Danish University Colleges

Connecting theory and practice in physiotherapy education - challenges for the clinical educators
Presenting results and perspectives from the masterthesis "The clinical educators perspective on competency development in clinical education"
Larsen, Louise Landbo

Publication date: 2013

Document Version
Pre-print: The original manuscript sent to the publisher. The article has not yet been reviewed or amended.

Link to publication

Citation for published version (APA):

General rights
Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

Download policy
If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Download date: 19. sep., 2019
Presenting results and perspectives from the master thesis “The Clinical Educators perspective on Competency Development in Clinical Education”

Author: Louise L. Larsen, Master of Health Promotion & Education, PT, Lecturer and clinical coordinator. University College of Northern Denmark, Dept. of Physiotherapy

Background: Clinical education forms a key component in the education of physiotherapy students. The clinical educator plays an important role in regard to the student’s development of professional competences in the clinical education – during clinical education the students must acquire the knowledge and skills that are needed to meet the demands of the basic education, but at the same time be part of a community of practice with highly specialized work tasks. The clinical educators are thus challenged to meet the demands of the basic education as well as the demands of a highly specialized clinical practice.

Objective: The purpose of this study is to contribute to the discussion about, how the relation between theory and practice in physiotherapy education can contribute to the student’s development of professional competences. This study aims to add the clinical educators perspective to this discussion.

Methods: 2 focus group interviews with clinical educators from the physiotherapy education in Denmark were conducted. There were 3 participants in each focus group. They all worked at larger hospitals. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed with an phenomenological approach. 6 main themes were identified through this process and they were then analyzed on the basis of the theoretical framework.

Theoretical Framework: Pär Nygren & Halvor Fauske’s theory on the development of professional competence and Illers’ competence formula which describes engagement, practice and reflection as key concepts in development of competence forms the theoretical framework for the analysis of the empirical data and the understanding of the clinical educators role in regard to the physiotherapy students development of professional competences.

Main conclusions and perspectives:

• The clinical educators define their main objective as helping the students identify their personal learning goals. The clinical educators believe that it is crucial because it is difficult to learn this in a school setting.

• The clinical education is important in regards to learning the role as a therapist and being able to form professional relations with the patients. The clinical educators therefore find it important to present the students to a broad variety of patients and give them supervision on how they conduct themselves as therapists.

• The highly specialised hospital forms a challenge as a clinical setting within an education, which aims to give the students basic competences.

• The reduction of the complexity that characterizes the daily work in physiotherapy can be made through participation in the community of practice. They also need to introduce the students to a broad variety of patients and assignments in the areas within the profession, but this can be difficult when the clinical education takes place in a hospital setting with highly specialized departments.

• It was found important for the students to be able to choose and adapt the patients and assignments in the clinical education, so it matches the level of the student, and the complexity of the clinical setting might influence the students development of a professional identity as a legitimate participant in the community of practice.

• The clinical educators need to take into account the barriers that this setting presents in regard to the students socialization into the profession by being included in the professional community of practice.

• The clinical educators find it important that the clinical educators is able to support the student's ability to reflect on their own practice and learn from this.

• The clinical educators find that it is important that the clinical educators is able to support the students identification of personal learning goals.

• The clinical educators find it important to facilitate the students understanding of the clinical educators role in regard to helping the student connect theory and practice.

• The clinical educators find it important to facilitate the students understanding of the relationship between theory and practice through a closer collaboration between the theoretical educators and the clinical educators.

• The clinical educators find it important to present the students to a broad variety of workfields within the profession.

• The clinical educators need to take into account the barriers that this setting presents in regard to the students socialization into the profession by being included in the professional community of practice.

References:


2. Illeris, K. (2011, 2003) describes competence as...