



DOI: 10.1515/rpp-2015-0009

Postgraduate student, **SVITLANA GUK**
Ivan Ohienko Kamianets-Podilskyi National University, Ukraine
Address: 61 Ohienko str., Khmelnytskyi region,
Kamianets-Podilskyi, 32300, Ukraine
E-mail: s.guk@list.ru

INTERPROFESSIONAL LEARNING OF PHYSIOTHERAPISTS UNDER CONDITIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN GREAT BRITAIN

ABSTRACT

The problems of implementing interprofessional training of physiotherapists in universities and at the bases of the practical training of students in Great Britain have been analyzed. The role of physiotherapists in issues of medical education and practical assistance within their own profession has been defined. The list of leading training bases that took part in the pilot implementation of common learning for health professions including physiotherapy and the list of the most common topics for interprofessional learning among health professions in universities of Great Britain are given. The role of public authorities and civil communities of Great Britain in providing financing, monitoring and defining requirements for interprofessional learning in the field of physiotherapists' training has been considered. Positive results and the significance of use of interprofessional learning in physiotherapists' training to improve interprofessional communication and collaboration for more effective health services that meet the modern needs of British society have been marked out. Project tasks that will ensure the development and implementation of innovative interprofessional clinical bases of learning in the field of health care in Great Britain have been analyzed. The importance of use of positive foreign experience in the preparation of national experts in physiotherapy has been emphasized.

Key words: *physiotherapist, interprofessional education, interprofessional environment, common learning, multiprofessional approach, universities of Great Britain.*

INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of science and technology, a high level of use of the advanced technologies and techniques in medicine, the social sphere, physical culture and sport require a high level of physiotherapists' training. After all, physiotherapy is a part of medical, social and professional rehabilitation. It is a system of measures to restore or compensate for physical abilities and intellectual capabilities, enhance the functional state of the body, improve physical qualities, psychological resilience and adaptive reserves of human body by means and methods of physical culture, elements of sport and athletic learning, massage and natural factors (Popov, 2005).

The primary means of physiotherapy are physical exercises and sports elements, the use of which always implies pedagogical and educational process. Its quality depends on how a future physiotherapist has mastered pedagogical skills and knowledge. Physiotherapists must be able to determine which methods and means will provide both general and local impact on the body, differentiate pressure according to disease type and the patient's condition (Popov, 2005).

At the present stage of staff's professional training in Ukraine the problems concerning professional training of physiotherapists, namely forms of education obtaining,



technologies and structures of educational process of students' training in this field, the content of the program material on specific subjects and majors, programs of practical learning and professional learning, the accordance of practice place with the requirements of specialists' training, opportunities of interprofessional learning are not studied enough. The quality of physiotherapists' training undergoes an active discussion that is mainly focused on the establishments of students' education.

Modern physiotherapist must not only possess a relevant basis of professional knowledge and skills, but also be able to orientate in the possibilities of other professions that should be used for work within interprofessional environment to provide patients with quality care if he wants to be in demand on the labour market.

The topicality of the research topic is caused by an insufficient study of the training of qualified specialists in foreign countries. We believe that the analysis of British experience will have a positive impact on the improvement of physiotherapists' training in the universities of Ukraine.

THE AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to analyze and justify the use of the positive results of implementing interprofessional learning in universities of Great Britain as a part of the professional development of future physiotherapists.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH METHODS

Theoretical analysis of literary sources on the research topic shows a significant increase of interest to the issues of physiotherapists' training. Some aspects of professional training of physiotherapists were studied by O. Dubohray, V. Krupa, T. Krutsevych, V. Kuksa, A. Miheyenko, V. Mukhin, V. Murza, V. Polishchuk, S. Popov, A. Vatsuba, G. Verych, T. Zinchenko, V. Zyuzinov and others. The actual problems of physiotherapists' training have been considered by N. Belikova, O. Pohontsevi. T. Bugerya has studied interdisciplinary relations and effective training of physiotherapists in pedagogical universities. I. Marionda and V. Osipov have analyzed peculiarities of physiotherapists' professional training in work with athletes.

