

INCREASE IN THE ROLE OF PHARMACIST AS A PROFESSIONAL UNDER THE CONDITIONS OF THE BOLOGNA SYSTEM IN UKRAINE

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Abstract: Countries worldwide are facing similar healthcare problems. Medicine develops new methods for treatment, and pharmaceutical companies invent more efficient products. These technological advances are, however, expensive, and put a double-strain on public healthcare spending: the cost of sophisticated treatment keeps growing, and improved healthcare allows patients to live longer, thus requiring more treatment. Budgetary constraints, however, require government to restrict expenditure. These challenges have to be answered in the context of existing public healthcare systems, which, are well established and complex.

Healthcare reforms will necessarily reflect these characteristics, as well as the relative political weight of the partners. Such reforms will most likely affect all partners involved in the provision and healthcare management, including social security institutions (state agencies, sickness funds, etc.), doctors, and other health professionals—pharmacists. Currently one of most important strategic tasks of modernization of the system of higher education in Ukraine is the high quality education provided to pharmacists in order to satisfy the worldwide needs.

Whatever specific reform will be adopted, the main goals are to make the system more efficient and, thus, more cost effective; and, because the first aspect will not sufficiently decrease the expenditure, it is necessary to limit the scope of public health care while maintaining a balance of benefits.

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Introduction

In general, the level of public health is an integral criterion reflecting the quality of life of the population as well as indicator of the social and cultural development. However, at the turn of the new Millennium, public health became one of the major prerequisites ensuring national security, adequate functioning, and future of any state (Moskalenko, Galienko, & Gruzieva, 2009). The impact of the reforms on the position of pharmacists will depend on the strength of their associations in the country in question. Countries with a strong, traditionally oriented pharmacists lobby will probably not be drastically affected. However, it is likely that there will be an increasing trend for consolidation in the retail pharmacy sector, where chains will further attempt to replace private pharmacies (Busari & Arnold, 2009; Danilov, 2003). The role of a pharmacist will probably become more active within the healthcare system; he or she may participate in computerized systems for tracking patient treatments and doctors' prescribing habits. The pharmacist will become more depended when dispensing generics even when brand names have been prescribed ("real" generic substitution), and, thus, assume a higher responsibility. This increased emphasis on the role of a pharmacist as a professional may also generate some pressure for dissolving the pharmacist's monopoly on retail sales of medicines (Fedotova, 2001; Wildavsky, 2010; Dent & Harden, 2009). Therefore, Ukraine carries out the Ukrainian quality criteria for accreditation of professional degree in the discipline of "Pharmacy." The purpose of the accreditation of specialists' professional training in pharmacy, pharmacy educational policies, and procedures for certification of professional degree programs in Ukraine is to provide stakeholders, such as, universities and other educational institutions (DSTU ISO 9000-2001, 2001; European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education [ENQA], 2005). Thus, the aim of this article is the implementation of new academic methods into pharmaceutical subjects under the conditions of the Bologna System in Ukraine and according to ENQA instructions.

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Methods

The basic criteria and requirements for the specialist accreditation in higher medical institution with the specialty of “Pharmacy,” under conditions of the Bologna System in Ukraine and according to instructions on quality assurance (ENQA), are: common demands—the concept of activity by declared specialty (specialization), agreed upon by City State Administration; staff provision for specialists’ training by declared specialty; material and technical base; educational and instructional support; information support; qualitative characteristics of specialists’ training.

Results and Discussions

The concept of activity in medical universities concerning the declared specialty (specialization), under the conditions of the Bologna System in Ukraine and according to instructions on quality assurance (ENQA), is carrying out new principles of construction of continuous professional development system of pharmaceutics, by implementation of European standards and instructions on internal and external quality assurance into pharmacists’ training (Communiqué of Conference European countries’ Ministers which responsible for higher education, 2010). The important task is setting the requirements for modern Ukrainian textbook, its structure, its compliance with the curriculum concerning the subject. Bogomolets National Medical University implements the basic criteria and requirements with the specialists’ accreditation in higher medical institution in the specialty of “Pharmacy” under the conditions of the Bologna System and according to instructions on quality assurance (ENQA) in Ukraine (Moskalenko, Nizhenkovska, & Siytinya, 2010; Moskalenko, Yavorovskiy, & Tsehmister, 2013).

The main criteria of staff provision for specialists’ training by the declared specialty are:

- share of scientific and pedagogic staff, with academic degrees and titles, in providing lecture hours in social and humanitarian cycle disciplines, basic disciplines, and specialty disciplines according to the specialty curriculum (more than 95% of lecture hours), excluding military disciplines, including those who are on a permanent basis—PhD or Professors⁴;
- share of pedagogic staff of higher category who provide lecture hours of disciplines according to the specialty curriculum (% of hours);
- the availability of Basic Disciplines Department (cyclic commission);
- the availability of Specialty Disciplines Department that is headed by the specialist of relevant scientific and pedagogic specialization: PhD or Professor Ph.D., and Associate Professor.

The main criteria of the material and technical base are:

- the availability of laboratories ranges, equipment, and tools that are necessary to perform the educational programs (100% of needs);
- availability of student dormitory programs (more than 70% of needs);
- quantity of computer working places per 100 students;
- food service points availability;
- gym availability;
- stadium or sports ground availability;
- health point availability.

⁴ the share calculation of PhDs and Professors is allowed to be based on 50% of PhDs and Associate Professors with continuous work experience in this educational institution that is no less than 10 years, and are authors of books or textbooks approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine.

The main criteria of educational and instructional support are:

- the availability of educational and professional qualification characteristics (including optional components);
- availability of educational and vocational training program (including optional components); availability of the curriculum approved according to the established procedure; availability of educational and instructional support for each discipline in the curriculum (100%);
- educational and practical disciplines programs availability;
- plans for seminars, workshops, laboratory's exercises availability;
- guidelines and subjects for tests and course works/term papers availability;
- tests/control tasks sets availability of being used to check the knowledge of social and humanitarian, basic and professional disciplines;
- availability of guidelines for thesis and governmental exams preparation;
- didactic support for students' individual work (including information technology elements);
- the availability of criteria for students' knowledge and skills evaluation.

The main criteria of information support are:

- textbooks, teaching aids provision to students based on own library resources (100%);
- correlation of seats in their reading rooms to the total number of students;
- the availability of professional periodicals in reading rooms;
- teachers' and students' access to the internet as a source of information—the equipped laboratories and channels of access.

The main criteria of qualitative characteristics of specialist training are:

- implementation of the curriculum by the criteria, list of disciplines, time frames and control tools (100%);
- professional qualification increase of core staff professors for the last 5 years (100%);
- funds distribution for paid services in the educational process (equipment, tool and books purchases, etc.);
- students' level of humanitarian disciplines knowledge: successfully completed tests (more than 90%);
- tests completed with high quality ("excellent" and "good") (more than 90%);
- students' level of fundamental/basic disciplines knowledge: successfully completed tests (%);
- tests completed with high quality ("excellent" and "good") (more than 90%);
- level of professional preparation: successfully completed tests of specialty disciplines (%);
- specialty disciplines tests completed with high quality ("excellent" and "good") (more than 90%).

Conclusion

This article presents the Ukrainian quality criteria for accreditation of professional degree of the specialty in "Pharmacy." The ECTS implementation into the university system of pharmacists' training and tasks of quality system education improvement are in accordance with European standards and instructions on quality assurance (ENQA). The system of student's training of the specialty in "Pharmacy" has been developed and is undergoing positive changes. This implementation shall improve the knowledge of young pharmacists and enhance their role in the professional society.

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