



# Aligning learning outcomes and expected competence of beginning therapists

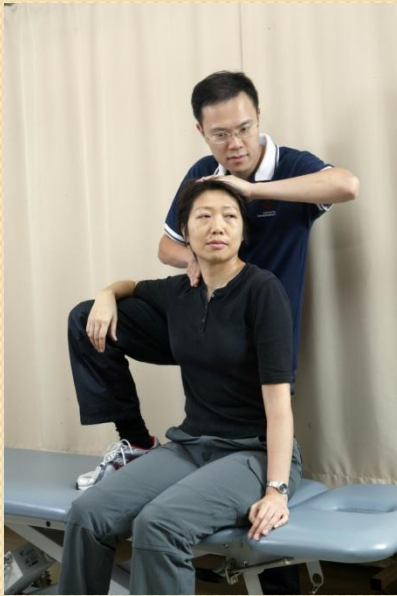
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# Physiotherapy

# Occupational Therapy



# Study Objectives

- To conduct a profile scanning of the practice areas of beginning therapists
- To identify professional and generic competence as expected from employers of both existing and new practice areas
- To examine the alignment of intended learning outcomes and expected competence
- To make recommendations to the academic programs

# Qualitative Methodology

## Semi-structured interview

### Development of Interview Guide:

- Policy direction and scope of rehabilitation services of Hong Kong
- Literature related to curricular design of professional education in health sciences
- Literature on how employers evaluate employee performance, and
- Biannual departmental survey of employers and graduates.

# Interview Guide

## Professional competence

- What are the main areas of service provision in your organization?
- What are the roles of beginning therapists your organization?
- What are the clinical duties of beginning therapists?
- What are the key professional competence you are expected from the beginning therapists working in your organization?
- How do you comment on the level of professional performance of beginning therapists? Any examples to illustrate your views?

## Interpersonal competence

- In what way do beginning therapists work with other members of the health care team?
- What are your views on the communication skills of beginning therapists with clients and families?
- How would you describe their performance in multi-disciplinary team meeting?

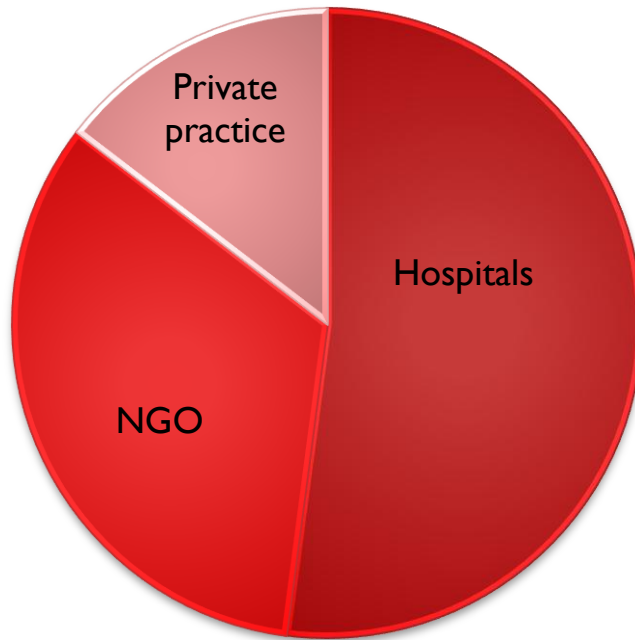
## Intrapersonal competence

- What are the personal competence you identified from the beginning therapists?
- How do you describe their ability to manage work pressure?

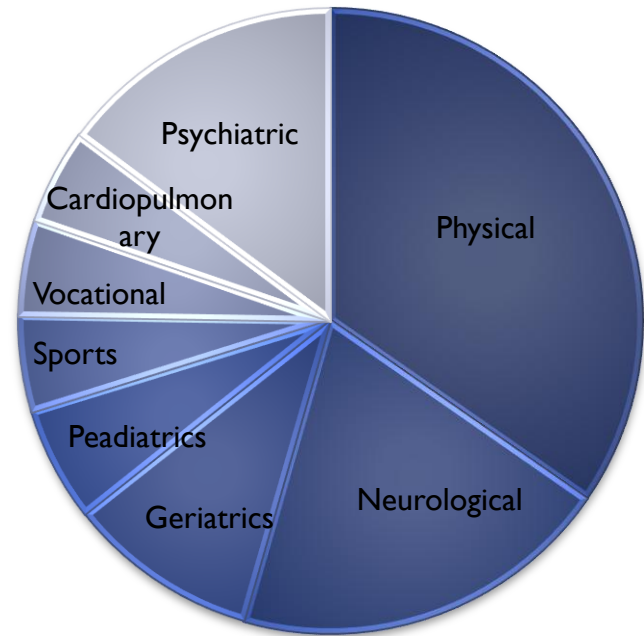
## Other opinions and suggestions

- Are there any other opinions regarding the professional practice of beginning therapists?
- Any suggestions you would like to give to the school to further equip students with the professional competence as required by beginning therapists?

