

PRACTICAL EDUCATION IN THE SPECIALITY OF “MEDICAL AESTHETIC CARE” - MODERN CHALLENGES, DEVELOPMENT AND PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract: In the modern world the practical education emerges as a leading factor in building professional qualities and competencies. The theme is particularly relevant to the education of specialists in the field of "Health Care", whose main role is to protect public health. The qualitative practical education is an element of the quality of education and allows fast and effective professional realization of the graduates, thus providing benefit both students and the labour market, with strong social and economic contributions to society. In the field of healthcare future professionals should be able to work in a complicated environment, involving teamwork and a work with a patient/client. This requires the establishment of good professional habits, social skills and competence, good adaptive capacity to changing conditions of work and life. The results in response to the current requirements to professionals can be achieved by deployment and creation of new approaches to practical education. The classical teaching methods in the higher education system should be developed and adapted to the new forms of education. The emphasis should be placed on practical education to allow for better preparation and subsequent success of students. This report addresses issues of the practical education in the speciality of "Medical aesthetic care", that are largely typical of other occupations in the field of "Health Care". Innovative and active learning methods, with opportunities for development of the practical education are discussed in this report. The development of the students' potential and their self-assertion as professionals during the learning process is a challenge to the modern systems of education, but is also an opportunity to provide adequately trained staff in the continually evolving field of healthcare.

Keywords: practical education, innovations, active methods, health care, medical aesthetic care

INTRODUCTION

In the modern world practical education emerges as a leading factor in building professional qualities and competencies. The theme is particularly relevant to the education of specialists in the field of "Health Care", whose main role is to protect public health. The qualitative practical education is an element of the quality of education and allows fast and effective professional realization of the graduates. The classical teaching methods in the higher education system should be developed and adapted to the new forms of education. The emphasis should be placed on practical education to allow for better preparation and subsequent success of students. It is necessary to apply methods that enable the learners to improve themselves to a level of complete preparedness for their realization in the working environment. At the ground level of practical education is also the development of social skills, especially in the areas requiring communication and teamwork.

DISCUSSION

Treating the issues related to the practical education in the speciality of "Medical Aesthetic Care" requires a discussion for the development of higher education in the field of "Healthcare". The future professionals should be able to work in a complex environment, including teamwork and working with patient/client. This in its turn demands good professional habits, social skills and competence, good adaptive capacity to changing working and living conditions, and so on. [2] Good results in response to the current requirements to professionals can be achieved by deployment and the creation of new approaches to practical education. With this report we want to present our experience with the application of innovative and active learning methods, showing opportunities for the development of practical education. Also, we discuss current challenges and difficulties that we encounter in the teaching process.

PRACTICAL EDUCATION

The curriculum of the speciality of "Medical aesthetic care" includes teaching subjects and hours aimed at the development of practical skills and habits. In general, they are divided into:

1. Profile subjects - their primary purpose is aimed at the direct construction of professional knowledge and skills. They include - theory, exercises and practical training in centres of practical education.
2. General subjects – contribute to the creation of a general culture in "Health care" system and help the development of the professional outlook, sense and education in the profession. They include both - theory and exercises.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

An indisputable moment in the structure of practical education is the proven effectiveness in the training of the students at the college level. At its core, this structure is stable and comprehensive, but as opposed to today's changing conditions of the education, it remains closed and inefficient.

Thanks to the innovative approaches the structure of the education can be converted into a flexible system with overt utility and performance for the students.

PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

In the classical version of the structure of practical training, one of the main problems that is often observed is the lack of the connecting element between the different disciplines concerning the professional approach and the outlook. Although well presented and taught, the subject matter is often misunderstood because of the lack of presentation of its practical utility in the sphere of work.

In this regard, we decided to create and implement a pedagogical approach under the name of "Training seminar in real working conditions". The concept of this innovative form is based on creating conditions in which students, through a practical task, use, deploy and implement the knowledge from different disciplines through their professional competence. Over the years, this form of practical application has evolved, with two types of training seminars being formed:

- ❖ Type 1 - seminars based on the reproduction and application of already learned methods of work
- ❖ Type 2 – seminars, where students create new approaches with practical applicability in the professional work, on the basis of the studied and acquired theoretical and practical knowledge and skills.

In both types of training seminars at the centre of the organization and realization is the activity of the students.

This approach contributes to the development of social skills related to the professional environment - communication skills, teamwork, carrying responsibility and commitment to achieving results, etc.

