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CPA Applauds New Research on Back Pain Treatment

Toronto – The Canadian Physiotherapy Association (CPA) is pleased to see new research further supporting the important role of physiotherapy in the management of chronic low back pain. New findings were recently published in *Spine* (31:10:1083-1093; Goldby et al). The results underscore the significant improvement noted by those who participated in the trial. “The study reinforces the significant role of physiotherapy in low back pain management and serves as yet another example of the importance of physiotherapy in helping Canadians regain their mobility, return to work more quickly and live a more pain free life,” said Pamela Fralick, Canadian Physiotherapy Association CEO.

A randomized, controlled clinical trial was conducted to ‘determine the efficacy of two components of musculoskeletal physiotherapy on chronic low back pain disorder’. The effects of a spinal stabilization exercise program were compared to manual therapy with other physiotherapy treatments, and an education booklet. Any change or progress in levels of pain, disability, handicap, medication and quality of life were measured. Results of this study indicate that while both manual therapy and stabilization exercises were effective in reducing pain and improving function in people with chronic low back pain, the spinal stabilization program was more effective over the long-term. The authors emphasized that studies of this nature serve an important role in helping to define “effective paths for clinical practice.”

“I’m not surprised by the results” says CPA member Debby To of Back-in-Motion Functional Assessments Inc. “Physiotherapy has an integral role in treating chronic low back pain.”

Spinal stabilization exercises, manual therapy and education are all interventions selected by physiotherapists to treat low back pain, based on client assessment, findings and feedback. Studies of this nature should be read in the context of the larger body of literature on the management of low back pain, and used by physiotherapists to provide their clients with care based upon the best available evidence.

The Canadian Physiotherapy Association and its more than 9,500 members want the public, other health care providers and governments to be aware of the important role physiotherapy plays in the health of Canadians. With their applied knowledge and understanding of the human body in action, physiotherapists work with clients to increase mobility, relieve pain, build strength, and improve balance and cardiovascular function. They not only treat injury, but they also explain how to prevent injury and the onset of pain that may limit activity.

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