# Purposeful Sampling Strategy



Practice Sectors



Clinical Specialties

# Study Participants

## Occupational Therapy

### Employers

- 128 contacted
- **40 completed**
  - 11 from hospitals
  - 20 NGOs
  - 9 private practice

### Graduates

- 13 completed
  - acute hospital, mental health, paediatrics, geriatrics, community service and vocational rehabilitation

## Physical Therapy

### Employers

- 175 contacted
- **33 completed**
  - 5 from hospitals
  - 10 NGOs
  - 18 private practice

### Graduates

- 11 completed
  - acute hospital, neurological, paediatrics, geriatrics and community service

# Findings

## Scope of clinical duties

- Conducting clinical assessments
- Treatment planning
- Implementing clinical interventions
- Administrative & supervisory duties
- Service planning

## Roles of beginning therapist

- Trainee (mainly for hospitals)
- Clinical practitioner
- Case manager / coordinator
- Educator / consultant
- Resource person
- Assist in administrative and supervisory duties



# 4 areas of learning outcomes

## Competent professional

- Professional knowledge and skills
- Professionalism and ethics
- Teamwork and leadership
- Life-long learning

## Creative problem solver

- Skills of problem-solving
- Creative thinking

## Effective communicator

- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Biliteracy and trilingualism

## Educated global citizen

- Global outlook
- Social and national responsibility

# Professional Knowledge and Skills

- ✓ Breath of clinical knowledge
- ✓ Awareness of patient safety
- ✓ Knowledge of practice models and principles
- ✓ Understand clinical pathologies and related impairments
- ✓ Able to conduct basic clinical assessments and interpret clinical results
- ✓ Able to plan and implement basic treatment modalities
- ✓ Demonstrate clinical reasoning skills
- ✓ Able to modify treatment strategies according to clients' functioning
- ✓ Adaptation to work culture

- ✗ Depth of clinical knowledge
- ✗ Less competent in hands-on practice and integration of clinical skills
- ✗ Less comprehensive in clinical assessment and critical appraisal of assessment results
- ✗ Inadequate knowledge of program/treatment evaluation

# Ethics, Teamwork, Lifelong learning

- ✓ Understand and demonstrate professional ethics
- ✓ Able to work cooperatively with team members
- ✓ Self-learning
- ✓ Keen to attend training workshops, continuing education courses, and local symposium/conference
- ✓ Member of the professional association

- ✗ Rather shy and quiet in team meetings → **CONFIDENCE?**
- ✗ Tend not to express opinions in team meetings
- ✗ Limited reading of scientific journals, rely mostly on Internet info.
- ✗ No clear vision on career development

# Problem-solving, Creative Thinking

- ✓ Problem-solve for straight-forward clinical conditions.
- ✓ Work independently for straight-forward clinical conditions.
- ✓ Creative thinking and innovations made to service programs are not expected from beginning therapists.

- ✗ Mostly work according to practice protocols, limited flexibility according to clinical tasks with variations
- ✗ Self-reflection

# Communication, Language Proficiency

- ✓ Communication and inter-personal skills
- ✓ Able to establish client-therapist relationship.
- ✓ Able to maintain professional interactions with clients.

- ✗ Less competent to communicate clearly to clients and caregivers, esp. technical knowledge and jargons.
- ✗ Less competent in report writing and engaging in case discussions.

# Global Outlook

## Social & National Responsibility

- ✓ Aware of the emerging trend of rehabilitation services, both locally and globally
- ✓ Active and keen to take part in volunteer work as related to professional practice
  - ✓ On-field practice for Trail-walker, Marathon, Olympics
  - ✓ Rehab services following Sichuan earthquake

- ✗ Not interested to practice outside Hong Kong.
- ✗ Less active in participating international and regional conferences.