The problems with using this form of training are as follows:

- Funding - very often the realisation of this kind of seminars is related to material and financial expenses. Given that this form is optional rather than compulsory in the curriculum, it is not intended to be funded by the educational establishment. An alternative approach we use is self-financing, which is not always positively perceived by the participants or finding sponsors, which is not a permanent and secure option.
- Organisation - though useful for learners, this form of practical training is accompanied by an extremely complex and heavy organization. Here, the teachers must first of all have a personal initiative and a desire to organize such a forum. Often, this leads to out-of-work engagement with out-of-work time, using personal contacts and connections, personal finances, and spending time to provide the necessary conditions for conducting training sessions.

BUSINESS AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Another important aspect in the development of practical training is the collaboration between the business society and the educational institutions. The "Business and Education Hand-in-Hand" project was developed at Medical College - Sofia. It organizes events and forums of significance in which, together with partners from the business environment, lecturers maintain and develop advanced level education. The speciality of "Medical aesthetic care" successfully cooperates with the cosmetics business.

Our experience shows that a good collaboration guarantees the successful career of "medical beauticians" on one hand and on the other hand, the presence of well-trained specialists provide the necessary personnel for the industry. This is also the philosophy behind the development of the whole national education - "Project 2020".

The difficulties we encounter in this collaboration are the following:

- Curriculum - it is necessary to create an institutional policy for co-operation with the business circles. The creation of mixed working groups for updating curricula would shorten the distance between the school, the business community and the labour market.

- Practical training centres- many of the companies offering student internship often employ students as a workforce, but they do not neglect student practice as an element of the learning process of the respective specialty. Also, it is not possible for the practice to be conducted by university lecturers, who in this case would reduce the contrast between the training and the real working environment, while paying attention to the curriculum and programs.
- Motivation - the motivation of students to devote more time to training in the learning process is increasingly difficult. It is especially wrong to think that the importance of rapid realization in the work environment is greater than the timely learning of the subject matter. This "mutilation" of knowledge at a later stage is expressed in inadequate competency on the part of the graduates, which also affects on their quality of work.
- Quality of training - although there are plenty of innovative approaches and training methods, the criteria for their implementation and pursuit of results remain in the background. It is necessary to update the criteria regarding the ways of applying and running, assessing and making use of the innovations, otherwise the nature of the training and its value would be inappropriate.

PRACTICAL TRAINING IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACCREDITATION SYSTEM

It is appropriate to have a special criterion in the NAOA Criteria System, in particular in the programme accreditation of the professional fields, for the assessment of the practical training with the corresponding content and characteristics. [1]

CENTRES FOR STUDENTS' PRACTICAL EDUCATION

Higher education institutions are unable to provide and maintain adequate equipment for the education of students on the full range of activities and processes in relation to the training in the relevant majors. Therefore, there is no economic logic, regardless of the quality of education requirements. For this reason, higher education institutions should maintain their material base but also seek contact with business by conducting practical training in base firms.

They should be selected according to the criteria for: activity in the field of the relevant specialty in higher education; availability of modern technology; the availability of jobs for trainees; the availability of qualified personnel who have the necessary work experience to train practitioners; motivating the management of the companies to undertake the training of trainees during the corresponding periods of the year. [1]

The problem with the choice of practice bases is multifaceted and should be resolved at several levels, with the selection of the bases being amongst: structurally leading companies in the country or in the region concerned, including health establishments; high-tech companies; international companies; institutes and others. It is advisable for the bases to pay for the work of practitioners, but this should not be the basic element in the activity. It would be a good not to practise in places other than the basic ones, and especially without the supervision of a college lecturer.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Practical training is an element of the quality of the education system. It is an upgrade of the basic knowledge and skills, creates adaptability of the students for realization in working in the specialty, but under different company conditions and requirements and different positions and jobs. Qualitative education is based on combining of education and training. Specifically, practical education should be accompanied by an educational element: knowledge and understanding of the real working environment, creation of working habits. Qualitative practical training is the basis for successful professional realisation.

The conduct of student practices with an unmanageable or unsatisfactorily managed process can not give a positive result and an opportunity for successful professional realization of the graduates in different work places and positions in the respective specialty. [1]

CONCLUSION

Practical education is an open system of continually evolving processes. A development of the students' potential and their self-assertion as professionals during the learning process is a challenge to the modern systems of education, but also an opportunity to provide adequately trained staff in the constantly developing field of

healthcare. Student practices are an upgrade of the basic knowledge and skills of the students and they form and guarantee the quality of the educational process in the higher education system. This ensures the successful professional realization and adaptability of the graduate students to the requirements of the labor market based on the acquired, skills and competences.

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