

Kinesiology in Argentina

The history of physiotherapy in Argentina begins in 1904, when the first school was created to grant the gymnast-masseur diploma. Later, on April 13th, 1937, the profession was leveled up to higher education. This date is now considered as the Physiotherapists' Day. At about the same time, the Argentine Association of Kinesiology was created, obtaining, in 1946 the trade union title No. 28.

The Argentine Association of Kinesiology (AAK) is a representative organization of kinesiologists, reinstated to the World Confederation for Physical Therapy (WCPT) in 2011. Its membership is voluntary, so it has only 993 active members (2.2%)¹.

This is not a first contact profession in Argentina, since the patient must be referred by a doctor to this area, although they can perform preventive tasks without referral. Among its competences, the following stands out: kinetic diagnosis, deciding which interventions should be performed, carrying out invasive procedures such as acupuncture and dry puncture (including an eco-guided form), referring to other specialties and requesting diagnostic imaging tests. This is in force by Law 24,317 and by regulations at national level, as well as by homologous laws at provincial level, since Argentina is a federalist country².

Argentina has a population of 45 million people, concentrated mainly in the provinces of Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Santa Fe and in the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires. In these places are most of the universities, currently reaching 43 academic units.

The approved curricular structures last from 4 to 5 years, depending on each academic unit. For those who choose to study at UBA (University of Buenos Aires) one year is added beyond the Common Basic Cycle. The workload declared by several institutions is approximately 3,810 hours. Although the validation of this course by the National Commission for University Assessment and Accreditation (*Comisión Nacional de Evaluación y Acreditación Universitaria* – CONEAU) is not mandatory, the Association of Academic Units of

Kinesiology and Physiatry of Argentina (*Asociación de Unidades Académicas de Kinesiología y Fisiatría Argentinas* – AUAKYFA) is working to reverse this situation.

Universities issue different degrees, such as a bachelor's degree in kinesiology and physiatry, a bachelor's degree in kinesiology and "physiotherapy" and a bachelor's degree in physical therapy, but their professional responsibilities are identical, since the national professional registration has a unique designation: bachelors in kinesiology. This profession is homologous to that of "physiotherapist" – so called in most countries of Latin America.

Unfortunately, by the records issued in each province, not a single national registry, and with professional mobility, it is practically impossible to determine the exact number of kinesiologists in the country. But it is estimated that 45 thousand professionals, with 60% of women (regarding international values). Therefore, the proportion of kinesiologist per inhabitant is 1:1000.

Postgraduate courses must be validated by CONEAU. The existing specializations are: cardiorespiratory, neurology, sports medicine and traumatology, among others. The masters and doctorates are academic. Vocational courses are not covered by the Higher Education Act.

Although research has increased in the past few years, unfortunately there is no indexed journal on kinesiology in Argentina, and scientific productions published in specialized journals in other countries are scarce.

Oscar Ronzio
ORCID: 0000-0002-0004-5992
*Universidad Nacional Arturo Jauretche ,
Buenos Aires, Argentina
Universidad Maimónides ,
Buenos Aires, Argentina
Asociación Argentina de Kinesiología ,
Buenos Aires, Argentina
(www.aak.org.ar)*



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