.

A proper remuneration for physiotherapists through the national health system is a key cost-effective measure in improving the quality of healthcare services for the benefit of the patients, especially in a scenario of health workforce shortages across all European countries.

Greece's current clawback and rebate scheme disincentivises both university graduates and professionals from pursuing a career in the health sector and forces the current workforce to seek employment in other countries.

This becomes clear when the working of this scheme is considered. By way of real-life example, a physiotherapist member of the Panhellenic Physiotherapists' Association registered 26 patient prescriptions in the month of March 2024, which represented 260 physiotherapy sessions and a total cost of EUR 3,495 at the E.O.P.Y.Y. approved rate of EUR 13.5 per physiotherapy session. The rebate applied equated to EUR 199.01, which resulted in an invoice of EUR 3,295.99. In March 2024, the clawback applied was calculated at 24% on the basis that out of a total cost of physiotherapy sessions in that month of EUR 8,737,449.63, the maximum cost that E.O.P.Y.Y. could cover equated EUR 6,641,666.67, i.e. a balance of ca. 24%. was left outstanding and represented a cost taken over by the physiotherapists. In the above example, this clawback rate represented an amount of EUR 790.70, on which the amount of withheld tax of EUR 659.20 (at the rate of 20%) ought to be added. This means that, out of a total cost of EUR 3,495, the total net remuneration of the physiotherapist in this example equates EUR 1,847, i.e. EUR 7.1 per physiotherapy session.

This remuneration is both unsustainable and unfair and is compounded by the practice of E.O.P.Y.Y. of clearing the clawback accounts with a delay of several years. In particular, in addition to the rebate

¹ <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/dd530c3e-en.pdf?expires=1718732089&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=9408FBB1961337497BD57459D36EA921>

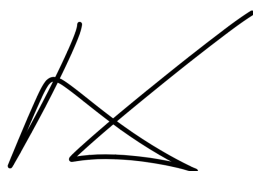
and clawback for March 2024, the physiotherapist in the above example is also required to pay the amount of clawback of 2018 and 2019 which is withheld in monthly instalments of EUR 150. This amount will be subject to an increase by EUR 150 shortly, representing a clawback amount of EUR 50 for each of 2021, 2022 and 2023. It is clear from the above that, not only are physiotherapists working at an economic loss, but they are also required, in addition to current liabilities, to pay basis arrears of significant sums on a monthly. In some instances, these arrears burden the heirs of deceased physiotherapists, leading to absurd and unacceptable situations.

Physiotherapists are entitled to fair, adequate and predictable remuneration. Insufficient expenditure limits of the E.O.P.Y.Y. for physiotherapy as well as arbitrary measures on clawbacks and rebates are unjustified and unacceptable. They are unsustainable and disproportionately high and physiotherapists are actually working at a loss.

The Europe Region of World Physiotherapy is at the disposal of the Greek authorities and the Panhellenic Physiotherapists' Association to ensure the best quality health services for patients in Greece.

On behalf of the Europe Region of World Physiotherapy

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General Secretary



The Europe Region of World Physiotherapy is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation that represents the physiotherapy profession at European level. The Organisation has a membership of physiotherapy associations in 38 countries, representing around 200,000 physiotherapists in Europe.