



## ISWP Professional Standards Board (PSB) August 13, 2019 Meeting Recap

The ISWP Professional Standards Board (PSB) met by conference call on Tuesday, August 13, 2019 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. U. S. Eastern Daylight Savings Time. This provides a recap.

**Link to Meeting Recording:** <https://iswp.adobeconnect.com/pqfs03kzb38o/>

**Next Meeting:** Please select your preferred timing for the October/November 2019 meeting here: <https://doodle.com/poll/x75wm44i9sg2xwea>

**Discussion:** Action items are shown in bold/underline.

1. **August 13, 2019 agenda:** Approved.
2. **May 15, 2019 minutes:** Approved.
3. **Certification Progress:** To date, 57 wheelchairs service providers from 20 countries have completed the certification; of these, 47 are from the pilot, and 10 are paid.
4. **Certification Promotion:** Perry Loh recommended changes to [wheelchairnetwork.org](http://wheelchairnetwork.org) to feature the certification more prominently ([link](#)). Perry distributed the flyer at LASS and during a rehab conference in Brazil. No additional Spanish certificants have applied since then.

Maria Toro Hernandez and Perry Loh provided feedback based on conversations with organizations in Latin America, India and the U.S.:

- a. People did not ask about the certification cost, which might be an indicator of lack of interest. The flyer does not include pricing.
- b. Since the certification is not required, it is not seen as important.
- c. ISWP is not widely known or recognized by the sector in some locations, so the certification does not have perceived value.
- d. It was difficult for service providers to understand why they would receive a certification when it is not tied to a specific course.
- e. People are passionate about providing wheelchair services but would like to see recognition for their work. Their attitude is that no one (e.g., employer, government) will assign any value to the effort and expense it takes to obtain certification.
- f. U.S. organizations, Free Wheelchair Mission and UCP see potential partners which might be interested, depending on the context; they are waiting to learn more about recertification requirements.

Mary suggested we start thinking of and promoting the certification as a package deal. When trainings are being held, we ensure the trainer has information about the certification, including



that training will help providers obtain the certification. Perhaps the certification fee can be built into the training cost, or the organization running training would be willing to pay the certification fee for participants.

Paula Rushton likes idea of tying it to a course; during the upcoming semester, she will describe the certification to students and get their feedback, as well as discuss it with the OT and PT program directors. Paula acknowledged the fee is cost prohibitive in light of other required expenses, such as taking the OT exam. Students would see value of including in their CV but question whether the certification add value overall. Maria Toro Hernandez spoke with an OT student at the University of Montreal, who confirmed Paula's comments. The student said the certification is nice but not a priority. It could be valuable for graduates who are looking for their first job, but if it is not required, there is little incentive to keep it. Cost is a factor, too; students do whatever they can to save money, including not buying or sharing textbooks, which are considered vital to the program.

Other ideas:

- Run a campaign featuring those who are certified to learn more about what they have found to be valuable related to the certification.
- Create a video promoting the certification similar to one Maria Toro Hernandez created in Colombia to encourage students to take the Basic test.
- Promote the certification as a recognition. Having the certification would give a person a better chance at getting a job versus a requirement to be hired.

Perry Loh said he envisioned a basic certification process that anyone with goodwill and effort could pass. As the certification evolves, there could be more stringent requirements. Also, as we build a base of certified providers (say 5,000 or more), we would create a dual track to continue to build certificants and find organizations to recognize the certificate. The approach to critical mass would mean that organizations like Permobil or governments would make it a requirement.

5. **Certification Fee for Volunteers:** One organization suggested certification could be important for volunteers in U.S. who travel abroad. Perhaps there could be a lower fee for volunteers than the fee for post-professionals in high-income countries. Currently, fee for students in high-income settings is \$85, which could be an option for volunteers. Perry thinks it would be attractive for an organization to have this as a requirement, and it could be a launchpad for other organizations. Mary agrees with classifying volunteers and students, since many students are volunteers and vice versa. Krithika to poll PSB members on this option.
6. **Web stats:** As of 9<sup>th</sup> August 2019, 325 page views and 215 unique page views ; average time on page is 1 minute, 20 seconds.



7. **Certification and Recertification requirements:** Some PSB and TWG members viewed the process as cumbersome and requested more information about training to help inform accreditation process down the road. Robertangelo Ciccone described the process ICRC, Myanmar has used: Participants must read the training manual and complete the Basic test. So far, the majority of trainees (95%) have passed the test with an average of 60% passing after reading the manual and 40% passing after the practical training. His organization currently is training mostly physiotherapists and technicians, as well as P&O from a school established in 2015. Robertangelo found it was more difficult for bench workers and basic community health workers who are not involved in wheelchair service provision but are gaining knowledge in the area; they had a difficult time with vocabulary, in particular. It would be better to have simple language to facilitate access for other professionals, such as community health and bench workers. Also, the online platform is still not accessible for their context; the internet connection is not reliable. Krithika will follow up with Roberto to discuss implementing a paper-based approach. Krithika, Mary and Maria to condense requirements to one page and simplify language for PSB review.
8. **PSB Membership Update:** Karen Reyes, an end user, was representing UCP and now works at WHO in a different sector so is not able to continue her PSB role. We are seeking someone else to represent the end user, consumer perspective. Krithika to request PSB members nominate a replacement.

**Participants** (check mark indicates participation on call)

✓	Robertangelo Ciccone, ICRC
	Susan Cwiertnia, VARILITE
	Rosemary Joan Gowran, University of Limerick
✓	Perry Loh, Loh Medical
	Patience Mutiti, Motivation
✓	Paula Rushton, University of Montreal
	CJ Stanfill, Pencils of Promise
✓	Mary Goldberg, ISWP
✓	Krithika Kandavel, ISWP
✓	Maria Toro, ISWP
✓	Nancy Augustine, ISWP

Prepared by: Nancy Augustine and Krithika Kandavel  
 Reviewed by: Maria Toro

