

U21 Annual Meeting of Deans/Heads of Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing and Rehabilitation Sciences

The University of British Columbia – Continuing Medical Education

Report of the Physical and Occupational Therapy Group 20th and 21st September, 2001

Present:

Professor Lesley Bainbridge	University of British Columbia
Ms. Jan Cauther	University of British Columbia
Ms. Pat Lieblich	University of British Columbia
Mr. Andrew Neale	University of British Columbia
Dr. Laurie Snider	McGill University
Dr. Diane St. Pierre	McGill University
Ms. Caroline Storr	McGill University
Professor Molly Verrier	University of Toronto
Dr. Bill Vicenzino	University of Queensland
Mrs. Gillian Webb	University of Melbourne
Professor Pat Wrightson	University of Birmingham

01/01 Session 1 Thursday 20th September, 2001

The discussion developed out of the morning's 'getting to know' each other's programs, and covered a wide range of topics. A key message from the group was the need to promote the OT and PT professions. It was felt that we did not market our particular academic and professional expertise effectively. It was felt that OT's and PT's developed a wide range of skills through entry level programs and postgraduate study, which enabled them to work in changing environments. However, the very focused nature of entry-level programme was felt to limit the scope for PT's to undertake health professional roles that would contribute to delivery of wider health care services – this was felt to be less of an issue for OT. The group discussions identified many similar issues and problems faced by institutions in making an impact on healthcare delivery, the lack of 'critical mass' was identified as a major factor. The importance of OT, PT and other health professional groups working more closely together was seen as essential to increasing our impact.

A more detailed discussion of the different models for entry level education, and potential changes by some countries to move to master's level entry education, raised issues relating to global mobility of physiotherapists, the present accreditation/registration processes in place in each country were also considered restrictive to movement of OT's and PT's.

Further topic areas related to development of research output and its perceived value within the wider academic community, the importance of linking research and practice was stressed, with the need to build postgraduate research activity. Facilitation of students/staff to complete doctoral studies, with support for post-doctoral studies being emerging theories.

In summary, the key points identified for further action were as follows:

1. Improved marketing of our professions, a political method being the identification of an item of discovery and its impact on the profession, i.e. an inventory.
2. The need to work collaboratively between OT/PT and other related health professional groups.
3. The importance of identifying the standards of OT/PT education by a 'benchmarking exercise'.

The discussion was concluded with the importance of debating and agreeing on an Action Plan, identified as the task for the next day's meeting.

01/02 Session 2 Friday 21st September, 2001

The group focused on two major areas, identifying plans to establish baseline activities that will lead to more specific and interprofessional initiatives. These two main areas were:

1. A U21 Physical therapy and occupational therapy network for sharing of information through the U21 platform.
 - 1.1 connect with the U21 webmaster to determine possibilities
 - 1.2 create links to physical therapy, occupational therapy (audiology and speech language pathology) for a broad paragraph highlighting the professions
 - 1.3 create links from PT and OT to the U21 education programs' websites

Information from the website will include:

- faculty profiles
 - research interests and accomplishments
 - areas of expertise
 - curriculum information
 - clinical education information
 - educational vision, mission and values
 - other useful links
- 1.4 create links to a "what's new and exciting" section for each program to showcase major research achievements, awards received, etc in the areas of discovery, impact etc.
 - 1.5 ensure that the university program "hosting" the U21 meeting sends out monthly reminders for the highlights (to be screened by 2-3 faculty members prior to submission)

2. The Learning Resource Catalogue provides an opportunity to “market” educational resources and to discover new ones. We need one person to act as the contact for a working party that will move the implementation of the LRC further along.

Resp. Laurie Snider (McGill)

3. Several other issues were discussed in less detail. There is a need for an HR strategy for tracking graduate students and post-docs. This may become part of the U21 networking possibilities. There is also a need to look more closely at benchmarking. This will be a part of the agenda for the next meeting. Bill Vicenzino will approach one of his colleagues in Australia to prepare a discussion paper on the issue in preparation for the next meeting.
4. There was a strong commitment to continue to meet annually with our other health colleagues. Several tasks were identified to prepare for the next meeting:
 - 4.1 Find out who will host the next meeting
 - 4.2 Find out if there is an OT or PT school at the host university
 - 4.3 If no OT or PT school, check geographical location. If the meeting is planned for Asia, Joan McMeeken and Gillian Webb will take on planning responsibilities. If it is in the UK, Pat Wrightson will do the planning.
 - 4.4 UBC will send notes from the inaugural meeting to all 21 programs in OT and PT. People from the inaugural group will make personal contact with specific programs (to be decided).
 - 4.5 UBC will roll out an agenda for the OT and PT group and will try to establish the interprofessional topics so that we can prepare to participate in the discussions.
 - 4.6 We will encourage opportunities for discussion with our health professional colleagues.
5. Issues for further, more in-depth discussions include:
 - 5.1 Curriculum: guidelines and expectations
 - 5.2 global mobility of PT and OT and its relationship to education
 - 5.3 graduate curriculum
 - 5.4 student and staff exchanges
 - 5.5 linking practice and research
 - 5.6 U21 partnership possibilities
 - 5.7 research and post-graduate education; collaborative possibilities
 - 5.8 changing models for entry-based education
 - 5.9 interprofessional education
 - 5.10 technology and education

As an inaugural meeting, this was a very successful initiative and has exciting possibilities for the future at discipline-specific and interprofessional levels.

We are grateful for the welcome we have received into the U21 network of health professionals.