# Other Views

- ✓ Good working and learning attitude
- ✓ Willing to assume responsibility
- ✓ Strong in IT knowledge and computing literacy
- ✓ Research skills and knowledge of evidence-based practice

- ✗ Inadequate self-confidence
- ✗ Hesitate to move outside comfort zone to take on challenges
- ✗ Less efficient work and time management

# Emerging Service Areas

- **Rehabilitation service at primary care level**
  - Health promotion & education
  - Early detection and prevention of disease / injuries
- **Sports Physiotherapy**
  - Private practice, e.g., fitness centre, sports teams, clinics
  - Consultant, coach, counselor
- **Geriatrics (Elderly) Rehab**
  - Community-based, home-based, residential services
  - Well elderly, dementia, multiple pathologies
  - Management of chronic diseases, palliative care, lifestyle redesign, falls prevention and management
- **Pediatric (Children) Rehab**
  - Private practice, pre-school, schools
  - Dyslexia, Asperger's disorder, Attention Deficit & Hyperactive Disorder
  - Development training, pre-school training, self-care training, hand-writing training, attention training
- **Mental Health**
  - Community re-integration
  - Life coaching, vocational preparation and coaching
- **Vocational rehabilitation**
  - Prevention of work-related injuries, occupational safety, work-capacity training



# How well is the alignment?



**79 – 87% of employers rated the performance of beginning therapists as ‘EXCELLENT to GOOD’**

# Physiotherapy

Competent professionals

Creative problem solvers

Effective communicators

Educated global citizens

## ALIGNMENT of program learning outcome with expected competence:

- 🔄 Appraise the health and social care needs of clients
- 🔄 Practice safely and effectively in assessment, knowledge, treatment planning and implementation, professional collaboration,
- 🔄 Recognize role of other professions and demonstrate ability to work with them.
- 🔄 Demonstrate awareness of public health trends, global economic, culture and sociological factors.
- 🔄 Assume multi-disciplinary roles
- 🔄 self-directed plan for career development
- 🔄 Logical and systematic thinking in drawing clinical conclusion and judgment
- 🔄 Demonstrate computer literacy and make of information technology in report and presentation
- 🔄 Use of bilingualism and professional-based language
- 🔄 Fulfilling civil duties, engage in community services and educational programme
- 🔄 Act as an advocator and articulate the need of client groups.

## Further improvements required:

- 😐 Monitor and adjust the plan of care in response to clients status
- 😐 Evaluate outcomes of all levels of physiotherapy services
- 😐 Supervise and manage support personnel in the workplace
- 😐 Appraise resource constraints and work beyond the current job specifications
- 😐 Critically evaluate and apply published research evidences, techniques and technologies
- 😐 Interact effectively with clarity, cultural sensitivity which communicating with clients, colleagues and public
- 😐 Documentation with appropriate use of language, citation, professionalism and standard.

# Occupational Therapy

Competent professionals

Creative problem solvers

Effective communicators

Educated global citizens

## ALIGNMENT of program learning outcome with expected competence:

- ↻ Synthesis in every aspects of sciences for occupational therapy practice
- ↻ Analyze activities and tasks essential to life role
- ↻ Identify clients' functional problem resulting from physical, psychosocial and/or ageing process in a life span approach
- ↻ Apply knowledge and skills to work co-operatively in a health care team and recognize the roles of each team members
- ↻ Demonstrate an awareness of public health trends that may influence the context of practice
- ↻ Identify the market needs for OT services in local as well as the whole nation
- ↻ Participate in ongoing professional development
- ↻ Gather and analyze information to recognize problems during treatment implementation and hence evaluating the outcome
- ↻ Manage interpersonal situation to reduce conflict among patients, caregiver and team members
- ↻ Fulfilling social and civil duties, engaging in service development and health education for the needed population locally and nationally.
- ↻ Translate ethical principles into accountable behavior and exhibit appropriate personal and professional conducts

## Further improvements required

- 😊 Plan, implement and evaluate programmers of therapy
- 😊 Contribute to the planning, organizing and managing and assuring the quality of services of an occupational therapy unit
- 😊 Understand the importance of health and labor policies on disable service provision
- 😊 Leadership skills in social functions, organizations and outside activities
- 😊 Keep abreast of professional and technological developments in rehabilitation
- 😊 Work independently and provide professional advice based on sound judgment
- 😊 Communicate effectively with clients, care-givers, colleagues, and other professions with clarity and sensitivity in professional manner
- 😊 Analyze and evaluate information with appropriate use of language and professional standards.

# Recommendations

- Emphasize the importance of and develop students' **generic competence**.
- Foster a **closer partnership with clinical colleagues** for knowledge exchange and service updates.
- Incorporate **professional knowledge and skills required for new practice areas** in the curriculum.
  - Introduce knowledge and concept of primary care, e.g., disease/injury prevention, health promotion
- Students need to take part in extra-curricular activities and/or volunteer work to **enrich life experience, practice inter-personal skills** and other generic competences.
- Students' **proficiency of English language** need to strengthened.



**THANK YOU**