Clinical education provides students with authentic learning experiences not available in the classroom. The goal is to integrate theory and problem-solving in a controlled setting while facilitating professional behaviors and enhancing the necessary clinical skills for entry into post-graduate practice. Based on the work of others and APTA’s Professional Behaviors for the 21st Century Professional, the following skills were identified as necessary to the success of students and clinicians within our field of work: collaboration and consultation with others, critical thinking, integration of evidence into decision-making, responsibility for communication related to their patient’s care across various settings, provision of cost effective services, flexibility and openness, and commitment to learning. It is vital for educators to identify methods to foster the development of these professional behaviors.

As adult learners, students want to apply what they have learned and value constructive feedback to be able to assess their progress and growth. Clinical instructors are essential for the student’s application of classroom knowledge into clinical practice. To assist the student, the clinical instructor may need to modify their communication and teaching style to match the student’s learning style (Greenfield et al., 2012). To assist the student, the clinical teaching skills to student understanding and experience, having good communication skills, providing constructive feedback, facilitating a student-centered environment, and training clinical instructors. The use of formal CI training has been identified as an essential component to prepare and design effective fieldwork programs and to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Colvin & Frum, 1998). Further, to enhance the effectiveness of clinical instructors, organizations can assist CIs in the development of their teaching and communication skills. Improved leadership skills will enhance their skill set, confidence and ability to better meet the needs of students in order to develop strong clinicians for our profession.

Purpose: To evaluate physical therapist students (SPT) clinical rotation within the Marianjoy network and identify implications for future research.

Materials/Methods: To find this poster and other research: visit http://www.apta.org/uploadedFiles/APTAorg/Practice_and_Patient_Care/PR_and_Marketing/Market_to_Professionals/TodaysPhysicalTherapist.pdf


Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital, Wheaton, Illinois

**Introduction**

The use of formal CI training has been identified as an essential component to prepare and design effective fieldwork programs and to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Colvin & Frum, 1998). Further, to enhance the effectiveness of clinical instructors, organizations can assist CIs in the development of their teaching and communication skills. Improved leadership skills will enhance their skill set, confidence and ability to better meet the needs of students in order to develop strong clinicians for our profession.

**Materials/Methods:** The survey was completed by 84 SPTs at 18 different academic programs. The length of clinical rotations ranged from 4-15 weeks with an average of 9.4 weeks. There were 29 CIs with the mean clinical experience as a PT of 12.32 years, 71.4% were APTA members, and 36% were APTA-certified CIs.

**Qualitative Analysis**

**Question #17:** What specific qualities or skills do you believe a Physical Therapy Student should have to succeed at this clinical education site?

- 199 responses were coded for qualities and skills required for this clinical site.
- Results were placed into 2 categories of academic skills and professional behaviors (Figure 1).
- Analysis of behaviors listed as professional behaviors were coded using APTA Professional Behaviors for the 21st Century (APTA, 2011). See Figure 2.
- Top 10 most important skills listed as the most frequently self-reported behavior required for success. For a successfully SPT experience.

**Discussion/Conclusion**

- Results of the overall content analyses for the open-ended questions related to qualities and skills necessary for success at this clinical site revealed 47% of the respondents related to academic knowledge and skills, and 53% were related to professional behaviors. These results suggest relatively equal importance for both academic and professional skills are required for a successful clinical rotation.
- The most frequent suggestions by the SPT for future students to improve their clinical experience were to review academic baseline work prior to the clinical rotation.
- The results suggest that students who have a solid knowledge base of academic skills and knowledge are then able to perform more efficiently.
- SPTs also reported that a variety of other educational and clinical experiences was frequently reported as a valuable learning opportunity. This result suggests that an array of clinical and educational experiences provided in CI is fundamental in creating an overall positive learning experience.

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