THE CONCEPT OF RESEARCH OF PHARMACISTS PROFESSIONAL TRAINING IN UKRAINE

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Abstract. Despite an increased focus of the Ukrainian scientists (V. Lazoryshynets, O. Volosovets, I. Vitenko, Ya. Tsekhmister, V. Chernykh, and others) on the issue of professional training of pharmacists, today it still remains insufficiently studied, and taken European integration into account it requires significant attention. The concept of pharmacists professional training in Ukraine implies that pharmaceutical education, i.e. the structure, content, timeframes, and quality, should be brought to conformity with the state and international standards and with the demand of the country’s healthcare system for high-quality pharmaceutical aid provided to population, for supply of good medicinal products in sufficient amounts, for the development of new technologies in production of medicinal products, for maintaining the nation's health.

The system of continuous professional training of pharmacists in Ukraine comprises three successive stages, integrated between each other since every next stage is based on the previous and backs the new, higher level of pharmacists professional training, namely undergraduate training, postgraduate studies, continuous (lifelong) professional development. The ultimate goal of pharmacists professional training in Ukraine is to achieve objectives such as improving the quality of medicinal products and pharmaceutical aid; maintaining and strengthening the nation's health; promoting the quality of education, research and professional activities of higher educational and postgraduate institutions offering pharmaceutical education; competitiveness of pharmacists in the European and international labor markets.

Keywords: training of pharmacists; pharmacist-in-charge; pharmaceutical education; concept; continuous professional development of pharmacists.

Introduction

At the stage of political, economic, and social and cultural contradictions, the Ukrainian pharmacists constantly seek ways to further develop pharmaceutical education, science, and culture for the deliberate, dynamic, and ambitious moving forward towards integration with the international community.

Despite an increased focus of the Ukrainian scientists (V. Lazoryshynets, O. Volosovets, I. Vitenko, Ya. Tsekhmister, V. Chernykh, and others) on the issue of professional training of pharmacists, today it still remains insufficiently studied, and taken European integration into account it requires significant attention.

Since pharmaceutical education is a developing system, its modernization is a natural historical process related to the necessity to change the educational model that has been formed under industrial culture and it conflicts with the cultural realia of a postindustrial society. The process of advancement of pharmaceutical education system under the new conditions, as any other system, starts with a new philosophy and geo-culture, which at the modern stage of civilization are the philosophy and the culture of postmodern.

Modernization of the modern pharmaceutical education, namely in the context of these philosophy and culture, is aimed at the renewal of not only the content, forms, and methods of the educational activities, but it also involves the comprehension of pharmacists modern professional training as a continuous process focused on forming a creative individual in the global informational society of the XXI century capable of personal development and lifelong education (Sysoyeva and Batechko, 2011).

Results

Democratization tendencies in professional training of pharmacists can be observed in several directions: decentralization of managing educational institutions specializing in pharmaceutical education; development of self-governing in higher medical (pharmaceutical) educational institutions (extension of rights of higher educational institutions in all activity areas: educational, research, financial); increase of the social status of
academic teaching staff; extension of students self-administration; expansion of the public impact on higher pharmaceutical school. Now, as democratization principles in Ukraine are being asserted, increasingly frequently all society institutions act as legitimate management entities, since, according to Michael Fullan, a Canadian educator, it is impossible that just one entity manages all educational processes.

We believe that a balanced combination of the acquired national experience in pharmacists professional training and the adopted best international practices is the integration of national pharmaceutical education into the international educational latitude and is based on the “priorities of national interest”, which fully complies with Cl. 36, Section 15 of the “National Doctrine of Advancement of Education in Ukraine” (National Doctrine of Advancement of Education in Ukraine in XXI century, 2001). Having its own national system, Ukraine modernizes medical and pharmaceutical educational institutions of I-II accreditation levels, and higher medical (pharmaceutical) educational institutions of III-IV accreditation levels on the basis of national traditions and culture.

The necessity for fundamental reorganization and reforming that rely on the principles of humanity, tolerance, understanding, ultimate values of a man and of human life – these are the crucial things that integrate educational systems of the world.

The concept of professional training of pharmacists in Ukraine implies that pharmaceutical education, i.e. the structure, content, timeframes, and quality, should be brought to conformity with the state and international standards and with the demand of the country’s healthcare system for high-quality pharmaceutical aid provided to population, for supply of good medicinal products in sufficient amounts, for the development of new technologies in production of medicinal products, for maintaining the nation’s health.

The following issues should be addressed: ensuring carrying out scientific support to the process of reforming pharmaceutical sector of the healthcare system and implementing the Nationwide program, “Health 2020: the Ukrainian Dimension”; and the issue of increasing state order in terms of training doctors and pharmacists-in-charge and the plan of target enrollment of young people from rural areas to higher medical (pharmaceutical) educational institutions of IV accreditation level.

The system of continuous professional training of pharmacists in Ukraine comprises three successive stages, integrated between each other as every next stage is based on the previous and backs the new, higher level of pharmacists professional training, namely undergraduate training, postgraduate studies, continuous (lifelong) professional development. The first stage is undergraduate training of pharmacists-in-charge: in medical lyceums, medical and pharmaceutical colleges, medical schools, higher medical (pharmaceutical) educational institutions (over the period of 5 years under curriculums with the number of instruction hours in the profession at least 5500). At the same time, the Concept involves bringing the list and volume of courses in the curriculums to those as in the European Union, implementation of a new methodology, i.e. the credit-unit system of arranging academic activities in the context of European integration and joining the Bologna Process. The second stage of professional training of pharmacists is postgraduate studies, which involves professional training of pharmacists-in-charge to do pharmaceutical internship at postgraduate educational institutions. Such professional training ends up with obtaining permission for independent activity in pharmaceutical sector. The third stage is continuous (lifelong) professional development of a pharmacist in the course of 30-40 years of professional activity. Continuous (lifelong) professional development envisages maintaining and enhancing professional competency of a pharmacist, which ensures provision of pharmaceutical aid in accordance with the advancement of science and new pharmaceutical technologies (Poliachenko et al., 2005).

