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A protocol for the development of professional competencies: the SPA Project

European College of Sports Science
Belgrade
15th July 2005

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What are competencies?

- Competencies: effective professional behaviours that integrate specific knowledge, skills and attitudes in a particular context (Ministry for Education, Culture and Science; Netherlands, 2002)

i.e. what do we expect a sports physiotherapist to be able to do?
Why develop competencies?

- Increasing specialisation
  - Delineation
  - Communication
  - Transparency
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy</td>
<td>Increasing international mobility; increasing professional recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Appropriate design of educational opportunities; international harmonisation of education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Design of employment specifications, job descriptions; integration into quality assurance mechanisms;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Recognition of roles and capabilities; identification of individual learning needs and design of an action plan;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sports physiotherapy

• How is sports physiotherapy distinct from:
  → other professions?
  → general physiotherapy?
  → other physiotherapy specialisms?

1st task of the SPA Project → competencies
Characteristics of the process

- International → documentation and consultation
- Rigorous → methodology
- Flexible → international similarities and differences
Stages of Development

1) Content analysis of international documentation: similarities and differences in 16 countries
2) Expert panel: cross-checking of themes
3) Expert panel: decisions regarding level
4) Use of a competency model as a structure to group themes (Coppoolse & Van den Heuvel, 2004)
Sports physiotherapy competency areas

**PROFESSIONAL LEADER**
- 6. Life-Long Learning
- 7. Professionalism and Management

**ADVISOR**
- 5. Promotion of a Safe, Active Lifestyle

**MANAGER OF THE PATIENT/CLIENT**
- 1. Injury Prevention
- 2. Acute Intervention
- 3. Rehabilitation
- 4. Performance Enhancement

**INNOVATOR/PROFESSIONAL LEADER**
- 9. Dissemination of Best Practice

**INNOVATOR**
- 8. Research Involvement

**PROFESSIONAL LEADER/ADVISOR**
- 11. Promotion of Fair Play and Anti-Doping Practices

**INNOVATOR/ADVISOR**
- 10. Extending Practice Through Innovation
Review and Revision

• Competencies written for each area in the model
• Draft 1 → internal review → Draft 2
• Draft 2 → external review → Final draft

• Final draft → unanimously accepted by the International Federation of Sports Physiotherapists 5th November 2004
Progression

- Standards were developed to supplement the competencies → accepted by the IFSP June 2005
- Next stage: development and piloting of an audit toolkit
- The documents are already being used internationally in education and policy development
Acknowledgements and References

The authors would like to thank the Dutch Agency for supporting this Leonardo da Vinci funded project.

REFERENCES:


• Bulley, C. et al. (2005) Sports Physiotherapy Competencies and Standards. Sports Physiotherapy For All Project. [online] Available at: www.SportsPhysiotherapyForAll.org