

Concerns and Challenges in Pharmacy Education

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Abstract:

Education in the field of Health Sciences must be in a close relationship with the Health Care System. Globalization of Pharmacy Education and Practice is an important component of Global Health and Global Education.

The slow shift from traditional drug-dispensing to a patient-centered approach in pharmacy practice requires a fundamental change in the roles and responsibilities of both policymakers and educators. Nowadays in many countries of the World, pharmacists are educated for 6 years and they receive the degree of Doctor of Pharmacy (Pharm D), the requirements of the modern pharmacist are described as well. Pharmacy graduates should be with a special set of skills, knowledge, and competencies, effective and experienced leaders.

Georgia has accumulated serious problems in terms of pharmacy education and pharmaceutical practice. The most important problem is that pharmacist is an unregulated profession in our country. Consequently, pharmacies employ pharmacists who may not have completed a residency program after graduating from the bachelor/master program as well as pharmacists are not required to pass the qualifying exams and therefore are not required to have a license/ certificate.

Clinical and hospital pharmacy in our country is still in its infancy. We are also taking the first steps towards the safety of the medication.

The research conducted by the students of the undergraduate program of the School of Health Sciences at the University of Georgia revealed the barriers to the development of clinical pharmacy and pharmacovigilance: unfavorable policy and administrative environment, lack of awareness of the clinical pharmacy functions, low level of knowledge in clinical disciplines, lack of training and workshops regarding patient-centered medication, lack of communication skills and clinical practice.

All of this indicates what significant changes need to be made in the field of pharmacy education. We must share the good experience of other universities and create modern curricula for undergraduate and graduate programs in pharmacy. In terms of patients' clinical consultation, patient-centered care, rational pharmacotherapy, it will be necessary to give students a deeper modern knowledge in the pharmacology, pharmacotherapy, toxicology, clinical disciplines.

We agree with WHO regarding enhance of competency-based educational model and including it in the curricula. In the context of medication safety students should be able to identify ADRs in authentic descriptions or examples of patient cases and suggest pharmacotherapeutic interventions for relatively simple cases of ADRs, provide rational pharmacotherapy and medication management services.

Regulation of the profession, licensing/ certification, strong professional councils, lifelong learning in pharmacy based on continuing education (CE) and continuing professional development (CPD) is the cornerstone of modern pharmaceutical education.

Key words: pharmacy, education, health care

Abbreviations:

WHO – World Health Organization

CE – continuing education

CPD – continuing professional development