Special attention should be paid to the researches by L. Sushchenko, related to the professional training of future specialists in physical education and sport in foreign countries; by T. Osadcha concerning the professional training of physical education teachers in the universities of the United States; by A. Hertsyk about the training of Bachelors in Physiotherapy in Canada; by A. Kavakze Rizik, related to organizational and methodological peculiarities of physiotherapists' training in Jordan; by E. Nerushenko and A. Vlasova concerning the analysis of major trends of physiotherapists' training in higher education establishments of Europe and the United States.

At the same time, there are no complex studies on how professional training of physiotherapists should be carried out taking into consideration the need of science-based organization of educational process and experience of advanced countries.

Analysis of literary sources, organized by T. Boychuk, N. Golubeva, A. Lewandowski, proves that this question still remains open, that confirms the expediency of discussing the problem at different levels (Boichuk, 2008).

In the study such methods of pedagogical research are used: theoretical analysis of scientific and pedagogical literature and documentary sources, generalisation, systematization.



RESULTS

As it is defined by The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy in Great Britain (CSP): “Physiotherapy is a medical profession that is related to the functioning of human body, movement and increase of activity potential. It uses physical approaches to maintain, preserve and restore physical, mental and social health, taking into account variations of health state.” (CSP, 2002).

For physiotherapy in Great Britain is a medical profession, physiotherapists can act as an authority of first aid or as assistants of other medical specialists. They play a key role in the issues of medical education as consultants in the professional activity helping other medical and non-medical specialists to support a satisfactory state of patients’ health and spread information about how to preserve and improve their health. Physiotherapists work independently, and the evaluation of their work involves physical, psychological, cultural, social and environmental aspects as well as an influence that they have on the functionality and the needs of an individual within their own professional activity. Their activity consists of manual therapy, therapeutic (curative) exercises, electrophysical method of influence, assistance in case of health deterioration and reduction of physical activity for people of all ages, support of the recovery process and rehabilitation after injury and post-surgery physiotherapy (CSP, 2002).

In Great Britain, the training of physiotherapist is carried out in universities according to the curriculum main integrated criteria of which are defined by the The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). The curriculum, in its turn, defines the trends of training of future physiotherapists for professional activity (QAS, 2013).

Interprofessional learning in Great Britain is determined by the Center for Advancement in Interprofessional Education (CAIPE) as “cases when two or more professions are mutually studied or influence each other in order to improve collaboration and care quality.” (CAIPE, 1997).

From the perspective of The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy in Great Britain (CSP), interprofessional learning is aimed at the enrichment of physiotherapy students’ experience with no damage to the development of knowledge, skills and particular qualities of its own specifics. The activity within interprofessional learning should prepare students for their future role of a key specialist in multiprofessional healthcare team and for practice in more extended medical environment. Future physiotherapists must develop a clear sense of the role of other medical specialists in the context of the modern vision of medical and social care so that after receiving a degree in physiotherapy, they could properly understand the methods of individual and team work for appropriate actions in the first or second cases as well as be able to involve into interprofessional communication and collaboration to ensure medical services that most effectively meet the needs of patients.

The search for ways to improve the physiotherapists’ training in British universities highlights the positive results of interprofessional learning. Interprofessional learning can modify negative professional stereotypes (Parsell, 1998), improve the students’ awareness of other specialists (Freeth, 2000; Gilbert, 2000), promote interprofessional communication (Edwards, 1998) and prepare students for work in interprofessional environment (QAS, 2013).

The model, volume and scope of interprofessional learning should be chosen on the basis of individual qualification program of physiotherapy, the basic university’s vision of this educational medical course, taking into consideration national and local legislative initiatives as for enhancing the improvement of interprofessional education and work (Dawson, 2004).



