Author's response to reviews

Title: Canadian physiotherapists' views on certification, specialization, extended role practice, and entry-level training in rheumatology

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Author's response to reviews: see over
April 23, 2009

Dr. Nina Titmus
Assistant Scientific Editor
BMC-series Journals
BioMed Central
Floor 6, 236 Gray's Inn Road
London, WC1X 8HL

Dear Dr. Titmus,

RE: Canadian physiotherapists’ views on certification, specialization, extended role practice, and entry-level training in rheumatology

Enclosed please find the re-revision of the abovementioned paper and our response to the reviewer. We have highlighted the section where major changes have been made.

We would like to thank you and the reviewer for the helpful comments, which have helped to improve the manuscript.

We look forward to your decision about this manuscript.

Sincerely yours,

Linda Li, PT, PhD
Response to Reviewers

Manuscript title: Canadian physiotherapists’ views on certification, specialization, extended role practice, and entry-level training in rheumatology

Date: April 22, 2009

We thank the Reviewers again for their comments and suggestions.

Response to Dr. Anita Atwal’s comments:

“In the UK the university of brighton run an MSc- please see web site with theArthritis Research Campaign http://courses.brighton.ac.uk/course.php?cnum=1087.

There are numerous articles about PT and extendd practice which could emnhance this paper particulary the inroduction and discussion. e.g Physiotherapy extended scope of practice – who is doing what and why? Paula Kerstena, Kath McPhersona, b, Val Lattimer, a, Steve Georged, Alice Breton, and Bridget Ellisf,

I am still unsure what this paper adds to professional practice.”

- We appreciate the reviewer’s comments and have added the systematic review paper to the background section (pg. 4-5). From the reference list of this systematic review, we identified the key studies on extended role practice in rheumatology. Please note that these studies are already in our paper.

We concur with the reviewer that the UK is the leader in developing advanced practice training for rehabilitation professionals through the excellent work of the Arthritis Research Campaign (ARC). In fact, our survey was informed by the previous work of ARC, which defined the extended roles of PTs, OTs and nurses in rheumatology through a series of surveys and workshops. ARC’s effort also led to a series of advanced education initiatives in the UK. However, these initiatives may not be directly transferable to other regions and countries.

It is well known in health services research that local information, such as gaps in care, availability of health human resources and other barriers to care, is required before implementing new practice models, such as extended practice in physiotherapy. To this end, our study focuses on Canadian PTs’ interests in pursuing certification, specialization and advanced practice roles in rheumatology. Our findings contribute background information for Canadian universities and physiotherapy professional organizations to plan education resources and credentialing policies. We, therefore, argue that this paper indeed adds to improving the future physiotherapy practice in the rheumatology field.

These points have been addressed in the discussion section.