Continuous professional development of a pharmacist is the period of maintaining and enhancing professional competency in accordance with the advancement of science and new pharmaceutical technologies in the pharmaceutical sector. Each pharmacist has the right to choose himself the content, forms, and methods of continuous professional development. In terms of the forms of continuous professional development of pharmacists there can be internships within Ukraine or abroad, distance learning, participation in conventions, congresses, seminars, conferences, lectures, information sharing, consultation, etc. Participation in continuous professional development of pharmacists in Ukraine is a necessary condition for improving the quality of pharmaceutical aid.

The level-type structure of pharmacists professional training provides for a complete and gradual continuous professional training in the field of pharmacy at every level of educational qualification,
depending on qualifications acquired both at the undergraduate and postgraduate stages and throughout professional activity.

The concept of professional training of pharmacists claims that postgraduate pharmaceutical education needs reorganization in terms of quality in accordance with European and international standards and reform of the pharmaceutical sector of healthcare in Ukraine, since only upon adjustment of changes the foundation for improving provision of care to people while bringing its quality closer to the international standards can be laid down. To achieve this, changes should be made, namely the introduction of a structured three-tier system of the pharmaceutical sector in healthcare; increasing demand for the number of pharmacists-in-charge who provide quality pharmaceutical aid in the pharmaceutical sector of the healthcare system.

Postgraduate professional training of pharmacists should comply with the European and international system of tendencies and standards and should be implemented at internship and master’s stages. Professional training of pharmacists in Ukraine at pre-graduation and post-graduation stages in terms of the number of specialties and graduates and their qualifications should meet the requirements of labor market of pharmaceutical industry experts in Ukraine and of the European standards.

Gaining higher pharmaceutical education at every level of higher education involves the person’s successful implementation of a relevant educational (educational and vocational or educational and research) or research program, which is the basis for awarding an appropriate higher education degree: 1) Junior Bachelor; 2) Bachelor; 3) Master; 4) Doctor of Philosophy; 5) Doctor of Science. The Master's degree in Pharmacy is acquired based on complete secondary education and is awarded by a higher education institution in case the candidate successfully completes a relevant curriculum of 300-360 ECTS credits (Law of Ukraine, “On Higher Education”, 2014).

Therefore, the new structure of postgraduate education proposed in the Concept should promote bringing professional training of pharmacists in Ukraine closer to the European Union requirements, which will ensure a more efficient pharmaceutical sector of the healthcare. The concept of reforming professional training of pharmacists as a component of the pharmaceutical sector of healthcare in Ukraine is based on:

1) introducing a system of training pharmacists that will ensure maintaining people’s health and rehabilitation by providing a guaranteed level of pharmaceutical aid in accordance with state standards;
2) the transition to a clearly structured system of pharmaceutical sector of the healthcare system organization, increasing the need for a number of pharmacists-in-charge who provide pharmaceutical aid at the primary level of the healthcare system organization;
3) adjusting training periods, list of majors with the requirements of the labor market and the European Union directives;
4) the level-type structure of pharmacists professional training at undergraduate and postgraduate stages that corresponds to the principles of requirements’ heredity, continuity and deepening of the content, and to the principles of continuous professional development;
5) carrying out postgraduate professional training of pharmacists by combining pharmaceutical practice and learning;
6) improving the quality of professional training of pharmacists who would be competitive on the European and international labor markets;
7) continuous professional development of pharmacists and confirmation of their professional competency.

The main directions of professional training of pharmacists in Ukraine are preconditioned by the actual social and economic processes, namely low direct indicators of health in Ukraine; imbalances in the system of training and making use of pharmacists; insufficient implementation of effective modern systems of pharmacists professional training at undergraduate and postgraduate stages; Ukraine’s integration into the global community.

The key principles of professional training of pharmacists in Ukraine should be the following:

1) continuity and level-type structure of pharmacists professional training depending on the qualification being acquired and which can be achieved through forming training-industrial complexes that would include specialized (medical) classes of secondary schools, medical lyceums, institutions of higher education of I- IV levels accreditation, pharmaceutical institutions;
2) training of pharmacists with in-depth knowledge of a specific area of pharmacy, and, if there is demand in the country, pharmacy specialists in new areas;
3) ensuring a combination, at all levels of pharmacists professional training, of theory and practice through the implementation of appropriate education and practical training models;

4) control of the quality of pharmacists professional training should be impartial through the use of standardized methods to measure compliance of the knowledge achievements and skills with the requirements of academic and proficiency characteristics;

5) the pharmacists professional training system should be transparent, and this requires programs that implement advanced information technologies in training and promote adoption of advanced experience in the world and national science and practice, and individualization of learning and professional practice;

6) formation of universal human values and culture;

7) constant adjustment of educational content in accordance with scientific achievements and practices of arranging pharmacy that would provide dynamic nature of professional training and education.

Discussion

The ultimate goal of the Concept of pharmacists professional training in Ukraine is to achieve objectives such as improving the quality of medicinal products and pharmaceutical aid; maintaining and strengthening the nation's health; promoting the quality of education, research and professional activities of higher educational and postgraduate institutions offering pharmaceutical education; competitiveness of pharmacists in the European and international labor markets. Achieving this goal requires an organic combination of the following factors:

- pharmacists professional training system with the system of making use of them;
- availability of personnel, financial and material resources for professional training of pharmacists;
- modern comprehensive effective models of pharmacists professional training.

References