

Post-Professional Athletic Training Students' Perspectives on Implementing Educational Competencies into Daily Clinical Practice: A Pilot Study

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Context: As post-professional athletic training education (PPATEP) continues to evolve, there will be a need to evaluate knowledge, skills, and abilities related to the six education competencies. These competencies are already being utilized by programs seeking athletic training residency accreditation, and will be instrumental in formulating the path for advancing athletic training practice. **Objective:** To evaluate post-professional athletic training students' perceptions regarding the importance of post-professional educational competencies and their ability to implement these competencies into daily clinical practice. **Design:** Cross-sectional survey design. **Setting:** Self-reported paper survey. **Participants:** Twenty-four post-professional athletic training students (13 first year and 11 second year students, age=24.00±2.27yrs, average hours per week completed at clinical site=30.21±4.54) completed the survey. **Data Collection and Analysis:** Participants completed the survey instrument at the conclusion of the 2011-2012 academic year. The survey instrument consisted of two sections for each of the six identified educational competencies: quality improvement (QI), professionalism (PROF), healthcare informatics (HCI), interdisciplinary collaboration (IDC), evidence-based practice (EBP), and patient-centered care (PCC). The first section asked participants to rate their ability to incorporate concepts within clinical practice and the second section asked participants to identify how important they perceived each concept to be for implementation within their clinical practice. All questions consisted of Likert-scale items (range 1-4) and the number of questions ranged from 8 to 18 for each competency. Composite ability ("strongly disagree" to "strongly agree") and importance ("not important" to "extremely important") Likert-scale scores were achieved by tabulating all values and then averaging the scores back to the Likert scale (total divided by four). Higher scores indicated that participants perceived themselves to have greater ability and that the concepts were more important for implementation into their clinical practice. Descriptive statistics (e.g. means, standard deviations, percentages) were reported using SPSS 20.0. **Results:** PPATEP students perceived the concepts involved in the QI (3.6/4.0), PROF (3.8/4.0), HCI (3.4/4.0), IDC (3.6/4.0), EBP (3.6/4.0), and PCC (3.5/4.0) competencies to be "moderately important" to "extremely important" for implementation in their clinical practice. Participants also "agreed" they were able to implement the concepts involved in the competencies within their clinical practice (QI=3.2/4.0, PROF=3.4/4.0, HCI=2.9/4.0, IDC=2.9/4.0, EBP=3.3/4.0, and PCC=3.0/4.0). **Conclusions:** The documentation and monitoring of students' knowledge, skills, and abilities within the competencies will assist us with defining post-professional educational programming as well as provide outcomes assessment. Future research should aim to determine how much students' professional educational program prepared them in these competency areas. Assessing students' preparedness could help educators and clinical preceptors formulate individualized clinical goals for each student.

Key Words: post-professional program, educational competencies, athletic training education

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