



The Fulfilment of Higher Competence Demands in Occupational Health Service (OHS)

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Background

- Three universities and five universities of applied sciences started courses aimed at deepening the competence of occupational health services (OHS) in cooperation with the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH) in 2008.
- These master's level courses were designed for occupational health nurses and -physiotherapists.



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Competencies in higher education of OHS's

- National and regional politics as the basics of the studies
- Visions and Strategies of OHS
- Description of core processes in OHS
- Quality development
- Assessment of effectiveness
- Research, development and innovations
- Leading employees, tasks, projects
- Multidisciplinary network



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- Assessment of the occupational health needs in organisations and enterprises
- Planning, implementation and assessment of health promotion actions
- Development of work, work processes and communities
- Producing knowledge (statistics, reports...)
- Marketing
- Management of cooperation with customers
- Ethics



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- Research methods
- Applying scientific knowledge (evidence based or good practise based work operations)
- Development and assessment of new operational models
- Continual development of quality
- Assessment of effectiveness of Oh operations
- Specific knowledge of OHS (according to the individual interests of the students)



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Aims

- The aim of this study was to answer the following questions;
- 1) Do OHS's have competencies in the operational environment, management and development of OHS?
- 2) Are there differences between the competencies of private and public OHS's?
- 3) Is the content of higher education still relevant to OHS's work?



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Methods

- The data were collected by sending a questionnaire to 40 public and 20 private OHS's
- The questionnaire focused on the main competence demands of master's level education
- OHS could fill in the questionnaire as a team
- The results are described as frequency distribution (%)



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Results

Theme	Private sector (N=20)			Public sector (N=40)		
	Poor competence %	Good competence %	Excellent competence %	Poor competence %	Good competence %	Excellent competence %
national health legislation and general knowledge on international work-unit health	80	20	0	55	45	0
knowledge on internal and external work-unit health	100	0	0	77,5	22,5	0
knowledge on internal and external work-unit health	85	15	0	55	45	0
scientific knowledge on work-unit health	45	55	0	47,5	47,5	2,5
multi-professional network	20	80	0	35	42,5	22,5



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Theme	Private sector (N=20)			Public sector (N=40)		
	Poor competence %	Good competence %	Excellent competence %	Poor competence %	Good competence %	Excellent competence %
Development and management of staff and competences	60	40	0	55	45	0
Development of tasks and projects	35	65	0	57,5	42,5	0
development and management of OHS and projects of work place health promotion	65	35	0	40	45	15
	60	35	5	45	42,5	12,5



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Theme	Private sector (N=20)			Public sector (N=40)		
	Poor competence %	Good competence %	Excellent competence %	Poor competence %	Good competence %	Excellent competence %
development of quality	20	20	60	30	70	17,5
development of effectiveness	25	75	0	62,5	25	12,5
assessment methods	100	0	0	65	20	15
development methods of OHS unit	10	30	60	32,5	67,5	17,5
development of the client enterprise co-operation	10	70	35	37,5	47,5	15



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Theme	Private sector (N=20)			Public sector (N=40)		
	Poor competence %	Good competence %	Excellent competence %	Poor competence %	Good competence %	Excellent competence %
new working methods and models	20	80	0	47,5	37,5	15
supporting of ongoing cooperation	45	55	0	60	40	0
production and marketing	10	90	0	32,5	47,5	20
entrepreneurship	35	65	0	30	32,5	17,5
	25	75	50	40	60	50
demanding communication and situation situations	70	30	0	57,5	42,5	0



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Discussion

- OHS needs to continually strengthen its competence concerning
- the operational environment,
- management and
- development
- There are differences between the competence level in public and private OHS
- This study is unable to determine whether this is due to differences in how OHS package their services
- The content of higher education still seems to be relevant to the needs of OHS' work.



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Recommendations

- It is important
- to strengthen understanding and knowledge in OHS about what happens in society such that effects on work life and conditions in work places
- to reconstruct the education programmes
- to offer net based learning possibilities
- to offer multiprofessional education



Thanks for your attention

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