The Department of Health in Great Britain (DoH) requires that educational programs meet the practical and theoretical purpose and support multiprofessional approach to modern medical care. According to this point of view, four leading modern British educational bases have received financial support from The Department of Health (DoH) to develop common learning and physiotherapy is represented in each of them:

- Kings College London with Greenwich and South Bank Universities;
- Universities of Southampton and Portsmouth;
- Universities of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Northumbria and Teesside;
- Universities of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam (Dawson, 2004).

Each of these educational bases has its strict approach to common learning. In London schools students of dentistry, dietetics, medicine, midwifery, nursing, pharmacy and physiotherapy enroll in the 3-phase program. The first year of learning includes communication skills and medical ethics. In the middle phase (second or third year) students who are assigned to the place of practical learning, work together in artificial situations of “patients’ care”, learning to distinguish and explore different stages of care provision and treatment. In the final phase (third or fourth year) students being in the places of practical learning under the supervision of teacher, work in small groups (4-10 students) “solving problems” in different situations.

In Southampton and Portsmouth an integrated curriculum for 11 educational programs has been developed: audiology, medicine, midwifery, nursing, occupational therapy, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry, diagnostic radiography, therapeutic radiography and social work. Common learning is practiced both at universities and at the bases of practical learning being divided into 3, 4 and 5-year programs.

The project of Sheffield common learning includes diagnostic radiography, nursing, occupational therapy, operating department practice, physiotherapy, therapeutic radiography, oncology and social work. On the basis of the project three leading interprofessional bases for practical learning, where interprofessional teams cooperate, have been founded that optimizes the students’ understanding and awareness of really existing problems in health care to their full extent. To support learning initiatives, the bases were equipped with modern learning materials, interactive means of communication and information exchange between the university and the place of practical learning (Edwards, Smith, 1998).

In Newcastle, Northumbria and Teesside the main goal is to develop and implement innovative interprofessional clinical learning bases, to facilitate learning and working in health care in the northeast of Great Britain. Project objectives that will ensure the achievement of this goal are the following:

- clearly formulate modern learning programs in order to determine localization of common learning bases;
- cooperate with appropriate health services, their staff and patients to identify the key policies of common learning;
- identify opportunities offered by the renovated curriculum for the opening of coordinated clinical bases based on collaboration for medicine, nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy and social work students;
- develop and coordinate innovative bases for practical learning and practical tasks that contribute to the development of cooperation between students of various specialties (Dawson, 2004).

Interprofessional learning is not limited by learning on educational bases, funded by the Ministry of Health (DoH). The verification has showed that many universities rely on



the aspects of interprofessional learning. But in most cases this approach is mentioned in the context of university study, but not on the bases of practical learning. The most common topics of interprofessional learning in universities are communication fundamentals, professional practice, research methods, health policy of National Health Service (NHS), interprofessional work and professional roles, reflective practice, management, complex cases' study, anatomy and physiology.

At the University of Ulster a new program is being actively implemented, thus in the second term of the first academic year physiotherapy and occupational therapy students intensively study together for a week. This week is dedicated to the clinical learning and students study topics such as patient transportation, cardiac and respiratory activity rehabilitation, document management, role of specialists involved in the treatment process, code of conduct, ethical and legal issues.

In its turn, the demand for increasing the number of professionals in related medical professions, proclaimed in terms of National Health Service of Great Britain (NHS), has led to an increase of the number of students in many universities. Great Britain Government have announced its intention to introduce the experimental innovation of successful interprofessional learning after considering the abovementioned projects of common learning. Four leading bases of clinical practice are developing different approaches to interprofessional learning, and while theoretical interprofessional learning is already a part of certain projects, interprofessional learning under the conditions of clinical practice has innovative nature. General local and national standards of assessment can help to form and define the future of interprofessional learning of physiotherapy and other specialties in higher education of Great Britain.

CONCLUSIONS

Ensuring sustainable development of physiotherapists' professional training in universities is a part of Great Britain government policy in the sphere of health and social security. Researches that are being conducted on the national level in order to obtain information about physiotherapy education on such leading educational bases as Kings College London with Greenwich and South Bank universities, Universities of Southampton and Portsmouth, Universities of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Northumbria and Teesside, Universities of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam point out the importance of these specialists' training for Great Britain.

