

# GROUNDBREAKING SYMPOSIUM: GOAL 9 FAQs

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## WHY ARE WE HAVING A GROUNDBREAKING SYMPOSIUM: GOAL 9?

Our reasons for having our Groundbreaking Symposium on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 are best summarised in our article in the November 2016 Update.

Learning outcomes are that, at the end of our symposium, attending delegates will be able to explain:

- what a self-owned private physiotherapy cooperative is
- why Physio First thinks that this is something that Physio First members should contemplate now
- what the first one might look like
- when the first one is likely to be established
- whether you should plan to become involved or not.

But please do read our November 2016 Update article “*Groundbreaking Symposium on Goal 9 planned*” for details, please click [here](#)

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## WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT COOPERATIVES?

This is something that our General Secretary, Paul Donnelly, has been looking into since we embarked on our 5-year business plan in 2013, but which is now one of his main tasks.

In very general terms, while it is possible for individuals, and indeed businesses to get together to trade as part of one business entity without breaching the Competition Act, it is not easy as:

- it requires a business model that includes governance (internal rules) that ensures that all participants “feel” valued, empowered and fairly represented
- it needs Physio First members, whether as individuals or as businesses, to believe that such action will enhance their position in the healthcare marketplace and be prepared to work hard to support it
- everyone has to understand that this cannot be about protecting our fees (as that is illegal under the Competition act) but about enabling those who participate in it to better compete in the healthcare marketplace, share in any profit as co-owners and be paid market rates for their services as suppliers.

That said, the cooperative model has several hundred years’ experience of:

- enabling business people to come together and share their effort, especially in marketplaces that are proving more difficult
- governance (internal rules) that can help everyone involved feel valued and empowered are intangible but very powerful business assets that drive the best businesses – a bit like John Lewis – see article <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2010/mar/16/john-lewis> .

Our research shows that there are no examples of cooperatives within private physiotherapy in the UK and indeed in the world, but there are many examples in other sectors both within the UK and around the world.

For a general overview Co-op UK, the trade associate for UK cooperatives, have produced a very brief video. Please click here [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90FL\\_bBE4mw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90FL_bBE4mw). It will only take 2 minutes of your time and is worth watching.

We will publish more details on cooperatives as we progress towards the date of our Groundbreaking Symposium, but there will be no better way to learn more about this than to attend the event.

To avoid missing out and to reserve your place on our Groundbreaking Symposium [click here](#)

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## WHY ARE WE TAKING THIS ACTION AROUND OUR GOAL 9 NOW?

For our entire history as members of Physio First (and OCPMP) we have bemoaned the fact that, as self-employed private practitioners, we have not been able to exert the sort of impact on our marketplace that we feel we should.

This “feeling” came up time and time again during our executive’s 3 days of facilitation in 2013 that resulted in our 5-year business plan. This was perhaps most eloquently summarised in a point captured during it “... it would be nice to be able to win some arguments!”

As Physio First, our executive and volunteer post holders have heard, felt and shared our members’ frustrations through the years of declining trust and fees from large purchasers of private physiotherapy such as private medical insurers and commercial intermediaries. In addition we have sought ways of increasing our members’ ability to market our skills to the self-paying, uninsured members of the public who form 80% of our average members’ patients.

On both elements Physio First has worked hard to help members help themselves, through a combination of dialogue with the large physio purchasers and through the creation of bespoke business courses that are now available through our strategic commercial relationship with Painless Practice – helping our members to help themselves, through the development of their own business skills.

Again as Physio First, our executive have researched the Competition Law and, being the responsible and trustworthy organisation that we are, we have advised our members how we must **not** act, i.e. to come together in a way that might serve to protect our fees, and which will impede competition, which is illegal. See our FAQ on the Competition Act that summarises this by clicking [here](#), for the CSP FAQ please click [here](#)

So, we have had to think and plan how we, as Physio First, might legitimately help our members to have that impact – hence our Goal 9 and now our Groundbreaking Symposium. This priority was originally scheduled for year five in our 5-year business plan, but we are launching it now, a year earlier than planned.

There is no doubt that this is a brave development. We have discussed our ambition with others who monitor the development of membership organisations and, to sum up what is quite substantial feedback, many other organisations are talking about it, but none are doing it.

So we are groundbreaking, and if you think that this is something you want to factor into the future of your practice, then you are invited to join our symposium on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. Please book now to avoid disappointment – for details [click here](#)

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## WHAT ARE OUR EXPECTATIONS OF OUR GOAL 9?

Our expectations, as set out in our Business Plan priority, include

- becoming very knowledgeable about likely business models and challenges for our first Goal 9 business entity
- uniting Physio First members, who want to join in, around something that could have a profound effect on the healthcare marketplace
- learning from well-established business minds, and our friends such as Rich Katz who has led a network of self-employed private physios in the US for over 20 years; Kyle Lunn, Director of our transformational partner Blue Zinc, who has navigated a route through the many stakeholders in our marketplace to develop their business and James Butler, Director of our strategic commercial partner Painless Practice who has extensive experience in helping individual members grow their businesses through acquiring business skills. This is not to mention our many other friends who would like to see Physio First succeed in helping a self-employed, private physio cooperative come into existence
- that our Groundbreaking Symposium on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 will be an excellent barometer of our members' depth of feeling with regard to whether we have sufficient motivation and support to become involved in this at this time
- that we will be able to draw from our considerable experience gained through the strategic journey that we, as Physio First, have been on.

## WHAT HAS PHYSIO FIRST PUBLISHED ABOUT OUR GOAL 9?

We first published details of our Goal 9 when we published details of our 5-year business plan, in early 2014.

Here are some links to some specific communications that we have published to date:

- May 2014 – Update article and animation “Audacious Goal 9 – Physio Owned Entities”. For the article click [here](#) or to see the same article as a 5 minute video see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eEreXB50zuU>
- July 2014 – Update article “Elegantly Thinking Bigger” click [here](#)
- November 2014 – Update article “The USA ... A Version of Our Future!” click [here](#)
- July 2015 – Update article “Gen Sec freed to look at Goal 9 Business model” click [here](#)
- November 2015 – Update article “Gen Sec goes on hunt for self-owned business model” click [here](#)
- April 2016 – Annual Report 2015 – 2016 (page 5) click [here](#)
- November 2016 – Update article “Ground breaking symposium on Goal 9 planned” click [here](#)

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