Cardiorespiratory physiotherapy education – are we achieving the vision?

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JOBSATISFACTION OF CURTIN PHYSIOTHERAPY GRADUATES 2000-2004: GENERATION Y INFLUENCE

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The aim of the study was to explore the employment characteristics of recent physiotherapy graduates from Curtin University of Technology, their satisfaction levels with working in physiotherapy, how many remain employed in the profession and what their future career intentions were. A self-administered questionnaire was sent to contactable year-level physiotherapy graduates and 256 responded (62.5%). Most respondents (76.5%) were employed full-time in physiotherapy with 14.9% inactive in the profession; 49% were Australian Physiotherapy Association (APA) members and 44.9% undertook 10-50 hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in 2005. Of those working as physiotherapists, 79.3% worked in major Australian cities and 52.2% were clinicians. Satisfaction with working in physiotherapy was indicated by 71.9%, with higher levels amongst rural workers. APA members, those completing over 100 hours of CPD, senior and principal physiotherapists. The highest salaries were earned by those working rurally, males, those completing over 100 hours of CPD and those working privately. Overall, respondents expected salaries greater than their current salary and X% were satisfied with income in physiotherapy. Sixty-four percent of respondents believed they would leave physiotherapy within 10 years. The three best aspects of working in physiotherapy were ‘helping people/people contact’, ‘flexibility and working in a healthcare team’ and ‘recognition for skills/experience and marketing’. Although most respondents were satisfied with working in physiotherapy, prospective employment predictions suggest serious implications for the short to medium term. Planning for physiotherapy workforce recruitment and retention to avert the exacerbation of current shortages is essential.

CAREER REFORM IN VICTORIA: ROLE INNOVATION FOR PHYSIOTHERAPISTS

Nall C
Austin Health

Following successful change in Elective Surgery and Emergency Departments in 2007, the Department of Human Services Victoria embarked upon a third wave of reform to review and develop a way outpatient services are delivered.

A major component of this work is the evaluation of the way in which role innovation will assist in improving access and using the outpatient workforce more efficiently. Many of these roles involve physiotherapist-led clinics in orthopaedics and neurosurgery with the possibility of Botulinum/Movement disorder clinics in the future.

This paper will provide an overview of the current role innovation initiatives for physiotherapists in Victoria within the context of the Victorian Outpatient Innovation and Improvement Program, including barriers to further roll out and future plans.

CAREIORESPIRATORY PHYSIOTHERAPY EDUCATION - ARE WE ACHIEVING THE VISION?

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This action research project comprised a broad, qualitative and quantitative analysis of physiotherapists, targeting clinicals conducting cardiorespiratory placements and those providing mentoring/supervision for The University of Notre Dame Australia. The intent was to gain a perspective from the clinicians and supervisors on whether current curriculum content and design was effective in preparing students for the real world of cardiorespiratory physiotherapy by inference, an avenue for reflection on teaching skill and performance was provided. A 46 question survey tool was distributed to facilities and individuals involved in the clinical education of Notre Dame students within the cardiorespiratory physiotherapy area in 2006-2007. This questionnaire incorporated three domains: clinical placement resources and student preparation, progression towards the national Australian Standards for Physiotherapy, and development and progression towards the specific cardiorespiratory physiotherapy graduate attributes as determined by Cardiorespiratory Physiotherapy Australia. Eleven individual responses were received. Results indicate that globally students are progressing appropriately from a cardiorespiratory perspective towards meeting the expectations of the external clinicians. There is scope for improvements in the preparatory material provided by clinical facilities prior to students participating in their cardiorespiratory placements. Students' satisfactory progress towards meeting the Australian Standards for Physiotherapy is clearly affirmed. Respondents' thoughts on students' progress towards the cardiorespiratory graduate attributes and competencies suggest overwhelming...
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satisfaction, with potential further advances against
cost elements of this domain still possible. Positive
affirmations of the professionalism, enthusiasm,
motivation, and willingness to learn within the
students came from open-ended questions.
These results supplement information from individual
student cardiorespiratory placement assessments,
Unit Content Evaluations, Teaching Performance
Evaluations, Course and Graduate Evaluation
Questionnaires to facilitate review of curriculum
content and design

PHYSIOTHERAPY COMPETENCY ASSESSMENTS:
FROM BEGINNING TO ENDED SCOPE
PRACTITIONERS

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Public hospital managers are required to monitor
the clinical practice standards of physiotherapy staff.
Competency assessment provides a framework for
this task. It is the process of gathering and judging
evidence in order to decide whether or not an
individual has achieved a standard. A competency
standard is an industry determined specification
of performance that sets out the skills, knowledge
and attitudes required to operate effectively in
employment. A clinical competency assessment
process was introduced, involving the application of
clinical protocols, use of checklists, observation
of practice and structured feedback. The aim was to
control clinical risk and to provide staff with objective
feedback. Prior to implementation, all supervising
physiotherapists received instruction from a certified
teacher in workplace training and assessment
Competency assessments were conducted when
physiotherapists were to perform potentially high
risk procedures, for the first time, or to assess
orientation needs and the achievement of competency.
Assessment included a variety of clinical procedures,
from the more standard, such as guedel suction,
to more complex procedures such as tracheostomy
decannulation. The competency assessment process
has been evaluated by survey. Results showed
a high level of satisfaction with the process and
confirmed that the process provided an accurate
reflection of the physiotherapists' usual standard of
practice. Competency assessment is part of clinical
risk management in our hospitals. It provides a
framework that is used to assess competence in the
performance of high risk procedures and could be
used as part of an assessment process for extended
scope roles in physiotherapy.

CONTINUING EDUCATION NEEDS: A COMPARISON
BETWEEN PHYSIOTHERAPISTS AND OTHER
ALLIED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IN VICTORIA

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A continuing education program for allied health
professionals is currently accessible in a number of
states in Australia for the purpose of building rural
workforce capacity and interprofessional practice.
The program aims to support professional needs
and ambitions of practitioners, particularly those
working in rural and remote areas. It utilises recent
developments in e-learning to enhance access to
continuing education, whether live or retrospectively.
The evaluation framework of the continuing education
program includes an online pre-program survey to
find out perceptions, values and preferences allied
health professionals and assistants have in relation
to continuing education, and the effect the program
may have on their intention to stay in rural practice.
Continuing education preferences are presented and
comparisons are made between physiotherapists,
other allied health professionals and allied health
assistants.

IMPROVING THE TRANSITION OF YOUNG PEOPLE
WITH CHRONIC DISEASE TO ADULT HEALTH CARE
- WHY, WHEN AND HOW

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Transition has been defined as the purposeful, planned
movement of adolescents and young adults with
chronic physical and medical conditions from child-
centred to adult orientated health care systems.
The transition of these young people has been
receiving increasing attention around Australia and
internationally over the past decade. This is in part
due to increasing survival rates of children born
with chronic or disabling conditions. For instance
an increase in numbers of surviving children in
early 1990's with perinatal neurological conditions
has produced a larger group currently reaching
adolescence with complex care needs. Failure to
adequately address transition has serious long term
implications for the physical and psychosocial well
being of young people with chronic health issues and/