

## 50 Years of History

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### Iceland

**Name of organisation:** Félag stoðkerfissérfræðinga – Association of Musculoskeletal Specialists

**Year organisation started:** 1994.

**RIG of IFOMPT since:** 1996

#### **Key influencers of OMPT through the years:**

Unnur Hjaltadóttir was the first big influencer in Iceland. She had worked and studied at Hans og Olaf fysiotherapi in Oslo. After moving back to Iceland in 1984 she hosted a MT course that inspired many physiotherapists, a few ended up going to Oslo and studying at Hans og Olaf as well. Olaf Evjenth and Freddy Kaltenborn came to Iceland with MT courses and OMPT in Iceland was therefore largely under Scandinavian influences. Unnur Hjaltadóttir remained very active with clinical education at the University of Iceland and inspired many generations of physios until she retired a few years ago. Australian influences then became more evident in the late 90's.

#### **Development over the years:**

In 1995 the organisation became an official subgroup of the Icelandic Physiotherapy Association / Félag sjúkraþjálfara. The purpose of the group has always been to encourage professional development and salary negotiations with the national insurance.

#### **Major changes or challenges in the last 50 years:**

With only 10 active members, the biggest challenge has been to keep the group running. For example, having so few people to delegate work amongst. A lot of work needs to be done to keep the specialism within physiotherapy in high regard; within the physiotherapy and medical professions, amongst the general public and the national insurance and health authorities (to ensure financing).

#### **Current status and challenges:**

In recent years, one of the biggest challenges we have faced is that in 2014, the Directorate of Health changed the regulation on what qualifies as a clinical specialist in physiotherapy. Some IFOMPT approved education no longer falls under this category and despite our best efforts we have not been able to get this changed. This is a real shame as clinical specialist roles offer significantly higher pay. It is also clear that fewer physiotherapists are interested in pursuing further education in OMPT since the regulation change. Therefore, we are not developing the expertise we need in order to provide that best possible care for our patients. We have been working hard to raise awareness about this issue and push for change, but it has not been easy.

#### **The future of the organisation:**

Our RIG will always remain small and MT education will not be on offer in Iceland in the near (or far) future. We will continue to do our best to be involved in clinical education, to be good role models and to keep OMPT in high regard.

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