Taking into consideration the results of the search for ways to improve the physiotherapists' training in British universities it is possible to single out a positive tendency in matters of interprofessional learning implementation both in the universities and at the bases of practical training. This issue is being considered on the state level and being funded by The Department of Health of Great Britain (DoH), that, in its turn, requires educational programs meet the practical and theoretical purpose and support multiprofessional approach of modern medical service.

The content of physiotherapists' professional training in British universities within interprofessional learning implies the forming of future specialists who are able to work in the system that is characterized by an effective interaction among specialists in the interprofessional environment, gives an opportunity to develop a clear understanding of the role of other medical specialists in the context of the modern vision of medical and social assistance and who is ready to work within a common European educational space.

The study, analysis and experience adaptation of interprofessional learning implementation in theoretical and practical training of physiotherapists in universities of Great Britain can be useful for improving the national system of physiotherapists' training.



As perspective directions for further researches we consider more detailed study of the process of physiotherapists' professional training in higher education in Great Britain and comparative analysis of physiotherapists' professional training in Great Britain with possibilities of native universities.

REFERENCES

1. Бойчук, Т. (2008). Концептуальні засади становлення і розвитку спеціальності «Фізична реабілітація» в Україні [Conceptual principles of forming and developing Physiotherapy specialty in Ukraine]. *Фізичне виховання, спорт і культура здоров'я у сучасному суспільстві. Зб. наукових праць* [Physical education, sports and health culture in modern society. Collected scientific works]. Луцьк : Волинська обласна друкарня, p. 11–16 (in Ukrainian).
2. Попов, С. Н. (2005). *Физическая реабилитация. Учебник для студентов высших учебных заведений* [Physiotherapy. A manual for higher education students]. Ростов-на-Дону : Феникс, p. 9–18 (in Russian).
3. *Centre for advancement in interprofessional education*. (1997). Interprofessional Education-A Definition. CAIPE Bulletin No 13. Retrieved 11.10.2014 from : <http://caip.org.uk/about-us/defining-ipe/>.
4. Dawson, P. (2004). *Case studies Physiotherapy*. Retrieved 22.11.2013 from : <http://practicebasedlearning.org>.
5. Edwards, J., Smith, P. (1998). Impact of interdisciplinary education in underserved areas: health professionals' collaboration in Tennessee. In: Morton, P. (Ed.) *Journal of Professional Nursing*, No 14 (3), p. 144–149.
6. Freeth, D., Chaput de Saintonge, M. (2000). Helping medical students become good house officers: interprofessional learning in a skills centre. In: Harden, R. (Ed.) *Journal of Medical Teacher*, No 22, p. 392–398.
7. Gilbert, J., Camp, R., Cole, C., Bruce, C., Fielding, D., Stanton, S. (2000). Preparing students for interprofessional teamwork in health care. In: Reeves, S. (Ed.) *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, No 14 (3), p. 223–235.
8. Parsell, G., Spalding, R., Bligh, J. (1998). Sheared goals, sheared learning: evaluation of a multiprofessional course for undergraduate students. In: Tavakol, M. (Ed.) *International Journal of Medical Education*, No 32 (3), p. 304–311.
9. *The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy*. (2002). Curriculum framework for qualifying programmers in physiotherapy. London. CSP. Retrieved 18.03.2014 from : <http://csp.org.uk>.
10. *The Quality Assurance Standards*. (2013). Standards of physiotherapy service delivery. London. CSP Practice and Development, p. 13–14. Retrieved 10.03.2014 from : <http://csp.org.uk>.
11. Turner, P., Sheldon, F., Coles, C., Mountford, B., Hillier, R., Radway, P., Wee, B. (2000). Listening to end learning from the family carer's story: an innovative approach in interprofessional education. In: Reeves, S. (Ed.) *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, No 14 (4), p. 387–395.