

## **Physical Therapists as Leaders in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Exploiting the Magic Bullet – Non Invasive Interventions**

**Dean E**

Department of Physical Therapy, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada

**Email:** [Elizabeth.dean@ubc.ca](mailto:Elizabeth.dean@ubc.ca)

This address is an urgent appeal to physical therapists in New Zealand regarding their capacity to lead in the assault on lifestyle conditions and to serve as a model for other countries in the pursuit of national and global health. Lifestyle conditions are the leading causes of premature death in Australasia including New Zealand and increasingly in middle- and low-income countries, and are associated with enormous, well-documented social and economic burdens. Non invasive interventions consistent with physical therapy that exploit non drug and non surgical approaches are unequivocally the interventions of choice given their generally superior outcomes with respect to prevention, ‘reversal’ in some cases, as well as management. Through a coordinated integrated program for evidence-informed professional change engaging the clinical community, educators, researchers and other stakeholders (public policy makers and politicians), the profession can position itself to impact national and world health. Strategies for physical therapists impacting national and global health, individually and collectively, are described. In the words of the famed anthropologist, Margaret Mead, ‘*A small group of people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.*’