



# PHYSIOTHERAPY



ICRC

IN BRIEF



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## WHAT DO WE DO?

After an injury, a patient is assessed by a physiotherapist, either in the acute hospital unit or during the first visit to a rehabilitation centre. Patients receive ongoing care at rehabilitation centres and sometimes follow-up within the community.

- We offer treatment to prevent, reduce or eliminate disability, especially during the acute phase.
- Exercise therapy, plaster-of-Paris application, rehabilitation through sport, counselling, educating the patient's family and providing advice on general health matters all form part of our work.
- We help to organize physiotherapy services in hospitals and rehabilitation centres and we support efforts to make these services more accessible.
- We deliver various kinds of training (on-the-job, refresher courses and specialist subjects) and help to develop formal training programmes as part of national capacity building.

## HOW DO WE WORK?

- We work as part of a multidisciplinary team, comprising prosthetists/orthotists, surgeons, nurses and other ICRC staff, to provide the patient with comprehensive care.
- The techniques and equipment used are simple and inexpensive in order to ensure the sustainability of projects over the long term.
- We help to strengthen the patient's links with family and close friends, as this is a key to successful reintegration into society.
- To develop national capacity in the provision of physical rehabilitation services, we work with national partners such as government authorities, NGOs and patient associations.
- Expatriate physiotherapists ensure the quality of services through structured staff education, the implementation of guiding principles and scientific recommendations, and effective project management.

It is important for the parents of children with cerebral palsy to allow their child to participate.

## MORE ABOUT PHYSIOTHERAPY

Physiotherapists help patients to achieve the best possible long-term quality of life. We provide guidance on preventing complications, adapting the home, and using assistive devices such as prostheses and wheelchairs.



Paul Hendricks/ICRC

Michael Greub/ICRC

Active life prevents later complications for people who have suffered spinal cord injuries.

People with physical disabilities learn how best to use and take care of their appliances.



Michael Von Bergen/ICRC

## WORKING AT THE ICRC

The ICRC currently supports physiotherapy services in hospitals and physical rehabilitation centres in 29 countries. Through these projects, some 300 national and expatriate physiotherapists assist approximately 200,000 people with physical disabilities. We aim to treat people according to their medical, psychological and social needs and to help them to successfully reintegrate into society. While our goals are similar to those of most other physiotherapists, our approach must be tailored to each context.

## MISSION

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence and to provide them with assistance. The ICRC also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles. Established in 1863, the ICRC is at the origin of the Geneva Conventions and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It directs and coordinates the international activities conducted by the Movement in armed conflicts and other situations of violence.



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